

# AN INFRASTRUCTURE REVOLUTION

## NORTHERN POWERHOUSE RAIL UNLOCKING THE ECONOMIC POTENTIAL OF THE NORTH

Existing rail services between northern cities – in particular the east-west lines – are slow and overcrowded, resulting in excessive demand on the road network and acting as a brake on economic activity. This poor rail infrastructure limits job opportunities, with people in the North West of England having access to only 187,000 jobs within 60 minutes by rail, while people in London have access to over nine times more (1.7 million jobs).

As part of its plans to deliver an ‘infrastructure revolution’ and level up the economy across Britain, the Government has proposed **Northern Powerhouse Rail** to link the North’s major cities with modern rail lines and trains, which would complement the High Speed Two (HS2) and TransPennine Route Upgrade projects.

October 2020

## WHAT IS NORTHERN POWERHOUSE RAIL?

Northern Powerhouse Rail is a Government project to build six new rail lines and upgrade connections between cities in the North of England:

- Liverpool to Manchester
- Manchester to Sheffield
- Manchester to Leeds
- Leeds to Newcastle
- Leeds to Hull
- Sheffield to Hull

The network is planned to link to HS2, including a hub station at Manchester Airport. The combined impact of Northern Powerhouse Rail and HS2 would more than double the amount of people in the North who are able to access Manchester Airport within an hour, from 2 million today to 4.7 million.

Northern Powerhouse Rail is expected to cost around £39 billion, which would be the biggest investment in transport for the North of England since the Industrial Revolution. Long term investment will be sought from the Treasury by the end of 2020, and the project is expected to be completed between 2029 and 2040.

### Delivering an Infrastructure Revolution

Whilst economic and social infrastructure projects are often in the headlines due to the amount of money spent on them and the disruption caused during their construction, they generate huge long-term benefits. By providing better local services, new jobs, cleaner air and faster connections, modern infrastructure helps to level up opportunity and prosperity across the UK.

[Build UK's factsheets](#) cover a range of local and national projects explaining what they are and why they are being built in Britain today.



## WHY WE NEED NORTHERN POWERHOUSE RAIL

Northern Powerhouse Rail will transform the way people travel in the North of England and boost the significant economic engine that is the 'Northern Powerhouse'. When completed, Northern Powerhouse Rail will:

- Provide quicker, more frequent and more reliable services between the North's largest cities
- Make commuting by train a more practical option, meaning that people can get a job that better suits their skills, leading to improved productivity
- Help businesses move goods more efficiently, for example by improving access to international air and sea ports
- Improve access to culture and tourism destinations, such as Manchester's MediaCityUK and Liverpool's Royal Albert Docks
- Shift road traffic to low-carbon rail, supporting the UK's transition to a net-zero carbon economy
- Link up with High Speed 2 (HS2), vastly improving rail access to the whole of England.

## NORTHERN POWERHOUSE RAIL IN NUMBERS



**£39bn**  
estimated investment



**6**  
new train lines



**1.6m**  
more rail trips per day

## KEY ISSUES

- Northern Powerhouse Rail is planned to use part of the forthcoming HS2 track, so any **delays to HS2** would see the cost of Northern Powerhouse Rail rise significantly.
- The success of Northern Powerhouse Rail will depend on **investment** and greater economic activity in Northern cities such as Liverpool and Leeds.



# WHO WILL BENEFIT?

## Passengers

- By 2050, nearly 10 million people in the North will be within 90 minutes reach of multiple economic centres in the North
- A reduction of up to 30 minutes on the popular Liverpool to Manchester route
- Increased capacity from 490,000 trips per day to 2.1 million trips by 2050
- Freight will shift from road to rail, freeing up busy roads such as the M62.

## The Economy

- Northern Powerhouse Rail will help close the 10-15% gap in productivity between the North and the rest of England, which could add as much as £3.4 billion per year to the Northern economy
- Combined with other infrastructure spending, Northern Powerhouse Rail will help kick start the UK's economic recovery following the COVID-19 pandemic.

## The Environment

- More journeys taken by rail will help the UK achieve its target of net zero emissions by 2050
- Travelling on Northern Powerhouse Rail will be twice as energy efficient as the current rail system and seven times more efficient than driving.

## Further Information

Transport for the North (2019) [At a glance...Northern Powerhouse Rail](#)

Transport for the North (2019) [Full Strategic Plan](#)

Find out more

[www.TransportForTheNorth.com](http://www.TransportForTheNorth.com)

Contact us

[www.BuildUK.org](http://www.BuildUK.org)

