

# Upcoming Rail Projects in the North of England

As noted in our leader article, the North of England has been under the spotlight recently with concerns being raised that the promised transport revolution for the area is failing to move with sufficient speed. Despite this, the scale of the proposed developments remains undiminished. The flagship Northern Powerhouse for Rail will see £39bn of improved rail links across the North. With an intended completion date of 2040, the project will provide major upgrades including faster and more frequent links between Liverpool and Manchester together with integrated hub stations at both Liverpool City Centre and at Manchester Airport. Whilst the recently published Oakervee review supported a Y-shaped network linking HS2 to Leeds, it remains to be seen whether the Integrated Rail Plan, due to be published by the end of 2021, will limit the scale of this extension.

We have set out some further detail regarding this project and others in this area below. For more information on any of these projects, feel free to contact us at [jonathan.smith@dentons.com](mailto:jonathan.smith@dentons.com).

Project	What is it?	By when will it be delivered?	Value?	Next steps?
<b>Northern Powerhouse for Rail ("NPR")</b>	The project will provide major upgrades, including faster and more frequent links between Liverpool and Manchester, together with integrated hub stations at Liverpool City Centre, Manchester Piccadilly and at Manchester Airport. Despite recent doubts around its delivery, links between Leeds and Sheffield are still planned to be delivered through HS2 Phase 2b with a further HS2 junction proposed to link Leeds to Newcastle.	Northern leaders have agreed a shortlist of schemes and an initial preferred way forward for NPR which has been sent to the Secretary of State for Transport, and an updated business case is to be submitted in Spring 2021. As part of the agreed initial phasing plan for the network, construction is to start from 2024/2025.	Totalling £39 billion.  Development budget frozen at £75m for 2021.	NPR and Government will agree a further shortlist of remaining options and delivery.  The Government's Integrated Rail Plan for the Midlands and the North is due to be published by the end of 2021 and is expected to consider investment in rail projects such as NPR.

	<p>The proposed NPR network includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A new line to be constructed from Liverpool to Manchester</li> <li>• A new line to be constructed from Manchester to Leeds</li> <li>• Upgrades and journey time improvements to the Hope Valley route between Manchester and Sheffield</li> <li>• Connecting Sheffield to HS2 and on to Leeds</li> <li>• Upgrades and electrification of the rail lines from Leeds and Sheffield to Hull</li> <li>• Upgrades of the East Coast Mainline from Leeds to Newcastle (via York and Darlington) and restoration of the Leamside line</li> </ul>			
<p><b>North East Transport Plan</b></p>	<p>A public consultation has been launched in respect of the draft North East Transport Plan. The draft plan covers the North East Combined Authority (Durham, Gateshead, South Tyneside, Sunderland) and the North of Tyne Combined Authority (Newcastle upon Tyne, North Tyneside and Northumberland).</p> <p>The draft plan's timeline of interventions includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• From 2020: delivery of new Tyne &amp; Wear Metro fleet; timetable enhancements (2021/ 2022); and opening of Northumberland Line</li> <li>• 2025 – 2030: system enhancements / station refurbishments including Monument, Sunderland, Cramlington and Metro in North and South Tyneside</li> <li>• 2026: enhancements of frequency and line of route</li> <li>• 2029: first trains to run on extensions, including Leamside services to IAMP</li> <li>• 2031 / 2032: opening of new stations at East Gateshead and Gilsland</li> <li>• 2035: implementation of further Metro and rail extensions including the remainder of Leamside and the Cobalt Link</li> </ul>	<p>The implementation plan sets out objectives running through to 2035 and is divided into the following timescales:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Shovel-ready” schemes;</li> <li>• delivery in the next 5 years;</li> <li>• development and delivery in the next 10 years; and</li> <li>• development and delivery beyond 10 years.</li> </ul>	<p>The draft plan includes £6.1bn worth of projects and sets out priorities up to 2035.</p>	<p>The public consultation ran until 14 January 2021, after which a final Transport Plan will be published.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2035: enhancement of rail fleets and new line openings including to Consett</li> </ul> <p>Specific Tyne &amp; Wear Metro enhancements include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A new fleet of 42 metro trains under construction by Stadler is expected to offer flexibility for these extensions by having battery technology, and is expected to arrive from 2023.</li> <li>• Upgrading and electrifying an existing freight line in South Tyneside from Sept 2022, so that it is capable of carrying Metro services and boosting daily capacity to an extra 30,000 passengers.</li> </ul> <p>The National Infrastructure Strategy also confirmed £209m of investment for the North East including £16m to redevelop Sunderland Central station.</p>			
<p><b>Manchester Metrolink and Stockport Station Growth Prospectus</b></p>	<p>A project is in the pipeline to pilot tram-trains with Network Rail. New lines are being planned for Metrolink by 2030, including an extension to Stockport, and a business case is being developed for a £2.1 million line to Manchester Airport. It is intended that there will be an initial extension to the Manchester Airport Terminal 2 development, and a possible link up with HS2 as well as University Hospital South Manchester. Longer-term options include tunnelled 'metro-style' services under the city centre.</p> <p>Manchester council and Stockport Mayoral Development Corporation have put together a £530m four-stage 12-year plan titled "Stockport Station Growth Prospectus" including improved station facilities, Metrolink extension (East Didsbury to Stockport) and Tram-train Stockport to Manchester Airport.</p>	<p>New Metrolink lines to be delivered by 2030. Other dates unknown.</p>	<p>£500m to £1bn for Stockport extension.</p>	<p>Funding dependent.</p>

<p><b>Sheffield Supertram</b></p>	<p>There are plans to extend the Sheffield Supertram tram-train network into Barnsley Dearne Valley, Waverly, Doncaster and Doncaster Sheffield Airport.</p> <p>The Sheffield City Region is seeking Government support for a £400 million renewal programme for the network.</p> <p>It is reported that transport authorities including Manchester, are seeking to create a similar tram-train service.</p>	<p>Unknown.</p>	<p>£440m (most of this to be funded by a request for Government support).</p>	<p>The Sheffield City Region is seeking Government support for a £400 million renewal programme for the network.</p>
<p><b>Upgrade / electrification of Transpennine main line</b></p>	<p>The Government has announced funding of £589m for upgrading and electrifying the Transpennine main line.</p> <p>The plan will consider works such as doubling tracks in sections of the route, electrifying most of the line, as well as improvements to allow more freight on the route.</p> <p>Further details are yet to be confirmed, however the following works have been proposed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• upgrade of a section of railway between Huddersfield and Westtown (Dewsbury) (on which two consultations have been held);</li> <li>• upgrade of the route between York and Church Fenton; and</li> <li>• potential closure of the Lady Anne level crossing.</li> </ul> <p>The Mayor of Greater Manchester indicated this upgrade is independent of the need for a new line in NPR and any solutions to capacity issues in central Manchester.</p>	<p>Specific details of the upgrade works are yet to be confirmed.</p>	<p>Over £600m.</p>	<p>The Government's Integrated Rail Plan for the Midlands and the North is due to be published by the end of 2021 which is expected to consider the delivery of the Transpennine upgrade, as well as other rail projects mentioned above.</p>