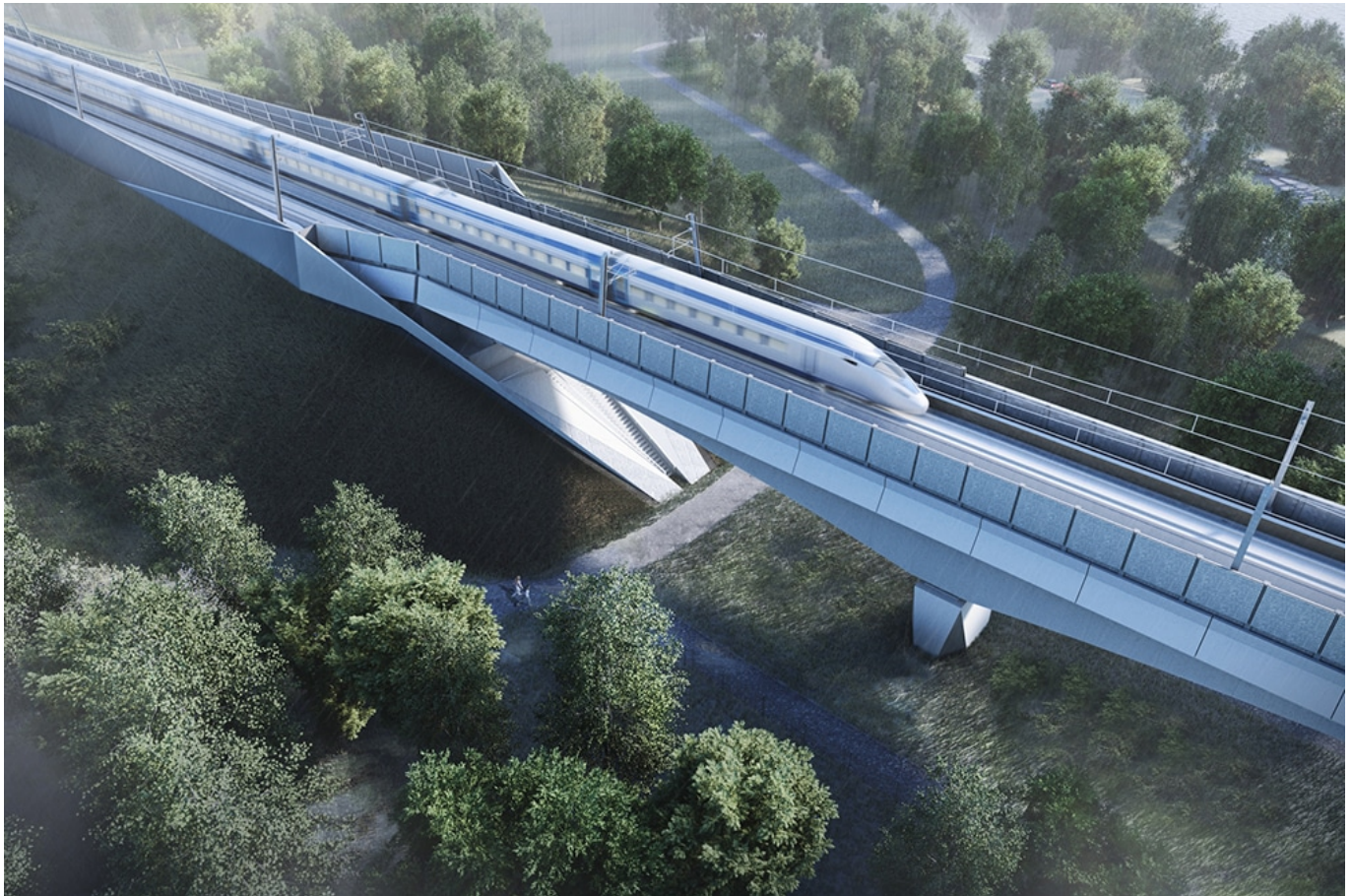


New High Speed Rail Yorkshire and North East Voices report highlights importance of Eastern Leg of HS2

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As the Government prepares to publish the Integrated Rail Plan and make a decision on the Eastern Leg of HS2, it must listen carefully to the voices of Yorkshire and the North East that will be most impacted by the consequences of that decision.

High Speed Rail Yorkshire and North East Voices report – [HSR Yorkshire & North East Voices](#) – shows that political and business leaders of the region are fully behind completing HS2 in full and integrating it with Northern Powerhouse Rail to ensure they get the investment, skills, and modal shift that these schemes can deliver. There must be no delay from the Government in committing to the Eastern Leg.

The report brings together contributions from leaders across the region in support of completing HS2 in full. Featured in the report are Members of Parliament, local Government leaders, LEAs and leading businesses, all of whom coalesce around a number of key themes:

- HS2 as essential to regional and local economic growth
- Development and regeneration opportunities created through high speed rail
- The pressing need to modernise the North's railway infrastructure
- Rejection of any false choice between HS2 and NPR in the Integrated Rail Plan
- The importance of collaboration to making HS2 and associated schemes a success
- High speed rail unlocking transport decarbonisation and modal shift

HS2 will create a major new station in Leeds, and with new services due to come to Sheffield, York, Darlington, Durham, and Newcastle it stands to have an important foothold in the Yorkshire and the North East. These services will integrate with Northern Powerhouse Rail and local transport to relieve congestion, improve reliability, and speed up journey times. In Leeds alone, the HS2 Growth Strategy will bring over £500m in investment and around 40,000 jobs and will be a major vehicle for levelling up the country.

Member of Parliament for Sedgefield Paul Howell, who was interviewed for the report, said: "The important word in the 'levelling up' agenda is the word 'up'. We need everyone to be going 'up', but some might just need more help. We shouldn't disadvantage growth in the south to help the north. We have regional strength, most notably manufacturing, which should be supported ahead and could play a key role in projects including HS2."

Cllr James Lewis, Leader of Leeds City Council commented in his interview for the report: "The delivery of the Eastern Leg of HS2 is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to truly rebalance the United Kingdom's economy, creating meaningful and inclusive growth across the Midlands, Yorkshire and the North East."

Helen Golightly OBE, CEO of the North East LEP wrote in the report: "HS2, coupled with upgrading the East Coast Main Line between York and Newcastle, will deliver an additional GVA of £80m a year to the North East LEP area in wider economic benefits alone."

Angela Barnicle, Chief Officer Asset Manager & Regeneration, Leeds City Council: "A modern integrated rail network is about much more than a faster connection to London and increased capacity for our region: for Leeds it represents 40,000 new jobs for individuals, 8,000 new homes for families, 273,000 sq. m of new office space for companies and £40bn in GVA for our communities."

Simon Middleton, Regional Director for Rail in Eastern Region, AECOM: "Strong collaboration between public and private sectors, across technical, funding, staging and operations, shows how these schemes can succeed effectively and with pace."

Paul Hirst, Head of the Transport Sector Group, Addleshaw Goddard and Chair of the Northern Powerhouse Partnership Transport Committee: "Securing high speed rail is a huge vote of confidence for the region, acting as a spur for regeneration and growth at a moment when we are emerging from the biggest economic disruption in a generation... HS2 is at the heart of the growth strategies of West Yorkshire and the Sheffield City Region, which aims to provide more than £70bn to those economies."

Justin Moss and Mike Hulme, Co-Chairs, Northern Rail Industry Leaders: "Rail should be a prime candidate for investment as the Government looks to industries to spur an economic recovery and could help provide jobs in the North for decades to come. The three major projects planned for the north of England: HS2,

Northern Powerhouse Rail and the Transpennine Route Upgrade, are all crucial in 'levelling up' the region, and each needs to be delivered in full, if we are to reap the full economic benefits."

Photo credit: HS2 Ltd