

Lancashire Enterprise Partnership Limited

Private & Confidential: NO

Date: 10th February 2015

**Lancashire Strategic Transport Prospectus
(Appendix 'A' refers)**

**Report Author: Dave Colbert, Specialist Advisor Transport Planning,
Lancashire County Council, dave.colbert@lancashire.gov.uk**

Executive Summary

2014 saw the publication of a number of reports setting out proposals to improve connectivity to, from and across the North of England, particularly but not exclusively by rail. In addition to the reports to Government prepared by the chairman of HS2 Sir David Higgins, the five city regions in the North (Greater Manchester, Merseyside, South Yorkshire, West Yorkshire and Tyne & Wear) have set out the 'One North' high level proposals for a pan-Northern multi-modal investment programme.

This report sets out the potential implications for Lancashire of the 'Connected North' agenda, and proposes a way forward to enable Lancashire to align its own strategic transport priorities alongside this fast emerging agenda through the preparation of a Strategic Transport prospectus for Lancashire. The prospectus includes those strategic priorities that have emerged to date through the highways and transport masterplanning process and development of the Strategic Economic Plan submitted by the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership to the Government in March 2014.

Recommendations

The Board is asked to:

- (i) Note progress to date in preparing the Strategic Transport Prospectus;
- (ii) Note the proposed modifications proposed by the Transport for Lancashire committee;
- (iii) Approve in principle the approach adopted in preparing the Strategic Transport Prospectus and the priorities set out therein; and
- (iv) Authorise Transport for Lancashire to receive and sign-off a final draft at its next meeting on 13th April 2015.

1. Background and Advice

- 1.1 In June 2014, the Chancellor of the Exchequer set out his vision for a 'Northern Powerhouse', a collection of northern cities sufficiently close to each other that, when combined economically would be able to challenge the World and in so doing, contribute to rebalancing the UK's economy¹. The Chancellor considers transport to be key to achieving this vision, together with science and innovation, culture and the environment and governance. However, in his view, the transport network in the North is simply not fit for purpose and certainly not good enough to enable cities to pool their strengths. The Chancellor has therefore identified the need for an ambitious plan to make the cities and towns across the North much better connected to create the equivalent of travelling around a single global city.
- 1.2 2014 saw the publication of a number of reports setting out proposals to improve connectivity to, from and across the North of England, particularly but not exclusively by rail. In March, Sir David Higgins, the incoming Chair of HS2 Limited, published his initial views on HS2², in which he reaffirmed the strategic case for the Phase 2 extension to both Manchester and Leeds. In doing so, he highlighted that, whilst capacity is an issue in some parts of the North to the same extent as it is in the South, the greater problem is connectivity: journey times are too slow. He therefore proposed the integration of HS2 into the existing rail network to transform connectivity across the North along a corridor broadly stretching from Liverpool and Manchester to Leeds, Sheffield and Hull.
- 1.3 Also in March, the HS2 Growth Taskforce published a report³ to the Government setting out the challenges faced by a range of organisations including local authorities in maximising the benefits of HS2 and how these challenges could be overcome. Key among the recommendations was that for each HS2 station, there should be an HS2 Growth Strategy setting out how the faster connections and greater capacity will generate local jobs, growth and regeneration. The taskforce also established that HS2 should be at the heart of an effective transport network that can spread the economic benefits of the project as widely as possible between the city regions.
- 1.4 In responding to the challenge to develop a coherent strategic transport plan integrating HS2 with the existing rail network, the five northern city regions (Leeds, Liverpool, Greater Manchester, Newcastle and Sheffield) set out the 'One North' high level proposals for a pan-Northern multi-modal investment programme⁴. The proposition attracted support from the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the five city regions, together with Hull and the Humber, subsequently commissioned further work to develop the strategic economic case and to refine the programme of strategic interventions into one that would be achievable.

¹ Speech delivered by the Rt Hon George Osborne MP at the Museum of Science and Industry in Manchester, 23rd June 2014

² HS2 PLUS, A report by Sir David Higgins, Chair of HS2, March 2014

³ High Speed 2: Get Ready, A report to the Government by the HS2 Growth Taskforce, March 2014

⁴ One North – A Proposition for an interconnected North, (Greater Manchester, Merseyside, South Yorkshire, West Yorkshire and Tyne & Wear) July 2014

- 1.5 In October, Sir David Higgins published a second report, Rebalancing Britain: From HS2 towards a National Transport Strategy⁵, setting out his latest views on HS2 and the 'One North' proposition. Whilst this report is not a statement of Government policy, it nevertheless represents a set of recommendations to the Government, including support for substantially improved east-west connectivity across the North, concluding that significantly improved journey times between the principal cities in the North is as important to the North as 'Crossrail' is to London. The report also recommended that formal arrangements be put in place with a clear remit to turn the 'One North' analysis into reality.
- 1.6 On 26th October, the Prime Minister and the Chancellor gave their backing to develop 'HS3', a high speed rail link that would significantly reduce journey times between the North's key cities. The Government is now working with a new body, 'Transport for the North', to develop a comprehensive transport strategy to include options, costs and a delivery timescale for HS3. An interim report will be available in March 2015, with a full report scheduled for March 2016.
- 1.7 In all of these documents, the focus is principally on the North's five city regions with very few specific references to Lancashire. Consequently, it is now essential that Lancashire agrees its own strategic transport priorities to help shape this fast emerging 'Connected North' agenda. A Strategic Transport Prospectus has therefore been prepared, the initial draft of which is attached as 'Appendix 'A'.
- 1.8 The prospectus confirms why and how Lancashire has a key role to play in an interconnected 'Northern Powerhouse' by providing access to global markets through its advanced engineering and manufacturing capabilities across a wide spectrum of industries, through its developing innovation base and through its large and skilled workforce. It builds on work already undertaken in developing the five area-based highways and transport masterplans and the Lancashire Strategic Economic Plan to identify a clear set of priorities that will facilitate engagement with the various organisations Lancashire needs to influence if it is to benefit fully from the current momentum to significantly enhance connectivity across the North. Many will require the support and commitment of external organisations such as Network Rail, the Highways Agency and neighbouring city region combined authorities if they are to be successfully delivered.
- 1.9 The Transport for Lancashire Committee considered the draft Strategic Transport Prospectus at its last meeting held on 3rd February 2015. The committee agreed that, subject to a small number of modifications, the prospectus is broadly fit for purpose. These modifications include the need for a greater emphasis on:
 - the significance of Blackpool to the 'Northern Powerhouse' and hence the importance of enhanced connectivity by rail, particularly east-west across Lancashire and including connections to Leeds and Sheffield;

⁵ Rebalancing Britain; From HS2 towards a national transport strategy, October 2014

- the Energy Coast and potential Enterprise Zone at Blackpool Airport; and
- the distinctive selling points of Lancashire within the 'Northern Powerhouse' and associated development potential.

The prospectus should also make clear that its focus is on strategic transport interventions, in particular, external connectivity, and that more local issues will be addressed through the next Local Transport Plan(s).

- 1.10 These modifications will be incorporated into the final draft of the prospectus. It is intended that a final version be available to enable the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership and the three local transport authorities to engage positively with the incoming government following the May 2015 General Election.
- 1.11 The Strategic Transport Prospectus will be updated as and when further priorities emerge through revisions to the Strategic Economic Plan, the five area-based highways and transport masterplans and/or related transport studies.