For the Leeds City Region, our HS2 Growth Strategy is about bringing economic growth, jobs and regeneration to the heart of the city, and seeing the effects spread across the City Region.

HS2 alongside Northern Powerhouse Rail is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity – providing a step change in connectivity.

Leeds Station is already the busiest station in the north of England. It is also a major transport hub for the city, Yorkshire and the wider north of England as a whole. Our Growth Strategy will place an integrated Leeds station with new high speed rail services at the centre of our national transport infrastructure, and be a catalyst to the continued regeneration of South Bank Leeds.

We are not waiting for the first high speed train to arrive, with funding secured to develop our HS2 Growth Strategy, work is already underway to integrate high speed rail into our ambitious plans for good growth – growth that combines innovation and productivity with more and better jobs, improved skills and career progression and a better environment so that the benefits can be felt by all.

Together, the Leeds City Region will support and champion the development of HS2. This interim Growth Strategy outlines our progress to date and commits to a programme of work to deliver a fully integrated strategy in 2017 for Leeds Station, which will capitalise on everything HS2 has to offer.
HS2 IS A KEY ELEMENT OF OUR VISION FOR SOUTH BANK, ONE OF THE LARGEST REGENERATION AREAS IN EUROPE. THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE YORKSHIRE HUB STATION IN LEEDS WILL ACT AS A LANDMARK GATEWAY WELCOMING VISITORS AND BUSINESS TRAVELLERS TO THE CITY AND REGION.

High speed rail will have a transformative effect on cities, towns and regions both on and off the route, in terms of new jobs, skills, regeneration and business opportunities. Along with the plans for Northern Powerhouse Rail, communities across the north will benefit from better connections and faster journey times.

We are working with our partners from the business community and neighbouring authorities to make sure HS2 builds on the economic strengths and successes in Leeds and the Leeds City Region.

Here in Leeds we are already seeing the benefits of HS2. Investors are choosing Leeds because of HS2 and we are working with our business community to make the most of the many opportunities it offers.

"Cllr Judith Blake, Leader, Leeds City Council"
THE CASE FOR HIGH SPEED RAIL

TRANSPORT AND THE ECONOMY

The Leeds City Region has a long history of innovation and industry, and of marrying together economic success and social progress, from the completion of the Leeds Liverpool Canal, to the Victorians who secured our central position on the railway network, helping lay the foundations of the original Northern Powerhouse.

Geographically, we are at the crossroads of London, Edinburgh, Liverpool and Hull, on the main national road and rail networks, linked north-south by the M1 and East Coast Mainline and east-west by the M62 and TransPennine Rail.

Delivered in several stages, Phase One will be operational by 2026, and see a new high speed line constructed from Euston to north of Birmingham.

Phase 2 will be completed by 2033 and consist of, Phase 2a from the West Midlands to Crewe; and Phase 2b comprising an eastern leg from the West Midlands to Leeds; and a western leg from Crewe to Manchester.

A TRANSPORT SYSTEM UNDER PRESSURE

Our transport system already supports high volumes of passenger and freight movement – but there are challenges facing transport. Fundamentally, our transport system is under pressure. Investment in road and rail has not kept pace with economic and population growth, resulting in congestion and delays on our roads, a lack of seats on public transport, and a lack of resilience.

WHAT IS HIGH SPEED RAIL?

HS2 is a new north to south rail line that connects eight out of ten major UK cities. It will be one of the largest public infrastructure projects ever undertaken in the UK and will have long-lasting implications for how people will travel.

TRANSFORMATIONAL CONNECTIVITY

HS2 will provide a step-change in rail connectivity on the corridor between Leeds and London. Connecting city regions, it will strengthen links between Leeds, as one of the largest UK financial and professional services centres outside the capital, and London’s global city functions.

UNLOCKING CAPACITY

The new high speed network will release much-needed additional track capacity to the north-south routes of our railway system, creating opportunities to improve the frequency and reliability of rail services for commuters, business travel and potentially freight, both on and off the HS2 network.
A NEW ECONOMIC GEOGRAPHY

The eastern leg of HS2, HS2 East, will reshape the economic geography of the UK. It will bring together the city regions centred on Leeds, Sheffield, Nottingham and Birmingham into a coherent and integrated economic zone of over ten million people, five million jobs, and some of the UK’s most significant manufacturing clusters. We will continue to push for the building of the eastern leg to be advanced so the benefits of high-speed rail can be felt across the whole of the north as soon as possible.

THE CAPACITY DIVIDEND

The East Coast Mainline (ECML) is one of the busiest railways in Britain. The ECML 2016 capacity review demonstrated ‘the demand for (railway) paths exceeds the capacity available and that without any trade-offs in journey times or service specification there is limited opportunities to increase the number of train services’. Without HS2 it will be standing room only on existing routes, people will remain dependent on cars, and future generations will be left in the economic slow lane.

The eastern leg of Phase 2 delivers a greater financial benefit, at a lower cost, than any other part of HS2. Without the eastern leg, the rest of HS2 is weaker. HS2 East is already gearing up for HS2 – we are investing heavily in long-term transport and economic strategies to enable our people, businesses, cities, towns and counties to fully realise all the benefits of HS2.

INTEGRATION WITH THE CLASSIC NETWORK TO THE NORTH EAST AND SCOTLAND VIA YORK

As well as the Yorkshire Hub in Leeds, HS2 trains will also serve York as the connecting point onto the classic East Coast Mainline network to the North East and Scotland.
THE LEEDS CITY REGION

MORE THAN THE SUM OF ITS PARTS

The Leeds City Region economy is the biggest outside London, worth over £62billion and generating 5% of England’s output. We have three million residents, a workforce of 1.9million, 119,000 businesses, 14 further education colleges and nine higher education institutions. Our economy covers a large and diverse geographical area, and yet functions as a coherent economic unit in which the great majority of residents both live and work. The Leeds City Region is a diverse and polycentric economy, made up of major cities, towns and countryside, each with distinctive assets, economic roles and priorities. The opportunity to lever the assets of each city and town – across urban and rural areas – in order to attract people and investment and to drive growth is huge.

TRANSFORMING OUR ECONOMY – A JOB WELL BEGUN

The Leeds City Region has significant potential, but also a range of challenges. In common with much of the north of England, levels of productivity and incomes are lower than elsewhere in the country, while unemployment and deprivation are higher than elsewhere.

SPREADING THE BENEFITS

We want to ensure these benefits reach everyone – good growth is central to our plans. This means High Speed Rail achieving both the right quantity and the right quality of growth across the Leeds City Region. This approach will help to create a strong, productive and resilient economy where a radical uplift in business competitiveness, productivity and profits goes hand in hand with access to good jobs that pay higher wages, and where all residents have access to opportunity and enjoy improved quality of life.

Excellent connectivity is at the heart of our HS2 Growth Strategy approach to ensure that the benefits are far reaching across the city region. Ensuring the Leeds City Region is HS2-ready is a critical component of both our Strategic Economic Plan and West Yorkshire Transport Strategy.

KEY

1 York St John’s University
2 University of York
3 Leeds Trinity University
4 University of Leeds
5 Leeds College of Art
6 Leeds Beckett University
7 University of Law
8 University of Bradford
9 University of Huddersfield

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LEEDS – A CITY TRANSFORMED

Leeds always had the potential to be a leading global city and now that potential is being realised regionally, nationally and internationally. Leeds has bounced back from the recession and is now growing strongly. Cranes are back on the skyline and major development projects are underway. Businesses across all sectors are investing, innovating and creating jobs.

MAXIMISING SECTORAL STRENGTHS

Financial and professional services remain a cornerstone of the Leeds economy. Leeds is the second largest centre for knowledge-based industries outside London. Over 400,000 people work in the city, and it is experiencing the highest rate of private sector jobs growth of any major UK city. The Leeds economy is now worth £20.4 billion each year and is recognised as the most attractive city in the north for inward investment.

A centre for further education excellence with three major universities and a University Technical College, we have a student population of 80,000. Leeds is a world leader in big data and health innovation, with the third largest manufacturing sector in the UK. A destination of choice – with a successful retail core, we are anticipated to move up to 3rd largest retail shopping destination following the opening of Victoria Gate, anchored by John Lewis, in October 2016. We are also a popular conference destination, business tourism is worth over £500 million to the local economy.

BUILDING ON OUR ASSETS

Substantial development activity is taking place across the city, with major development schemes totalling £5.8 billion are currently under construction and in the development pipeline in Leeds including major new office schemes at Wellington Place and Central Square in the city’s West End. The pipeline of new schemes in development is even larger with major investment areas including South Bank, Kirkstall Forge, Aire Valley Enterprise Zone, Thorpe Park and the Airport.

TOURISM, CULTURE AND HERITAGE

The city is not all about business. Leeds is a great place to live and work, with major cultural attractions, including Opera North and Northern Ballet and The Tetley – one of the newest art galleries, which makes use of the old brewery for which Leeds was once well known.

Leeds is a city that knows how to put on a good show, 2014 saw Leeds stage the grandest of Grand Départs when Yorkshire hosted the first two stages of the Tour de France. We were also a host city for the Rugby World Cup in 2015 and World Triathlon Series in 2016. The opening of the first direct arena has seen the city play host to numerous international music artists, and what’s more the city is now bidding to become European Capital of Culture in 2023.
CONNECTED ECONOMIC HUBS

Our diverse towns and cities across the region each have distinctive assets and opportunities, enhancing connections between Leeds and our key economic hubs will be vital if we are to maximise the agglomeration benefits of a HS2, and foster both the Leeds City Region’s and the north’s sectoral strengths.

BARNSLY

Located in South Yorkshire, with close links to Sheffield and Leeds, Barnsley is an attractive and viable destination for businesses. It recorded the greatest rate of private sector jobs growth in the UK, alongside strong progress in raising the overall employment rate and driving down the number of young people not in education, employment or training. Along with highly successful small, medium and large companies across a range of sectors, Barnsley is home to the global distribution of fashion retailer ASOS, US sleep technology manufacturing pioneers Leggett and Platt and international automotive manufacturers including German owned KOSTAL and Japanese owned Koyo Bearings. A range of projects including the £100million redevelopment of the town centre supports the development and growth of the borough.

BRADFORD

Bradford has an economy of £9.2billion. The city’s scale, dynamism and international outlook is at the centre of its plans for growth. Bradford is a ‘Producer City’ at the heart of the north, with above average concentrations of production business and employees across manufacturing, energy and utilities. The major regeneration of Bradford in recent years is continuing with close to £1 billion of investment in the pipeline including ambitious plans for the city centre stations at Forster Square and the Interchange being developed as gateways to the city. The City Centre Growth Zone has redefined Bradford’s offer, providing for high quality office and residential schemes and new retail and leisure outlets. Bradford’s economy is currently constrained by poor rail connectivity – fast access to the HS2 hub in Leeds, and a Bradford station as part of the NPR network is seen as critical by Bradford and the Leeds City Region to its continued growth and development.

CALDERDALE

An important centre for financial services and manufacturing, with strength in smaller businesses in the digital and creative sectors and pioneering green businesses. These sectors are attracted to towns in the Upper Calder Valley like Mytholmroyd, Hebden Bridge and Todmorden, each offering attractive living and working locations. Calder Valley electrification and the access to HS2 brings continued assurance to these businesses of their choice of location.

Dean Clough and the Broad Street Plaza demonstrate the successful approach taken to transforming the district’s business and leisure offer, with a £100million partnership programme of investment in place to further transform Halifax. There is scope for further housing growth and for an enhanced education offer through a proposed Vocational Higher Education Institution for Digital Manufacturing.

CRAVEN

Containing a variety of high quality landscapes Craven’s traditional economy has diversified with notable strengths in financial and professional services and leading firms in the health sector. Skipton, the District’s principle town enjoys low rates of crime, top-class schools, a vibrant retail offer and good transport links to Bradford and Leeds. To the north the smaller settlements of Settle and Bentham play an important role in accommodating businesses and jobs with rail connectivity to Carlisle, Lancaster and the West Coast Main Line. Improvements in digital infrastructure have bolstered Craven’s rural economy with indigenous micro businesses and self-employment predominating although the District is home to a number of internationally influential companies including Skipton Building Society, Systagenix and Angus Fire.
HARROGATE

With a near £4billion economy and an ambition to unlock high-value growth, Harrogate District enjoys strong levels of employment and enterprise particularly in financial and professional services, digital, creative and life sciences; whilst wholesale and distribution also thrives in a district that is strategically placed within the centre of the UK. A world-class conference centre and renowned visitor economy offer attracts circa five million visitors annually. Harrogate also holds aspirations to build on its growth of rail passengers as strong commuting links with London and Leeds have justified doubling the frequency on the Harrogate line and plans are being developed to regenerate the area around Harrogate Station into an exemplar rail, business and urban living hub. These developments – combined with a high value resident workforce – leave the district ideally placed to take advantage of the opportunities afforded by HS2.

KIRKLEES

Economically, Kirklees has one of the biggest concentrations of manufacturing in England. Assets of city regional importance also include world leading engineering and textile businesses, cutting edge innovation and creative businesses.

With Huddersfield a major regional centre in its own right with significant commuter flows in and out of both Manchester and Leeds – journey times in both directions are crucial. Transpennine upgrades will facilitate enhanced business to business connectivity and support the growth of the manufacturing and engineering sectors by helping it to access markets, attract investment and collaborate across boundaries. The North Kirklees Growth Zone recognises that half of Kirklees population live in the north of the district where connectivity to and employment in Leeds and Bradford are major factors in driving prosperity.

SELBY

The district of Selby sits on the eastern boundary of the Leeds City Region within the county of North Yorkshire. The district’s 3 market towns of Selby, Tadcaster and Sherburn-In-Elmet are home to many highly skilled and paid employees. It’s vibrant economy is characterised by manufacturing, distribution, construction and energy production. Looking ahead, the district has a pivotal role to play in providing space for business growth in the Leeds City Region with a number of large-scale strategic sites which are development ready. Most of these sites already have existing rail connections and excellent strategic road network linkages to the A1 and M62, making Selby a strong contender for inward investment.

WAKEFIELD

Wakefield’s accessibility and the availability of land to accommodate housing and economic growth have put it in a strong position and it now has an annual economic output of almost £6.5billion, making it the fourth largest in the Leeds City Region and the 30th largest economy in the UK.

Wakefield’s concentration of nearly 900 engineering firms will be ideally placed to provide the services to keep HS2 trains running on time and, in return, will be supercharged by new supply chain opportunities. The recent announcement around the proposed change of routing of HS2 in Yorkshire presents the opportunity for a ‘Parkway’ station, the location of which should maximise economic and connectivity opportunities for Wakefield and the city region.

YORK

Home to one in ten of Britain’s rail industry jobs, York knows a thing or two about rail. With high speed trains also arriving in York – an integrated hub at York station is central to York’s vision for attracting and nurturing high value businesses. York is home to two universities and world-class research and training facilities, such as the National Agri-food Innovation Campus, Nestlé’s Product Technology Centre and Network Rail’s Workforce Development Centre. Enhanced regional connectivity and high speed connections will attract businesses looking to tap into these assets. With Enterprise Zone status to help finance around £80million of infrastructure investment, ‘York Central’ will regenerate the land next to the station, creating commercial space, up to 1,500 new homes, and up to 7,000 new high value jobs.
ALREADY THE BUSIEST STATION IN THE NORTH OF ENGLAND – PASSENGER NUMBERS USING LEEDS STATION ARE FORECAST TO MORE THAN DOUBLE OVER THE NEXT THIRTY YEARS, REACHING A LEVEL SIMILAR TO THOSE AT GATWICK AIRPORT. AS A MAJOR TRANSPORT HUB FOR THE CITY, YORKSHIRE AND THE WIDER NORTH OF ENGLAND AS A WHOLE, WE NEED TO PLAN FOR SIGNIFICANT FUTURE GROWTH IN RAIL USE INTO LEEDS AND ACROSS THE CITY REGION.

LEEDS STATION A WORLD CLASS GATEWAY

AN INTEGRATED LEEDS STATION

We are planning for the future with Network Rail’s studies suggesting increased peak demand growth into Leeds Station of 114% over the next 30 years. Work is already underway to strengthen the station’s role as the major transport node in the city region’s transit network to spread the benefits of HS2 and Northern Powerhouse Rail across the Leeds City Region and beyond.

Leeds City Region in partnership with HS2 ltd and Network Rail, have appointed Atkins to develop a transformational Masterplan for Leeds Station which will deliver a new combined ‘T’-shaped station incorporating HS2, upgrades to TransPennine and Northern Rail services, Leeds City Region Metro and Northern Powerhouse Rail.
LEEDS STATION MASTERPLAN

DESIGN OBJECTIVES

The design of the new combined station will reflect the significance of its role and place not just for Leeds and Yorkshire but as a major national landmark. The design will be future proofed with a capacity for a 30 year forecast to allow for the increase in rail demand.

The focus will be on the areas that connect rail platforms, connections to other modes of transport, and South Bank and City Square.

The study will also include provision for retail, office and other viable commercial developments. A common concourse will provide seamless access between HS2 and other services.

The study will be led by following the four key design objectives:

1. **WORLD CLASS HUB** from quality of architecture and urban design to intermodal connectivity, clarity and delivery.

2. **DISTINCTIVE GATEWAY** that celebrates travel, proudly announces arrival into Leeds and speaks of the unique characteristics of the city.

3. **DESTINATION STATION** an attractive place to visit in Leeds city centre, where South Bank meets City Square.

4. **CONNECTED PLACE** that seamlessly integrates national/regional/local transport modes and optimises every form of connectivity for all users.

DELIVERABILITY

A programme-level ‘blueprint’ will ensure each component project can be defined, designed and delivered in a harmonised manner that will ultimately realise greatest overall value for money, with the avoidance of unnecessary re-works, delays, costs, or missed opportunities.

We will not wait for the arrival of HS2 for work to start. We will ensure that this work will deliver tangible benefits to station users in the short term as well as deliver our long terms ambition. With implementation in phases over time, including short, medium and longer term enhancements, we will ensure an operational station and appropriate passenger environment achieved throughout the stations transformation.
THE ARRIVAL OF HS2: SOUTH BANK LEEDS REGENERATION AROUND THE STATION

The new integrated Leeds Station is a catalyst for growth in the immediate locality. The station is at the centre of our expanding city. To the north of the station, we will be creating a new transformational gateway to Leeds at City Square. To the south of the station is South Bank – one of the largest regeneration projects in Europe.

South Bank is already a successful and growing business, educational and residential destination and we aim to further transform the area. Our Growth Strategy will build upon the successful regeneration and growth at Leeds Dock, Round Foundry, Marshall Mills, Duke Studios, the educational cluster and Tetley. With the proposed vision for the area, to double the size of the city centre by transforming South Bank into a distinctive and leading European destination for investment, living, learning, creativity and leisure.

SOUTH BANK FRAMEWORK PLAN

Our vision is for a destination that makes the most of the opportunity presented by HS2, Northern Powerhouse Rail and new franchise services through a station that integrates these with adjacent development of international significance to reflect Leeds’ role as a driving force of the country’s economy.

TRANSFORMATIVE VISION

- Retains historic assets and makes them central to our placemaking – with Temple Works and Hunslet Mill restored.
- Is a leading destination for leisure with distinctive and diverse public spaces, including a green city centre park and world-class waterfront that people of all ages can enjoy.
- Harnesses creativity and distinctive design of buildings and spaces, with new ways of delivering spaces and growth through co-production.
- Is resilient and has modern 21st century infrastructure including digital, social and flooding infrastructure.
- Is inclusive and connects people to jobs by improving links between South Bank and surrounding neighbourhoods thereby raising skills levels, and strengthening connections between employers, schools and local people.

- Provides 35,000 jobs across key sectors such as financial and professional, creative and digital and new emerging sectors.
- Has 4,000 homes in a sustainable location, where people of all ages, including families, live.
- Showcases the diversity and range of sectors comprising the Leeds economy, and where the global meets the local – national firms are located alongside local, independent and SME businesses.
INFRASTRUCTURE DELIVERY PLAN

The draft South Bank Leeds regeneration framework sets outs:

• Principles on how development and growth will be delivered across South Bank.
• Details of the key interventions proposed across the area, including infrastructure requirements and transport proposals to achieve the intended growth.
• Guidance on how HS2 is best integrated into the city’s urban grain and economic vision. This is to help set out the detailed design of the Leeds HS2 Station and developments immediately near it, achieving a world-class gateway that projects an image befitting of Leeds’ role as an international city.
• Specific initiatives to maximise the economic opportunities linked to HS2 across the area.

NINE KEY MOVES

The framework is centred on nine key moves which will shape the infrastructure requirements for South Bank. In addition, there is a focused look at the land in the hinterland of the station, with clear guidance set out for the city’s physical, social and economic vision for the development of HS2 in Leeds.

DELIVERY

As part of the Growth Strategy we will seek to develop an infrastructure plan for South Bank drawing upon this framework. This will aim to set out the infrastructure required to deliver growth in the area and maximise the benefits of HS2, including high level assessments on feasibility, deliverability and buildability.

The Nine Key Moves

- Create a rationalised road hierarchy
- Improve access beyond the Inner Ring Road
- Implement a sustainable parking strategy
- Expand the pedestrian area
- Connect the green & blue network
- Activate the waterfront
- Adapt heritage and link existing assets
- Create and revitalise centres
- Improve resilience and sustainability
A HS2 READY TRANSPORT NETWORK

A HS2 READY HIGHWAY NETWORK

In July 2014, the Government announced that WYCA had, uniquely, secured funding to establish a £1billion West Yorkshire + Transport Fund. As part of this fund, we have ambitious plans to reshape Leeds city centre through our highway network – reducing the impact of through traffic to create an environment where people and knowledge economies can prosper.

A package of highway improvement works delivered by 2021 will enable the closure of City Square to general traffic and place the Leeds Station at the heart of a growing accessible city.

MAXIMISING NETWORK EFFICIENCY

Not only will this package of works unlock the wider economic benefits of reduced levels of traffic across the city through major infrastructure improvements to the Inner Ring Road and M621 (in partnership with Highways England), but it will also allow for the diversification of the highway network in South Bank, maximising the opportunities for station led development in the vicinity of High Speed Rail.

Traffic will be encouraged to move around the city centre rather than through it. The Inner Ring Road will have the greatest volume of traffic, while a proposed City Boulevard will accommodate slower moving vehicles, prioritising pedestrians and cyclists in a pleasant and safe environment.

This work is necessary for HS2 to arrive as the new high speed alignment will cut through the existing highway network and will potentially close Neville Street to all traffic to allow for a shared concourse. Therefore integral to the Growth Strategy will be ensuring that our highway and bus network is HS2 ready.

HS2 – A WORLD CLASS ARRIVAL GATEWAY

The package takes general traffic out of City Square allowing the creation of a world class gateway to the city.

A redesigned City Square will provide an iconic arrival gateway providing seamless connectivity to the city and the city region, complementing the world class design of the Yorkshire Hub Station.

As part of the HS2 Growth Strategy, working closely with the Leeds Station Masterplan and South Bank Framework – work is underway to progress a urban realm design for City Square.
**TRANSFORMED CONNECTIVITY**

**HS2 LEEDS CITY REGION ‘ONE SYSTEM’**
We have an ambition to create a ‘One System’ integrated public transport network for West Yorkshire and the city region, which will build on and make the most of the national investment in High Speed Rail.

We already have an extensive heavy rail system serving much of the city region, and on many corridors improvements to rail will be the solution.

A much improved bus network will also have a key role to play in supporting economic growth, and we propose to expand rail and bus Park and Ride facilities, building on the success of the Elland Road Park and Ride service in Leeds.

**HS2 CONNECTIVITY PACKAGE**
The cancellation of the NGT (trolley bus) project, together with the proposed allocation of the £173.5million funding from the Department for Transport, means we are taking a fresh look at strategic gaps in our transport networks and the identification of potential transformational transport opportunities.

**YORK STATION: A SECONDARY HIGH SPEED HUB**
Leeds City Region will have two stations served by HS2, with York providing the connecting point onto the East Coast Mainline served by HS2 class compatible services. With already over 1.5 million rail journeys to/from London a year, HS2 services will further strengthen York’s rail connections and support regeneration opportunities at York Central.
NORTHERN POWERHOUSE RAIL

LEEDS CITY REGION PRIORITIES

We are critical to the north’s and the nation’s success. As the largest city region outside London, our economic growth will be fundamental in rebalancing the economy. We need better access to global markets to grow our exports and inward investment including direct road and public transport access to Manchester and Leeds-Bradford Airports and northern ports. We should be at the heart of the Northern Powerhouse through improved intra-regional connectivity to allow more people to travel, and more quickly, between the main economic centres in the Leeds City Region and the cities and growth areas across the north.

Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR) is an important part of the region’s connectivity requirements that build on the crucial enhancements of the TransPennine and Calder Valley lines and other layers and supporting measures that are needed. The design and connectivity provided by NPR stations will be fundamental, in enabling connections to other rail and transport services seamlessly including between HS2, NPR and local connections. There needs to be a NPR stop in West Yorkshire between Leeds and Manchester with strong economic evidence pointing to it being located in Bradford City Centre, and at York, to serve the northern and eastern parts of the city region.

PRODUCTIVITY

We face a productivity challenge, with rapid employment growth that is not fully translating into increased productivity. Better connected economies can improve total productivity; there is a powerful correlation between the size of a city and the productivity of its inhabitants. The top 600 cities in the world contain just 20% of global population but create 60% of global GDP: specialisation is greater, competition and economies of scale increase, ideas and innovation spread faster.

PARTNERSHIP

We are working with a range of partners on a number of exciting opportunities to deliver much needed capacity, performance and quality improvements to the rail network connecting the major towns and cities of the north in the coming years.

STRATEGY

The vision of a Northern Powerhouse is a compelling one: by bringing together our northern cities they can become much greater than the sum of their parts. By joining them together by providing modern transport connections, by prioritising science and innovation, by establishing creative clusters and by cities local control and power, we can maximise national prosperity, not just that of the north.

Transport for the North has set out a strategy for what we want to see achieved across the north. This includes:

- Options to reduce journey times and increase frequency and capacity between the largest cities
- Simplified fares, integrated smart ticketing, and improved passenger information.
- Improvements to the strategic highway network.
- A commission on the international connectivity needs of the north with key industry and sector representatives is underway.
- Identifying the interventions to improve strategic freight connectivity.
A CENTRE OF SKILLS EXCELLENCE

HS2 offers a unique opportunity to connect people, jobs and industry, boosting productivity, economic growth and social mobility. Young people from deprived areas in Leeds and across Yorkshire will benefit from the jobs created from constructing HS2. As the city develops, grows and prospers with new jobs and careers there is a real chance to halt the loss of creative talent to London.

In addition to the roles created by industries locating in the Leeds City Region for the first time, HS2’s physical infrastructure will generate a need for a skilled workforce to maintain, service and operate it. This presents an opportunity for these skills to be filled locally from the region's range of training, higher and further education providers.

The city region is home to fourteen further education colleges and eight higher education institutions, the latter producing 35,000 graduates every year, many in vital STEM subjects – providing high speed rail with a workforce for a generation.

SUPPLY CHAIN OPPORTUNITIES

Given the scale of the planned HS2 procurement activity and business supply chain opportunities available now and in the near future, this project is a once in a generation ‘game changer’ for businesses in the city region, and the LEP is committed to working with the business community to maximise the opportunity for the local supply chain to capitalise.

A similar opportunity is offered by the significant volumes of labour that HS2 will demand across the lifetime of the project. We recognise that there are already significant skills shortages in the construction sector and increasing demand for labour, particularly at higher skill levels, that HS2 will exacerbate.

DELIVERY

We are already working closely with education and skills providers, including schools, to raise awareness of the opportunity that HS2 offers for young people who will be entering the labour market in the next three to fifteen years, and will expand the scale and scope of this work as the project develops.

We are already leading the way in work to connect the local workforce to major development projects, as part of the Growth Strategy we will continue to develop policy and practice to improve opportunities for the local labour market.
For the Leeds City Region, our HS2 Growth Strategy is about bringing economic growth, jobs and regeneration to the heart of the city, and seeing the effects spread across the city region.

HS2 alongside Northern Powerhouse Rail is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity – providing a step change in connectivity with significant potential for growth in Leeds and across the Leeds City Region. Land values will be realised, jobs will be introduced, business rates for the improvement of the city captured and opportunities for young people seeking an exciting career will be created.

Together, the Leeds City Region will support and champion the development of HS2. This Interim Growth Strategy outlines our progress to date, and commits to a programme of work to deliver a fully integrated strategy in 2017, which will capitalise on everything HS2 has to offer.

We now need government to prioritise their phase two route decision and make a strong commitment to deliver this project at the earliest opportunity. We will continue to push for this certainty and for the building of the eastern leg to be advanced so the benefits of high-speed rail can be felt across the whole of the north as soon as possible. Accelerating the pace of construction and building from the north continue to be priorities for partners across the city region.