

# Policy position statement: Multimodal Hubs

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# Context



Transport for the North’s (TfN) Strategic Transport Plan (STP) states that “TfN will support the development and delivery of improved multimodal transport hubs at key national and international gateways in the North”, and that TfN will “work with partners to develop and implement their local plans and strategies, ensuring they complement the policies and proposals set out in the Strategic Transport Plan, to deliver packages of improvements that support a more seamless, integrated end-to-end experience.”

The scale of multimodal hubs across the North of England varies significantly in both size and demand. For the purpose of this work, TfN is considering multimodal hubs in areas of “important economic centres”<sup>1</sup> which can be supplemented with enhanced facilities and information features to both attract and benefit passengers. Examples of a multimodal hub include bus park and rides, or a bus and rail interchange. This document identifies the potential

role of TfN in achieving better integration between Strategic Road Network (SRN), Major Road Network (MRN) and local public transport networks including bus and rail. This policy position will be used as a basis to help inform and support TfN programmes, the refreshed STP, and TfN partners’ local transport plans.

TfN is looking to support partners with the development of multimodal hub plans and can apply our pan-Northern evidence base to support partners in adding value to their multimodal hub development. This will also help ensure multimodal hub plans consider pan-Northern connectivity, facilitating cross-boundary travel and, where beneficial, collaboration between neighbouring transport authorities.

Our ambition to support multimodal

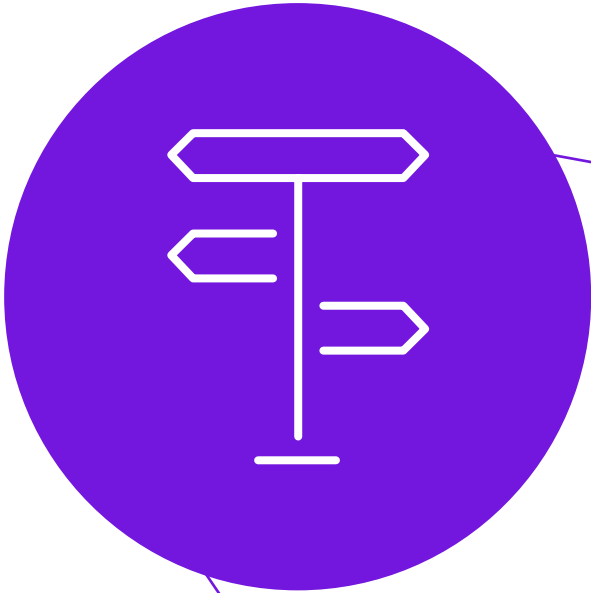
journeys is reflective of a growing policy focus on improving integration across transport modes, for example improving rail and bus connections, and transforming rail stations into integrated mobility hubs.<sup>2</sup> This includes consideration of the spatial element of the multimodal hub itself, with a focus on efficiency, inclusive design, quality, planning and funding<sup>3</sup> to contribute to urban realm improvements alongside overlapping transport modes. The recently published National Bus Strategy for England refers to an aspiration to develop railway stations as hubs for connecting services with high quality bus stops close to station entrances.<sup>4</sup>

Data from the National Travel Survey show multimodal journeys only accounted for 3% of UK trips, and 2% of trips across the North in 2019.<sup>5</sup> This is a small proportion of total trips and shows significant potential for increasing multimodal journeys through identifying potential demand which could be enhanced through improved integration and transport options.

The differences between multimodal

hubs across urban and rural areas of the TfN geography is recognised, with equal consideration given to both area types. This includes the varying needs, with urban areas more likely to have ambitions to reduce traffic levels and rural areas more likely to be focused on improving accessibility and managing the peak traffic levels generated by the visitor economy.

As such, case studies of different locations have been developed to show the scale of multimodal hubs in different areas as part of setting the context for the development of the policy position.



<sup>1</sup> A population of <50,000 people, or perform a sub-regional function (e.g. Northallerton), represent a regionally important gateway for people or goods (e.g. Manchester Airport or the Port of Liverpool), or employment cluster (e.g. Daresbury) or university located external to a major settlement (e.g. Liverpool Hope).

<sup>2</sup> Transport Decarbonisation Plan (2021)

<sup>3</sup> TfL Interchange Best Practice Guidelines (2021)

<sup>4</sup> DfT Bus Back Better: National Bus Strategy for England

<sup>5</sup> National Travel Survey (2019)

# Multimodal hub case studies

## Transport for Greater Manchester

- Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) is responsible for co-ordinating transport services across the 10 Greater Manchester districts.
- The Greater Manchester 2040 Strategy makes reference to the development of Greater Manchester Travel Hubs, which have improved pick-up and drop-off provision, access to cycle facilities, and access to electric vehicle charging points. Travel Hubs aim to have a more rounded view of improving access to rapid transit stops and stations by increasing rapid transit customer numbers, while decarbonising access to rapid transit stops and stations. A pipeline of Travel Hubs is being developed and, subject to funding, would see one to two Travel Hubs implemented per Greater Manchester district over a five-year programme.
- Additionally, there is reference to the development of hubs through improved demand responsive travel, multimodal ticketing and payment, and the evolution of park-and-ride. There are currently 21 park-and-ride sites within Greater Manchester.
- TfGM is also developing a strategy and pipeline of potential sites for mobility hubs away from rapid transit nodes, alongside the development of a toolkit to assist in identifying the most suitable locations for mobility hubs.
- TfGM has provided feedback that TfN contributions in this area would be beneficial for the design of HS2/ Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR) stations, alongside the development of interchanges, Mobility Hubs and Travel Hubs. This could be supported by a **TfN produced design guide, coordination of collaborative working on hub development, and any additional evidence for mobility hub demand**. The process of site selection and business case/ operating models is identified as a current knowledge gap.

## East Riding of Yorkshire

- There is an existing Park and Ride in Bridlington and this provides a service to the Bridlington resort via both land train and bus.
- There are a number of locations within the East Riding area which have been identified as areas of potential development for future multimodal hubs. These include a proposed park and rail/bus facility with electric vehicle (EV) charging and cycle parking in Brough, and a potential Parkway station at Melton. There is also overall support and implementation for cycle parking at railway stations where there is evidence of demand.
- The East Riding Local Transport Plan Bus Strategy refers to the development of cycle parking at bus stations and significant hubs, to encourage multimodal journeys. There is also reference to encouraging multimodal journeys i.e., the Bridlington Bus/Rail Interchange.
- TfN work in this area would be most beneficial in providing evidence of the potential demand to support identification of locations, and to assist with business case evidence.





# Role of Transport for the North

As a Sub-national Transport Body (STB), TfN's role is to set the overall transport vision, and to provide statutory advice on planning and priorities for large scale transport investment. Within this context, TfN supports the development of multimodal hubs in the North and this policy position aims to set out the role of TfN in this area for future development.



# Challenges and opportunities

For TfN, there are several challenges to address as we develop our multimodal policy, including:

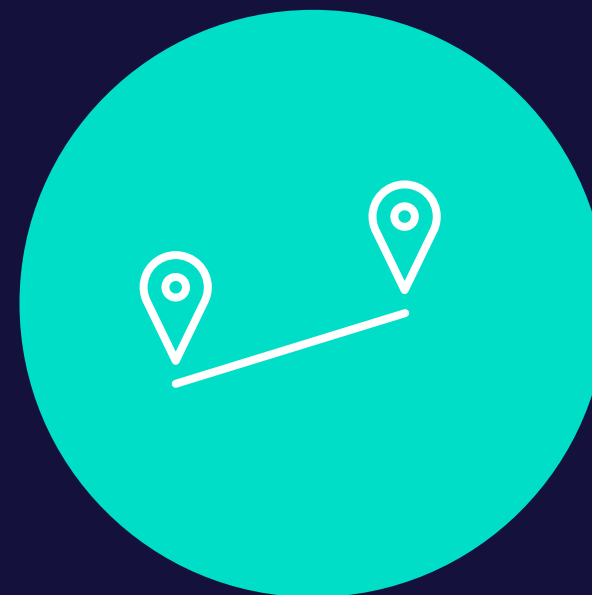
- As a statutory STB, TfN has the remit to influence and promote strategic transport interventions, and our STP is a formal plan that should be a key consideration for any transport plans within the North of England. Through developing a defined policy position, TfN has the opportunity to support partners further in this area.
- The creation of a TfN multimodal hub policy position creates greater certainty for partners around what TfN's defined role is and the added value which TfN can provide.
- Multimodal hubs can vary significantly both in size and demand levels, and TfN recognises the need for a flexible 'place-based' approach to supporting multimodal hubs.





# Links to other TfN work streams

- Strategic Rail – Supporting the development of new and existing rail stations as multimodal hub locations, with coordinated timetables and facilities (i.e. EV charging points). Also applying best practice/ guidance to the spatial elements and provision of facilities in multimodal hub development. This includes the development of multimodal hubs at NPR/HS2 stations. The focus is on achieving integration of all rail services, links to other forms of public transport, active travel modes, and integration with land use planning to promote appropriate development.
- TfN Transport Decarbonisation Strategy – The Transport Decarbonisation Strategy outlines the commitment from TfN and partners to a regional target of near-zero carbon surface transport network by 2045.
- Clean Mobility Visions – Will gather evidence and produce contextualised examples of how better integration between public transport modes, and between private and public transport, can reduce levels of car use. This is to support decarbonisation, health, and social inclusion.
- Major Roads Report – Supporting a reduction in urban centre trips through encouraging park-and-ride sites.
- TfN Freight & Logistics Strategy – The TfN Freight & Logistics Strategy outlines the ambitions for freight growth and support across the North.
- TfN spatial planning policy position – Delivering high-quality, accessible multimodal hubs should be embedded in new developments to promote public transport, active travel and car sharing, while reducing single car occupancy. For spatial planning, multimodal hubs can transform and revitalise communities through supporting increased density and mixed-use development around public transport hubs, enhancing the attractiveness of public transport across all parts of the North.
- TfN active travel policy position – TfN is supportive of active travel journeys across the North, and supports active travel trips to and from multimodal hubs.





# TfN’s role in multimodal hubs

As noted within the context section, TfN as an STB, has a statutory responsibility to support and implement transport strategies across the North, promoting the investment priorities of the North on a national scale. Our STP is a formal plan and therefore as part of our role within multimodal hubs, we aim to ensure the ambitions and priorities of our STP are included as a key consideration for any spatial or transport plan developed within the North by local partners.

**Action: Making the case for financial investment in multimodal hubs in the North.**

**Evidence:** Support for multimodal hubs in wider Government policy is growing and there is scope to increase the number of multimodal journeys in the North. There is an opportunity for TfN to work with local partners to identify locations for future development of multimodal hubs or improvements to existing multimodal hubs, and work with local partners in making the case to Government for investment.

**Action: Supporting partners through access to expertise.**

**Evidence:** Partners can seek support from TfN around their proposed development plans for multimodal hubs. This can include seeking advice from TfN officers on making the case within business case development (i.e. ensuring TfN plans are represented in the Strategic Case) and also using communications between TfN and central Government to gain insight into future funding opportunities and Government direction. TfN can facilitate communications between local partners and DfT, through inviting the correct DfT representatives to provide updates on multimodal hubs at partner engagement meetings (i.e. Major Roads Group, Strategic Oversight Group).

**Action: Providing partners with an evidence base of potential multimodal hub demand.**

**Evidence:** Further work is required to explore multimodal hubs from a freight perspective, exploring freight interchanges and potential locations for that.

**Action: Add a further recommendation to the final TfN Freight & Logistics Strategy to develop a freight multimodal hubs policy position and prioritise this activity in the 2022/23 financial year.**

**Evidence:** Through the TfN Analytical Framework, TfN can provide data to Local Authorities which reflects the regional scale of travel patterns and accounts for cross-boundary trips, for both baseline demand for multimodal hubs and forecast demand in various future travel scenarios. This can support partners in developing business cases through providing evidence of the wider spatial context, alongside support for submitting funding applications for investment in multimodal hubs.



# TfN’s role in multimodal hubs

(continued)

**Action: Collation of best practice for partners to apply to their areas.**

**Evidence:** There are various existing best-practice documents which relate to multimodal hubs, however the guidance has a tendency to focus on larger scale hubs than those of a smaller scale i.e. in rural areas or smaller towns. Those hubs which may be considered small on a broader scale are often significant for the surrounding rural area and therefore the development of such hubs is key.

For example, Government documents such as the Transport Decarbonisation Plan and Bus Back Better make reference to the support for multimodal hubs, however there is minimal reference to guidance on the development of hubs. There is guidance within international best practice, however there may be lower levels of applicability of this guidance for some local partners. Similarly, Transport for London has issued guidance on principles which could be considered in the development of hubs.

There is an opportunity for TfN to collate existing best practice which considers examples across the North, across England and internationally. This could also consider different planning requirements relevant to multimodal hubs. This repository could be made available to local partners, for their reference in the development of multimodal hub plans, and business case development.



**Action: Undertake work to identify multimodal hub locations which would benefit from improved passenger information/marketing.**

**Evidence:** A clear element of TfN’s role is to help prioritise investment across the North. TfN has recently commissioned a Stations Study to identify which rail stations would provide the best value for money if ticketing information and wider marketing improvements were implemented.

TfN can share the findings of the study to inform future investment and decision making and to assist in identifying effective measures for multimodal hub enhancement.



# Next steps

- Engage with partners on the identified “actions” and seek feedback on whether this is reflective of their thinking, and whether these actions are considered useful to them in the development of multimodal hubs.
- Continue to work with partners to implement the actions identified.



**Transport for the North**

2nd Floor  
4 Piccadilly Place  
Manchester  
M1 3BN

**Transport for the North**

Ground Floor  
West Gate  
Grace Street  
Leeds  
LS1 2RP

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0161 244 0888  
[info@transportfornorth.com](mailto:info@transportfornorth.com)

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