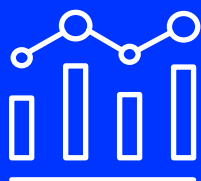


# Strategic Transport Plan: Transforming the North

## Executive Summary



### TfN's role and purpose of this plan

An effective, efficient transport system is a fundamental part of everyday life. It connects people and places to services and opportunities including jobs, health, education and leisure. It connects businesses and allows the efficient movement of goods and services.

As **Transport for the North (TfN)**, we speak with one voice on behalf of the North of England for transport. We are a statutory body made up of elected and business leaders from across the whole of the North. We collectively represent the region's 16 million citizens and 1.1 million businesses.

Our role is to advise government on the strategic ambitions and priorities for the North's transport system, informed by our local knowledge, expertise and evidence and with a particular focus on connecting places across, into and out of the North. This, our second **Strategic Transport Plan (Plan)**, is a strategy for our region and provides the framework against which we will (separately) provide advice - with our partners - on how it is implemented and the required interventions. The Plan sets the vision, objectives and the North's long term strategic transport priorities to 2050, setting the direction for our work with government, local transport bodies and delivery bodies.

To reflect the North's diverse people, places and the scale of the transport challenges we face, we have developed this Plan with the following key principles in mind:

- This Plan is a **user-centric, outcome-focused, place-based** strategy that is underpinned by **robust evidence**.
- This will be enabled by a **systems approach** which recognises the need to integrate transport solutions with energy, spatial planning and digital connectivity.



## Our vision

By 2050 the North of England will have become a thriving, socially inclusive region. Our communities, businesses and places will all benefit from sustainable economic growth, improved health and wellbeing and access to opportunities for all. This will be achieved through a transformed, near zero-emission, integrated, safe, affordable and sustainable transport system, which will enhance connectivity, support mode shift and resilience and improve journey times for all users.

Our vision is supported by three clear strategic ambitions the North wants to achieve:

- 1 Transforming economic performance
- 2 Rapid decarbonisation of our transport system
- 3 Enhancing social inclusion and health

\*'Near-zero' for TfN means less than 2% of our 2018 surface transport emissions, and you can find more details in TfN's Decarbonisation Strategy, available [here](#).



1

**The Northern Powerhouse Independent Economic Review (NPIER)**, which identifies the economic prize of closing the productivity gap between the North and the rest of England (less London), would mean a Northern economy that is £118bn larger by 2050.



2

TfN's **Regional Decarbonisation Strategy** which sets the need to achieve near zero carbon emissions of surface transport by 2045\*.



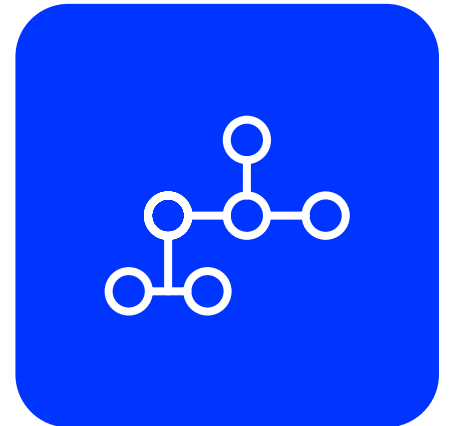
3

Our **Socially Inclusive Transport Strategy** (Connecting Communities) which builds on our ground-breaking work on **Transport Related Social Exclusion (TRSE)** to remove the risk of TRSE for a million people across the North.



To achieve our vision and strategic ambitions, we need to address connectivity challenges by creating a transport system for the North that enables:

- Strong, interdependent and integrated labour markets working collectively to drive up productivity and growth through agglomeration
- Fast, frequent, and reliable connections between our economic centres for goods, people and business
- Strong outward facing connections to other parts of the UK and to our international gateways
- Acceleration of the decarbonisation of our transport system and reduced car dependency both within and between places
- Safe, reliable and accessible public transport networks, both at pan-regional and local level, which enable access to opportunities for all communities across the North.



Improvements in the transport system need to be considered as part of an overall solution to a complex set of economic, environmental and social challenges facing the North of England. When goods, services, knowledge and skills move more freely, greater collaboration and transformational economic growth will follow. This Plan identifies **three connectivity needs** for the North:

1



Pan-Northern connectivity, sustainably connecting the economic centres of the North through our seven Strategic Development Corridors and the delivery of **Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR)** in full and the **TransPennine Route Upgrade (TRU)** to support the identification of a pipeline of investment and interventions

2



Connectivity between the North, other parts of the UK and internationally, recognising the North's critical role in connecting all parts of the UK and across the globe, not least for moving goods

3



Supporting our member authorities to transform local connectivity within all places of the North, including cities, towns, coastal and rural areas

Poor road and rail connectivity is holding back the North, often acting as a binding constraint on growth, and exacerbated by current deficient performance of our rail network. The result is a dependency on private transport for many in the North, which acts as a barrier to opportunity and hinders efforts to decarbonise travel. The North's economic and social challenges manifest in lower-than-average wages for workers, which subsequently leads to multiple and adverse consequences such as increased benefit dependency, increased health and social care costs and cycles of worsening poverty and inequality.

The way in which businesses and people responded to the pandemic highlighted how the need to travel, and the way in which we travel, can change rapidly. It showed that there is nothing permanent about our current travel choices, and that such choices can be related to digital connectivity and other policy areas; which is why this Plan advocates for systems thinking, policy alignment and sustained investment. If we are to achieve national strategic outcomes - like decarbonisation - then we must harness such changes positively as they are transforming future travel demand and choice.

We recognise that future transport investment programmes must support the need for better outcomes. These include transport decarbonisation, improved health, inclusivity, biodiversity gain and a sustainable increase in economic productivity. The shift to this 'decide and provide approach' is essential to ensure our integrated transport system is fit for the future.

It is important we recognise that many aspects of the future are uncertain. Our future travel scenarios demonstrate four plausible options for how people across the North might travel in the future, incorporating a range of different assumptions behind the economic and social drivers of those travel behaviours. The scenarios enable us to test the effectiveness and resilience of proposed policies and interventions across a range of futures and use that analysis to inform the actions we take to deliver the vision set out in this Plan.









## Our strategic priorities

Given the scale of these challenges, investment is required to provide increased capacity and connectivity locally, across the North, and between the North and the rest of the UK.



Our rail network and wider connections must transform the access to opportunities for millions of people, recognising the need to move beyond the current deficient performance and take clear steps to create capacity for passenger and freight growth over a sustained period of investment.

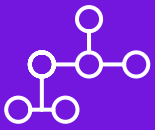


Investment must recognise the importance of improving local connectivity and multimodal integration in providing door-to-door sustainable transport for people and goods.



The delivery of the full (TfN preferred) NPR network and TRU are fundamental to transforming rail connectivity and capacity across the North of England, connecting our economic centres, for passengers and freight, to unlock the North's potential. This Plan reaffirms TfN's strategic priorities for rail including the need for commitment to our preferred NPR network which includes a new line from Liverpool to Manchester via Warrington and Manchester Airport, a new line from Manchester to Leeds via central Bradford and significant upgrades to the Hope Valley and East Coast Main Line routes (including the Leamside Line) to ensure effective services through to Sheffield, Hull and the North East.





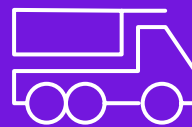
Our evidence base also shows that High Speed 2 (HS2) phases 2a and 2b were fundamental to transforming connectivity and capacity. So there remains a need to identify solutions in the absence of HS2 as planned, that will deliver a similar level of connectivity/capacity to and from the North.



Increasing the North's international connectivity to perform on a global stage will attract and facilitate businesses and entrepreneurs to work together and reach customers and suppliers across the North, the UK and the rest of the world. This will encourage outward and inward overseas trade and investment, which will facilitate economic growth.



The North's highway network will remain critically important to our economy and to supporting our modern society. Roads are a multimodal asset and provide the public space we all use to move around, whether that be on foot, by bike, bus or car and as such they are an essential community asset. We need to choose how the space available is used in order to meet needs to decarbonise, maintain access for freight and encourage active travel and only focus investment where truly needed.



We need to ensure we maintain and grow an efficient multimodal freight network by improving gaps in connectivity, including to newly designated freeports and enable growth in freight flows. Delivered holistically, this will allow the economy of the North to be more productive, efficient and sustainable while at the same time improving the environment, health and wellbeing of Northern residents.



### A place based approach

The successful delivery of our strategic ambitions and headline objectives can only be achieved through a collective effort nationally, regionally and locally. This can be achieved through effective transport planning and ensuring a strong golden thread through key policies and implementation at a national, regional and local level.

Our People and Place framework uses TfN's extensive evidence base and expertise to identify how policies might best support different types of people and places in the North to achieve our collective vision and strategic outcomes.

### Implementation

Since being established in 2018, TfN has created a compelling reputation for clear forward thinking on transport issues, industry-leading technical expertise, local knowledge and relationships. The implementation of this ambitious and challenging Plan will require a concerted sustained effort across the North, in partnership with government.

This Plan demonstrates the scale of change needed to deliver the strategic outcomes the North wants to see, as well as the significant challenges faced by the current state of the transport system.



Creating a virtuous circle of investment leading to greater choices and enabling mode shift for people and goods, more efficient use of road and rail networks, and greater public transport patronage, while delivering better outcomes for the North's places and communities requires a fundamental change in approach.

The evidence base assembled within this Plan demonstrates how investment in the North's infrastructure contributes to achieving agreed outcomes on reducing carbon emissions, improving health and achieving sustainable economic growth. This will require, at a minimum, alignment of decision making in transport investment with that in energy systems and digital connectivity. TfN's ground-breaking work on Electric Vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure demonstrates how we can build strategic partnerships to affect change.

The Plan sets clear metrics for measuring progress on critical issues, such as accessibility, clean air, road safety and performance. This includes mode shift 'right share' metrics that provide a minimum level of ambition necessary to achieve our vision. We commit to continue to work with our delivery partners, businesses, the transport industry and government to shape the priority investments, policies and interventions, and funding needed to deliver this Plan to ensure we are on track to deliver on our intermediate 2030, and long term 2050, ambitions.

Tackling the transport challenges in the North will also require fundamental reform in the way we plan, develop and deliver investment in infrastructure and services. While significant progress has been made by TfN, government and local transport bodies since 2015, there is more to do.

To achieve this Plan's strategic outcomes for the North there is a need for targeted investment in transport, combined with complementary policy and investment in areas such as education, health and economic growth. The NPIER demonstrates how a consistent long-term public-sector approach to policy and investment would lock in private sector capital and generate a positive return on government investment through additional tax revenues and lower spending on health interventions and welfare funding by 2050.

To support strategic planning of transport as part of a whole systems approach, TfN recommends that a 'five year plus five year' regional indicative funding envelope is established. Statutory advice on pan-regional infrastructure and service priorities, which are nationally controlled, could then be prepared within this envelope. This should be complimented by simplification of national funding streams and more devolution to the local level, building upon and extending initiatives such as the Greater Manchester Single Settlement. Indicative funding envelopes built into existing regulatory and statutory processes, would bring significant opportunities to accelerate decision making, reduce uncertainty and avoid duplication of effort at national, regional and local level.



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