

LONG TERM RAIL STRATEGY

The framework for how rail in the North of England should be developed over the next twenty years

RAIL IN THE NORTH TODAY

The North has a significant rail network. It is served by three north/south inter-city lines, and also by the important cross country and trans-Pennine corridors.

Passenger services are provided by ten different franchises and two open access operators. It is an intersection of key national, regional and local flows. There are over 500 stations in the North, a fifth of the national total. Over half the rail freight on the national network travels to or through the North.

The rail network in the North has many strengths. Investment sponsored by Local Transport Authorities and others has supported a rail renaissance in many areas with annual growth rates outstripping growth in London and the South East. Connectivity to London from the North's larger centres is generally good. Rail provides a significant social role, connecting people to jobs, to healthcare facilities and to education.

Despite these strengths, rail in the North is under-performing compared with networks elsewhere and therefore not realising its full potential. Weaknesses include poor connectivity between some of the North's urban centres and to other major cities in the country with journey times that are not always competitive with the car. Many trains,

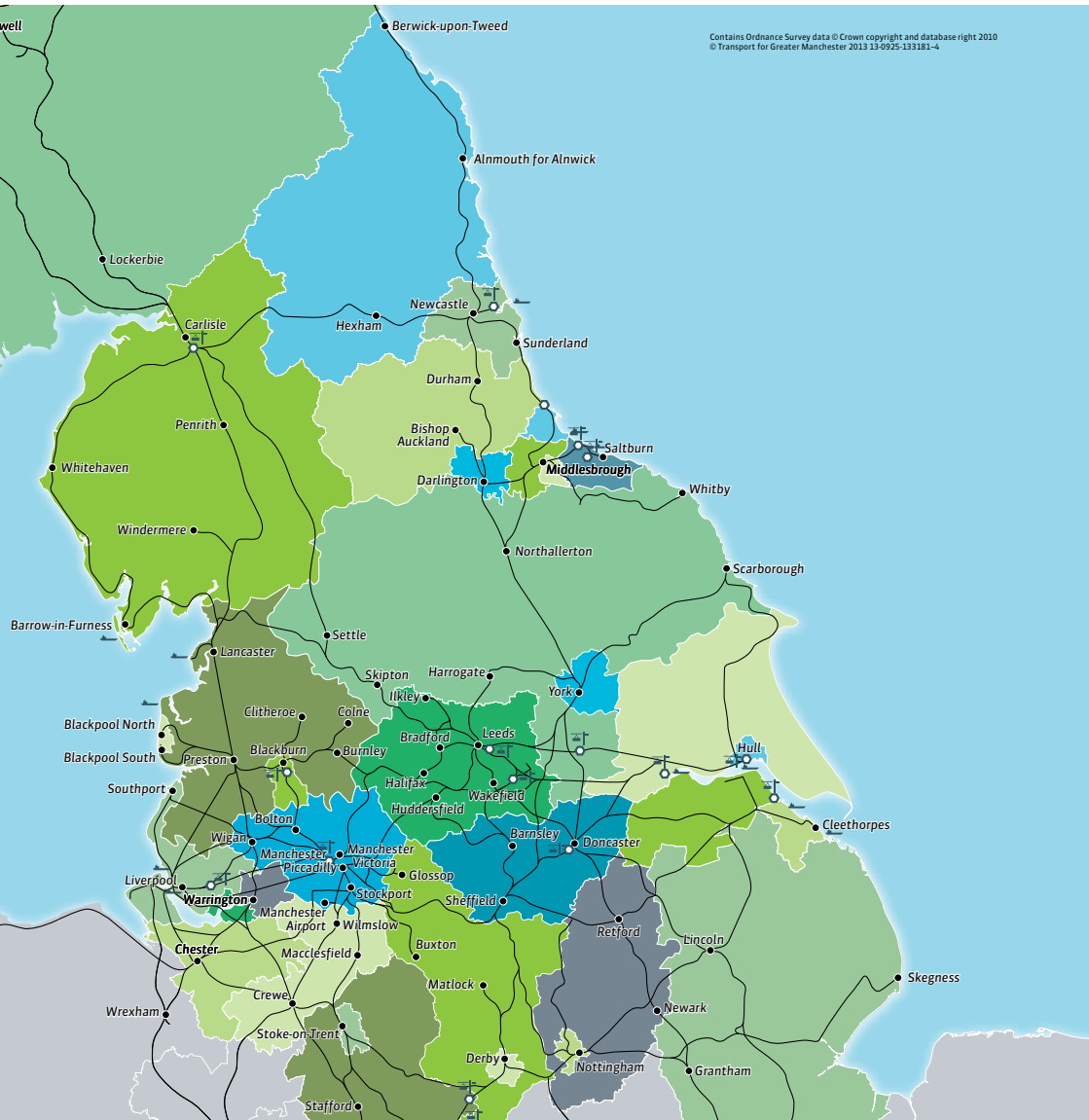
particularly those operating local services, are amongst the oldest on the national network and do not meet modern expectations or legislation for accessibility and emissions. Crowding is a problem on many routes, and not just in peak periods.


Subsidy requirements are higher in the North than other parts of the country. In part this is a legacy of under investment, for example in electrification and modern rolling stock. Rail in the North can and should deliver greater efficiencies. Committed investment in the Northern Hub and electrification is a welcome reversal of historic under investment, but to deliver greater efficiencies further investment will be needed.

That is why Rail North, representing the Local Transport Authorities in the north of England, has produced this Long-Term Rail Strategy, to improve services in the next franchise round and beyond.

THE VISION FOR A BETTER RAILWAY IN THE NORTH

Our vision is for the North’s railway to support economic regeneration and future prosperity, and contributing to a better quality of life for everyone living or working in the north of England.



A decorative graphic consisting of several parallel lines in shades of blue, green, and dark teal. The lines enter from the left side of the page, pass behind a central dark teal rounded rectangle, and then curve and exit to the right side of the page. The lines vary in thickness and color, creating a dynamic, flowing effect.

**Our Long Term Rail Strategy
sets the framework for how
rail in the North of England
should be developed over
the next twenty years.**



CONNECTIVITY

Better connectivity, with targeted improvements to journey times, service frequencies and improved connections to make end-to-end journey times quicker.



COHERENCE

A more coherent and user-friendly network: a network with the visible coherence of the London Underground delivered over the North's wide geography. This needs defined categories of train services as well as planning the North's many routes to operate together as a single whole with a single simplified fares structure.



CAPACITY

Increased capacity, both on train so that passengers do not experience excessive overcrowding and on track so additional demand for economically worthwhile passenger and freight movements can be accommodated.



COST EFFECTIVENESS

As use of the North's rail services grows, running costs per passenger and tonne of freight carried need to fall. The key to achieving this is investment.





SUPPORTING THE NORTH'S ECONOMY

Alongside the development of the devolution and franchising proposition the authorities in the North, working with Local Enterprise Partnerships, Chambers of Commerce and other stakeholders have developed a Long Term Rail Strategy for the North of England.

Our strategy takes a 20-year view across the North of all rail services (passenger and freight).

The North of England accounts for 25% of the national economy – larger than Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland combined. At £311 billion Gross Value Added per year, our economy is bigger than the individual Scandinavian economies of Sweden, Norway and Denmark.

Yet, the North under-performs economically in comparison to other parts of the UK. It has a higher proportion of public sector jobs and has been hit harder by the economic downturn. The North lacks economic cohesion and transport is a factor in this. Rail has played a major role in the reshaping of the economy of the North over the last 30 years. As primary and manufacturing industries have declined, so new sectors have developed such as biotechnology, information technology and creative industries. To continue to grow in the North these sectors need



good business-to-business connectivity within the North, to London and other key business centres in the country, and internationally.

Many of the North's towns and cities have seen significant redevelopment over the last decade, making them more attractive leisure destinations and supporting a flourishing retail economy. The five national parks in the North are significant tourism destinations, as are cities such as York and Chester and our seaside resorts and coasts.

Leisure and tourism are both significant generators of rail travel, as well as job creators. Rail in the future will continue to play a major role in shaping and promoting the growth and redevelopment of our major centres and attractions.

The 26 universities in the North, as well as being key drivers of economic growth, also generate significant travel which is placing new demands on the rail network. Rail in itself is a significant employer in the North and is a key driver and enabler of growth in new economic sectors.

DELIVERING THE STRATEGY

Improving services between the key towns and cities in the North will make a significant contribution to economic growth

For passenger services within the North there are five levels to be addressed:

- Between the five largest cities in the North (Leeds, Manchester, Sheffield, Newcastle and Liverpool). These cities should be linked by fast high quality services providing high frequency connectivity, the highest standards applicable nationally in terms of customer amenity, and at journey times significantly better than those achievable by road (as measured centre to centre, in off-peak periods).
- Between the major towns and cities of the North (and between them and the five largest). Here the aim is to provide a consistent high standard of express services.
- To London and to other major cities in the UK
- To major international gateways
- To and from smaller towns, rural areas and tourist destinations. Here the service delivered needs to be to a standard appropriate to encourage growth.

In the short term (to 2019) the focus is to maximise the value of committed investment, particularly the Northern Hub and associated electrification schemes, which will bring considerable

benefits across the north of England. New franchises in the North will also be important delivery mechanisms, particularly the new Northern and Transpennine Express franchises which will be managed by a partnership of Rail North and the Department for Transport.

In the medium term (2019–2024), replacement of rolling stock should be a priority, particularly to capitalise on the vehicle cascade as result of electrification. Opportunities will be pursued for extending the electrified network, for example to key freight locations and ports.

In the long term HS2 will present significant opportunities for the North of England, which will benefit other rail networks by creating the opportunity to change the way the existing network is used. Early investment decisions need to be made to achieve that goal. Current plans for HS2 will see the North West linked to the national high speed rail network from 2026. Yorkshire, the East Midlands and North East will be connected to HS2 from 2032.

Achieving some components of the strategy may require legislative change, so influencing Government policy development is also important. Network Rail, as the owner and operator of the national rail network is also an important

interface. Local Transport Authorities and the Local Transport Plans which they develop play a significant role particularly in facilitating better connections between rail and other modes.

Delivery of the strategy will be achieved by a new approach to building an integrated network through eight key principles:

- 1. A harmonised and simplified fares system (including smarter ticketing technology)**
- 2. The adoption of a categorised service specification (e.g. high speed, inter-regional express, urban commuter, community railways etc.) each with specific service and rolling stock standards**
- 3. Timetables designed to provide good connections between connecting rail services**
- 4. Information provided in a user-friendly manner before and throughout the journey, across the network including on connecting modes using the latest, ever-evolving systems and databases**
- 5. Stations designed and operated to facilitate transfers for all users between rail services and onward connections by bus, tram, cycle, car and walking routes**
- 6. Operational practices designed to facilitate through journeys including those involving interchange and including between different operators**
- 7. Investment in infrastructure and rolling stock designed to create a pleasant and safe travelling and waiting environment that is accessible for all, to avoid overcrowding and to improve timetables**
- 8. A progressive introduction of these principles achieved through franchise specifications and input to on-going railway planning processes and through supporting activities of local planning authorities.**

WHAT DIFFERENCE WILL OUR STRATEGY MAKE?

The more effective network we set out would double rail use across the North and carry more freight, ensuring that rail supports greater economic growth.

Our strategy would lead to very considerable benefits, quantified at £50bn (PV 2010 over a 60 year appraisal period) and Gross Value Added benefits (2025, nominal inflation) equating to £0.9bn per year.

Our railway will also be more efficient. This will be achieved in part by Network Rail's investment programme, particularly in signalling modernisation and electrification. Efficiencies will also be delivered through better co-ordination of rail and other services, through smart ticketing, through providing longer rather than more trains, through the approach to train procurement and through changes to operating practices.

The North's future network should provide:

- Clear information before the trip
- A single walk-up fare system across the North, integrated with other modes (not removing the opportunity for advance purchase and other discounts)
- Fast and frequent links between the North's largest cities
- Connected journeys to main centres and London, with certainty
- Trains which meet modern customer expectations
- Convenient journey times, including for leisure and airport trips
- An efficient network for moving freight to market



Rail North Limited was created in 2014 to represent the rail refranchising interests of all the Local Transport Authorities in the north of England. Rail North and the Department for Transport together will manage the new Northern and TransPennine Express franchises from 2016 through a new, formal Partnership body.

The Directors of Rail North Limited are appointed by the Association of Rail North Partner Authorities, the political body representing the Local Transport Authorities.

Rail North will monitor the implementation of the Strategy and we will produce an annual report on progress.

