

Written evidence submitted by Transport for Greater Manchester (IRP0069)

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This written evidence has been submitted by Transport for Greater Manchester on behalf of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority and individual Partners, including Greater Manchester Local Authorities directly affected by High Speed 2, and is intended to support and complement individual submissions made by Partners to this Inquiry.

2. Summary of Submission

- 2.1. Taking the Greater Manchester (GM) geography in isolation, the Integrated Rail Plan (IRP) may be considered to represent a substantial improvement on the rail network of the present day. However, these are not the terms by which the success of the IRP should be measured. The blueprint set out in the IRP represents a downgrade, in terms of connectivity, capacity and investment in the North, when compared against the network that Greater Manchester and the wider North requires to help meet local and regional economic growth, productivity and 'levelling up' objectives as well as national policy challenges including decarbonisation. This led to the disappointment expressed by the Government's stakeholders and partners across the North upon publication of the IRP, including by Political and Business Leaders, who called for a free vote on the IRP in Parliament and delivery of the TfN Board's original ambitions for Northern Powerhouse Rail¹. In setting out what amounts to a relative downgrading of the overall rail network across the North, all places on that network including Greater Manchester will benefit less in transport and travel terms and therefore in terms of the wider economic, environmental and social benefits derived from improved rail connectivity. Given GM's position as an important transport hub for the whole of the North and the contribution the city-region makes to the economy, the loss of opportunity for GM in the IRP will have impacts beyond the city-region and across the wider region.

- 2.2. This submission highlights the need to compare the IRP against the rail network repeatedly advocated by Northern Authorities, political and business Leaders, Transport for the North (TfN) and others, and which Ministers regularly reassured stakeholders would be delivered: HS2 Phase 2b in full with legs to Manchester and Leeds (the 'full Y network'), and TfN's preferred plan for Northern Powerhouse Rail including a new, segregated east-west railway with a station serving central Bradford. For the purposes of this submission, this network is described as 'the pre-IRP status quo'.
- 2.3. The IRP shifts the direction away from a future network, represented in the pre-IRP status quo, where additional railway capacity is created through the delivery of extensive new, segregated, high speed railway lines, and towards one where the creation of new lines is scaled back with, instead, a greater focus on upgrading the existing network. Although the IRP fails to provide a level of detail to enable a proper understanding of the expected benefits and disbenefits of this. In general terms the move away from the creation of new railway means the IRP is less likely to be able to meet the needs of the future, including: to ensure rail connectivity can play a greater part in driving economic outcomes in GM and across the North; to build more resilience into the whole railway, including the classic network; to create a whole network that can enable and drive future growth in passenger numbers and rail freight through the creation of substantial new capacity across the classic and high speed networks; to attract a greater proportion of all trips to rail, in turn contributing to long-term modal shift from road to rail and therefore contributing to decarbonisation, improved air quality, and tackling road traffic congestion.
- 2.4. It is useful, also, to consider the relationship between the schemes set out in the IRP and the long-standing challenges on the existing network in GM, on which the IRP is largely quiet. If the need for the IRP was, in part, a consequence of the recognition that there needed to be a single overall strategy for the network of the North and the Midlands – classic and high speed rail together – then it is important to consider the extent to which the IRP achieves this. Major rail projects like HS2 have not always been developed in a way which is sufficiently cognisant of the practical reality

that, for services on them to work properly, they need to be planned and delivered as part of the whole network and not as standalone pieces of infrastructure. There are longstanding problems with the existing rail network in GM which the IRP does not resolve but nevertheless demand long-term infrastructure solutions if IRP schemes – and indeed the whole railway network - are to be successful in transport, economic and public policy terms.

2.5. This submission makes a series of specific recommendation to the Committee, including:

2.5.1. That the Government should publish the evidence and analysis which informed scheme-selection for the IRP, and the quantified changes in connectivity and capacity which the IRP will deliver – and when – for each constituent scheme in the Plan and for the Plan overall. These changes should be described in a way that enables direct comparison against the pre-IRP status quo position.

2.5.2. That the Government should publish any wider analysis of the economic, social and environmental benefits of the IRP and its constituent schemes versus the pre-IRP status quo position.

2.5.3. That the Government should ensure the IRP fully contributes to levelling up in Greater Manchester, including by: committing to an underground solution for the new high speed station at Piccadilly; committing to the Golborne Link as the best way to link classic compatible HS2 services to the West Coast Mainline while also generating critical local economic opportunities; committing to the economic opportunity represented by the high speed station at Manchester Airport by providing further funding, and; committing to deliver the IRP in a way which recognises the need for sustained, long-term action to achieve levelling up – including evaluating the value of individual infrastructure options on the basis of their whole-life costs and benefits.

- 2.5.4. That the Government should ensure Greater Manchester is able to work with it to help deliver the IRP effectively by providing more details, in particular relating to the design and specification, and the delivery timescales of, of schemes in the GM geography.
- 2.5.5. That the Government should reassure partners in Greater Manchester and across the North that mechanisms will be put in place to help ensure that, as a minimum (see paragraph 2.5.6 below), the IRP is delivered in full despite the hurdles constituent schemes have to negotiate if they are to be delivered in reality and, relatedly, given the immaturity of many schemes in the IRP, and;
- 2.5.6. That the Government must be open to discussing with its partners how the IRP can be enhanced beyond the scope of its core pipeline, including with improvements made to schemes within it and additional schemes being added to the blueprint. This should include working with Transport for the North and its Members to explore alternative funding options for the delivery of TfN's preferred NPR network, including local contributions and through harnessing local economic benefits, potentially via Land Value Capture².

3. Question 1: The contribution that the IRP will make to rail capacity and connectivity for (a) passenger and (b) freight in (i) the Midlands and the North and (ii) the UK

3.1. Key recommendation: The Government should publish the specific, quantified, capacity and connectivity changes brought by the IRP in total and of each constituent scheme, and the social, environmental and economic benefits these are expected to help generate, and do so in a way which facilitates direct comparison against the pre-IRP status quo on HS2 and NPR.

3.2. Any meaningful assessment of the IRP must compare the schemes it contains with the 'pre-IRP status quo' of the full Y network of HS2 Phase 2b plus the preferred NPR network advanced by TfN. Although the IRP says the versions of HS2 and NPR it puts forward will deliver reduced journey times and higher

service frequencies, greater seat capacity and greater released capacity on the classic network, it fails to provide any detailed analysis to substantiate the claims. This is also true of its assessment of rail freight benefits.

3.3. Without the necessary detail, it is impossible to know what contribution the IRP will make to key measures of connectivity and capacity and **the Government should be urged to publish this information as soon as possible so that stakeholders are able to fully understand the implications of the Plan.**

3.4. It is nevertheless possible to make some general assumptions about the IRP's implications for capacity and connectivity. Fundamentally, in moving away from the pre-IRP status quo by reducing the creation of new railway and increasing the focus on upgrading the existing network, it is difficult to see how the IRP can be an improvement on capacity or connectivity terms against the status quo. For example, on NPR, the pre-IRP status quo would have provided up to 12 fast trains per hour between Manchester and Leeds; the version of NPR in the IRP estimates up to 8 trains per hour. On Manchester-Leeds NPR, the IRP scheme would be slower than the preferred NPR scheme by 3 minutes and, more importantly, would represent a significant reduction in capacity. By choosing not to use NPR to create a genuine rail 'by-pass', with local stopping services segregated from high-speed east-west services on new lines, the IRP risks contributing to poorer performance on the classic network of the future, affecting flows which promised to be crucial for GM and our neighbouring regions. The rail network flowing into and around GM is already highly congested, with sections officially designated as 'congested' and major pinch points affecting performance particularly into central Manchester. By not creating sufficient new railway capacity the IRP misses the opportunity to solve this problem for the long-term.

3.5. The pre-IRP position was always that connectivity and capacity were both critical, and that only with the delivery of significant new, segregated track, would the IRP ever be able to create the blueprint for a future rail network that would enable and/or actively drive the growth in rail patronage and mode-shift from road to rail that is required by national policy, including the

2021 Transport Decarbonisation Plan. However, with new, segregated capacity being reduced in the IRP, the stated improvements to connectivity and capacity will come at the expense of existing classic services, and risk constraining the ability of future governments to increase service levels to accommodate new growth or to stimulate new demand.

3.6. Poorer connectivity and capacity compared to the network favoured by GM will ultimately translate into rail in GM and beyond not being able to make as significant a contribution to future economic growth, deliver social benefits, or help to address critical environmental issues as was envisaged. For GM this includes:

3.6.1. The implications of the downgrading of NPR with a greater focus on improving existing routes to Leeds and to Liverpool.

3.6.2. The implications of no direct NPR connectivity to Bradford.

3.6.3. The implications of a surface turnback station at Piccadilly for the ability of that station to be future-proofed to accommodate potential future growth in services, and for services to operate with high levels of resilience and reliability.

3.6.4. The lack of full funding for the new high speed station at Manchester Airport, despite its positive business case.

3.6.5. The lack of any solution for the proposed NPR connection to Sheffield (including via Stockport and on to Manchester Airport), with planned upgrades insufficient to improve service frequencies: while the IRP recognises the issues with capacity in the classic network in south Manchester, it fails to put forward any definitive solution.

3.6.6. Options being developed to improve capacity in central Manchester through the Manchester Recovery Task Force (MRTF), but with no additional plans for this part of the network included in the IRP.

3.6.7. Uncertainty around the Golborne Link and therefore the opportunities for Wigan and surrounding areas to reap the levelling-up benefits of HS2.

3.6.8. Reduced opportunities to increase local passenger services and rail freight, with both being vital for economic and decarbonisation agendas.

3.7. The IRP also lacks important detail regarding how the core NPR route will be specified and the extent to which it will actually be 'high speed' (as the IRP describes it). The speeds the infrastructure is designed to accommodate will have a significant bearing on operating speeds and, in turn, journey times. In this and other respects, there is a risk that the expectations set in the IRP (for instance to deliver certain journey time improvements between Liverpool and Manchester via Warrington) may not be achieved in reality.

3.8. The IRP regularly uses heavily caveated language (e.g. 'could see' in relation to when schemes will be delivered (pages 135-137), 'possible completion dates for schemes...*if the government was to commit to them at all*' (Figure 9, emphasis added), and 'if progressed' (page 135). In sections on the 'adaptive approach' (paragraph 5.2 onwards) the IRP acknowledges that 'commitments will be made only to progress individual schemes up to the next stage of development, and a re-authorisation will be required at that point'. These caveats allude to the challenges faced by the Government in seeing through the IRP to delivery and operation over a period of decades, particularly given most of the schemes it contains are far from 'shovel ready' and may be poorly understood (see paragraph 4.13). Moreover, at paragraph 4.3 it is recognised that individual IRP schemes will proceed 'subject to future approval at key gateways...'

3.9. Thus, rather than a 'plan', the IRP may be better understood as an aspirational document which describes a vision for a future network which will require a great deal of work over many years to have a chance of being delivered. This is important because, not only does it mean it is not possible to judge with

confidence what the IRP will actually deliver, it also highlights the risk that the success or failure of a plan for a network lives or dies on its ability to deliver the full package of interventions. On the Northern Hub, GM has seen the consequences of a failure of this kind, where not delivering all its component parts has led to a situation where the overall capacity of the network in GM is less than prior to the Northern Hub and key pieces of infrastructure like the Orsfall Chord are not being utilised to the level they need to in order to deliver the benefits which were promised. With this in mind, **it is critical that the Government sets out what mechanisms will be put in place, which can hold across political cycles, to help to ensure that – at the very least - all parts of the IRP are progressed and individual schemes do not fall away, and that the ‘adaptive approach’ is able to provide opportunities to improve upon the core IRP pipeline.**

4. Question 2: Whether and how the IRP will “level up” communities in the Midlands and the North

4.1. Key recommendation: The IRP brings into focus the choices faced by the Government which involve trade-offs on the levelling up agenda. The Government can ensure levelling up is genuinely at the heart of the IRP in GM by taking advantage of upcoming opportunities through the HS2 Phase 2b Crewe-Manchester hybrid Bill and elsewhere to ensure the agenda more strongly guides the approach to certain choices in scheme selection and design. A more pro-levelling up approach would, for example, support the case for an underground high speed station at Piccadilly and for the retention of the Golborne Link.

4.2. Key recommendation: Noting the time typically taken to deliver major infrastructure, Government should ensure an appropriately long-term view is taken to levelling up so that it can be sustained for generations; this includes evaluating the value of infrastructure investment on the basis of whole-life costs and benefits.

4.3. GM and the wider North has for many years highlighted the investment gap between the Northern cities and London in investment into strategic

economic infrastructure such as rail. In setting out a blueprint for a rail network to support the economy of the North and Midlands for generations to come, the IRP presents a number of opportunities to level-up communities for the long term and therefore reflects the case made in Greater Manchester's HS2 and NPR Growth Strategy 'The Stops Are Just The Start' (2018)³ that the connectivity brought by an integrated high speed rail network could – if delivered in the right way – lead to major economic benefits. Investing in a high speed rail network not only attracts local investment into and around station sites, it improves connectivity across regions and nations which drives economic efficiency and productivity. The power of this connectivity is amplified where stations are properly linked into high quality local transport networks, enabling residents and businesses beyond the immediate station area to benefit from better access to the rest of the country and, through better access to airports, to the international markets which benefit the whole of the North of England. Meanwhile, the creation of additional capacity through new, segregated, lines, helps to improve the performance of the classic network, helping large volumes of people to access jobs, leisure, culture and retail more efficiently. There are also economic, social and healthcare (air quality) benefits from a better rail network enabling modal shift from private car to an electric railway, and from road freight to rail freight.

4.4. The IRP is not accompanied by any analysis of how it will support levelling up, and **the Government should be encouraged to publish or undertake such an analysis to clearly articulate the extent to which levelling up will be achieved through the plan.** If this is not included in the forthcoming Levelling Up White Paper, then it should be set out elsewhere.

4.5. Notwithstanding the need to understand the levelling up opportunity in detail, it is likely that, compared to the pre-IRP status quo, the network described in the IRP will provide weaker levelling up opportunities for GM's communities. The lack of capacity in GM's classic network will not be solved by the schemes in the IRP. Moreover there is a risk that the reduction in segregated capacity will create additional pressures on the classic rail network

of the future unless major steps are taken outside the scope of the IRP or in a future revision of the IRP.

4.6. The IRP's inclusion of the Western Leg of HS2 Phase 2b represents major levelling up potential for GM. Accompanied with effective links into the wider public transport network (the 'Bee Network'), the city-region's population of 2.7 million (forecast to be over 3 million by the mid-2030s) will have access to the enhanced regional and national connections provided through the high speed rail network and reap the consequential economic benefits.

4.7. With three station gateways into HS2 – at Piccadilly, Manchester Airport and Wigan – plus classic compatible services serving Stockport during phases 1 and 2a, GM's communities are uniquely placed to benefit from wider economic opportunities for inward investment and regeneration.

4.8. However, it is critical that how HS2 interfaces with GM's communities and local transport network is designed and delivered with a strong focus on the needs of local people and places. Greater Manchester's HS2 and NPR Growth Strategy set out a range of benefits accruing from the integration of HS2 and NPR based on the pre-IRP position, including that Bradford and Sheffield would be fully connected into the high speed network. Unfortunately, some choices made in the IRP risk reducing the local economic benefit of HS2 and undermining the levelling up agenda: **it is critical that Government takes steps to ensure HS2 and NPR actively deliver – and not actively constrain – levelling up.**

4.9. Finally, the IRP will require the industry to work with Government to ensure there is sufficient capacity in the supply chain, not only to deliver schemes but also to operate and maintain assets on an ongoing basis. There is an important opportunity for the creation of an appropriately skilled workforce to contribute to local levelling up by actively creating sustainable, professional careers and supporting the talent pipeline at every level. Against the backdrop of GM's unique range of devolved functions and locally-developed programmes across education, skills and work, there are real opportunities to align training and employment support to ensure our communities can

contribute to and benefit from the IRP. To achieve this, **the Government will need to engage meaningfully with GM Local Authorities and the Greater Manchester Combined Authority in the design and implementation of skills initiatives** which look beyond the work of individual portfolios or departments in isolation to realise their full potential.

Piccadilly High Speed Station

4.10. The IRP's approach to the new high speed station at Piccadilly would restrict the opportunity to level up compared to the potential of GM's preferred plan for an underground station. The overground option favoured by the IRP would require major land-take and thus reduce the land available for commercial, residential and other community and social uses. Rather than to rule out an underground station, in part based on a higher capital cost, **we urge Government to prioritise whole-lifetime returns on investment and the impact that an underground station could have to attract inward investment and stimulate local regeneration** (please also refer to the separate submission from Manchester City Council to this Inquiry). Taking forward a second-class option through the hybrid Bill would restrict how the station asset can foster levelling up over the long term and GM Authorities are likely to be making the case for the underground option through the legislative process.

4.11. In considering the design of the new Piccadilly station, the Government should:

4.11.1. Take an approach which considers opportunities over the long term: how can levelling up be achieved over a multigenerational timeframe in this location and how can HS2 support it?

4.11.2. Acknowledge that land use policies which intensify economy density in urban areas is an important factor in driving economic productivity and growth, and therefore in levelling up.

4.12. Based on the above principles, favouring an overground station is actively constraining levelling-up around Piccadilly:

4.12.1. An underground station would maximise opportunities of development and would increase economic density on the basis that it would involve far less land-take than an overground station: recent independent modelling commissioned by Transport for Greater Manchester and Manchester City Council estimates that the extra land required by the overground station and its associated infrastructure would result in the loss of almost half a million square meters of floorspace, which could otherwise support almost 14,000 jobs.

4.12.2. Recent independent modelling estimates that an underground station could make the Piccadilly area the most important location in the North for delivering levelling up, as a product of being extremely well-connected into the high speed network while ensuring the maximum amount of land to be utilised for economically-productive purposes and at the same time minimising the negative impacts on jobs, homes and business of construction.

4.12.3. Using DfT's preferred methodology, by 2050 an underground station could result in annual economic benefit of £333 million more than with a surface station. Meanwhile, the construction of the surface station and track infrastructure on approach to Piccadilly would result in an estimated loss of 2,600 jobs from the area.

Golborne Link

4.13. The IRP is written on the basis that the Golborne Link, providing a connection between HS2 (classic compatible services) and the West Coast Mainline (WCML), is part of the current design and will be in the Western Leg hybrid Bill. This is welcome. However, the IRP also states that a final decision on the Link will be made following the Union Connectivity Review (UCR). That Review recommends the Government should investigate in more detail a potential

alternative link south of Preston, on the basis that it might create journey time savings to/from Scotland of two to three minutes.

- 4.14. To replace the Golborne Link in such a way would be to the clear economic detriment of Wigan and its surrounding communities, while a longer 'Preston Link' would be unlikely to generate similar or better benefits given its smaller catchment population and less potential to generate economic growth by investing in the local station infrastructure. The Golborne Link is critical to levelling up the Wigan area: **the Government should swiftly address the uncertainty created by the IRP and the UCR by confirming the Link as the preferred mechanism to connect HS2 to the WCML.**
- 4.15. To lose the Link would have a hugely detrimental impact on levelling up in Wigan and the surrounding area. It would undermine the Wigan Station Gateway strategy which aims to leverage the value of at least three HS2 services per hour between London and Scotland while also realising the potential of Wigan's strategic location on the WCML, catchment population size and existing mainline stations. While circa 3.2 million passengers use Wigan's existing stations per year (pre-Covid figures), of which circa 1 million are interchanging, if passenger numbers were more proportionate to its catchment population and with the Golborne Link plus the necessary associated investment to its stations and public realm (including to accommodate 400-metre long trains), there is the potential to grow the number of station users significantly; to perhaps 12 million station users with 6 million interchanging.
- 4.16. Due consideration should also be given to the upgrade of the WCML north of Bamfurlong, to be delivered alongside the Golborne Link, to ensure that regional passenger and freight services can be maintained and enhanced – failure to upgrade could result in HS2 services to Scotland being prioritised and local and regional passenger services, which are vital to the Wigan and GM economy, being withdrawn.
- 4.17. The uncertainty facing Wigan highlights a tension between the aims of the Government to level up, and of the UCR to look at potential improvements to

connections between England and Scotland. **There is an opportunity for Government to make gains on both fronts while also confirming the levelling up agenda as its central policy objective.**

Manchester Airport High Speed Station

- 4.18. The IRP confirms the new high speed station at Manchester Airport both for HS2 and on the core NPR connection between Leeds and Liverpool, but only subject to local or third party funding. Cost–benefit analysis undertaken in conjunction with the DfT found a very positive business case for the station, which drives patronage and revenue for the HS2 network, alongside its wider economic benefits. As such there is a clear case for government investment, as for all other stations on the HS2 network, since not delivering the station would reduce the overall business case for HS2.
- 4.19. The airport station will support local levelling up by supporting the Timperley Wedge and Airport City developments, which aim to provide 2,400 new homes and 0.5 million square metres of new office space. More broadly, with the right network in place, the station will improve access to international connectivity across the whole North of England, driving levelling up through the development of trade, investment and the movement of people.
- 4.20. Manchester Airport is already the international gateway for the North, the only airport outside London providing a range of global long-haul connections and frequent connectivity to short-haul business destinations. Whilst the majority of the North of England is within two hours’ drive time from the airport, rail connectivity is much poorer, meaning the majority of passenger access is by car, with implications for carbon emissions, congestion and air quality. For example, while 77% of long-haul passengers from West Yorkshire use Manchester Airport only 23% of these travel by rail.
- 4.21. Whilst the IRP will see welcome improvements in journey times from Liverpool, Leeds and the North East, these will not be realised for over 20 years, with little benefit for levelling up in the meantime. The IRP provides no clear route to how direct connectivity from Manchester Airport to Sheffield or

Hull will be restored, which have been lost to restore service reliability following the failure of the May 2018 timetable.

- 4.22. The loss of the proposed new high speed line into the centre of Bradford represents a lost opportunity to improve the international accessibility of one of the UK's youngest cities, which suffers from high levels of socioeconomic disadvantage, in part due to its poor transport connectivity. Improved links could have made a real step change to the economic prospects of the city, driving levelling up.

5. QUESTION 3: How the IRP will affect rail infrastructure and services outside the Midlands and the North

5.1. Key Recommendation: It is important that the Government responds to concerns that the IRP risks setting a precedent which would see long-term evidence-based strategy and planning to develop schemes with cross-party and stakeholder support undermined by other pressures. Irrespective of where schemes are being developed, therefore, it will be important for the Government to demonstrate that major decisions on transport policy are still led, first and foremost, by evidence.

5.2. The scope of the IRP was always to set a blueprint for the rail infrastructure to meet the needs of the North and the Midlands and this response sets out a number of Greater Manchester's concerns.

5.3. However, the IRP (particularly given its inclusion of Phase 1 of HS2) is concerned with infrastructure which almost spans the length of the country and its schemes are therefore of major national importance. For the reasons laid out elsewhere in this response, the whole-network benefits likely to accrue through the delivery of IRP schemes will be less than would have been delivered through the pre-IRP status quo position. In particular, the full Y network of HS2 would deliver greater released-capacity on the classic network across a wide geography and contribute to a more resilient network nationally.

5.4. The IRP also risks sending a signal that a downgrading of ambition for rail, and therefore for the role of strategic infrastructure in the UK economy, is politically acceptable. The IRP may, therefore, lead to places outside the Midlands and the North to conclude that their own ambitions for their future strategic infrastructure may also become downgraded.

5.5. Finally, the pre-IRP status quo was the result of serious, long-term planning and decision-making on the basis of evidence and cost benefit analysis. For such a body of work to not come to fruition in the IRP could set a worrying precedent for other schemes in the future. **It is important that any analysis which was undertaken to inform the IRP is published as soon as possible**, and that the design and selection of future projects is routinely justified to the public and industry with reference to their evaluation against key criteria including value for money, decarbonisation, and levelling up.

6. QUESTION 4: The challenges to central Government, GBR, regional and local transport authorities, transport bodies and other stakeholders in delivering the IRP

6.1. **Key Recommendation:** To maximise benefits while minimising impacts, the Government and its delivery partners such as HS2 Ltd need to work closely in partnership with local authorities, including in Greater Manchester. To enable this, much more detail is required on the delivery programme(s) for each IRP scheme. Government should also provide Greater Manchester Authorities with a clear, timetabled, programme of activity to ensure local partners can inform and support scheme delivery to the benefit of all parties and the success of the schemes overall.

6.2. **Key Recommendation:** In downgrading the schemes in the IRP, some stakeholders may consider that this signals a downgrading in the Government's ambition to build a new railway network for the future which is central to meeting the varied policy challenges of the coming years. In the formulation of the Whole Industry Strategic Plan (WISP), it is important that Government and the GBR Transition Team demonstrate that a long-term

growth-orientated railway is central to its strategy and the steps that will be taken to actively ensure it is fostered.

6.3. It is understood that the Government seeks to deliver the schemes in the IRP in partnership with local authorities. Greater Manchester welcomes this. However, the lack of scheme-level detail in the IRP presents GM's authorities with a number of challenges if they are to be able to play their part in successful scheme delivery. *Also see section 7, below.*

6.4. GM Authorities need to understand in much greater detail the intended design, delivery programme and funding expectations of the IRP schemes which require GM's active involvement.

6.5. It is also important that GM continues to have ongoing and direct involvement in IRP scheme development. For example, on NPR where the change in clienting arrangements mean GM's ability to influence the scheme through Transport for the North will change.

6.6. While GM Authorities have been working with Government and HS2 Ltd for several years in preparation for the Western Leg of HS2 Phase 2b, and more recently in anticipation of the Crewe-Manchester hybrid Bill, the IRP has presented significant new uncertainties related to the delivery time of new railway infrastructure. In contrast to the original Phase 2 strategic case which envisaged delivery by 2033, the IRP now describes delivery by the early-mid 2040s but potentially at any point from around the mid-2030s. This is vague and does not, for example, detail when construction would be likely to commence, and therefore by when GM needs to be ready to prepare for a long and disruptive construction period. With the hybrid Bill expected in early 2022, and taking around three years to reach Royal Assent, GM may be in the position where the enabling legislation is in place but without clarity over when spades will enter the ground. This uncertainty would be to the detriment of local authorities, property owners, potential developers and investors, and other interested parties, and would make it more difficult for local authorities to programme into their respective forward plans the work

that is required to ensure the HS2 infrastructure is delivered locally in an appropriate way and with effective mitigation in place.

6.7. Beyond HS2, there is even greater uncertainty over the elements of the 'Core NPR' network which enter GM. The IRP reflects on the need for legislation to be tabled in the future to enable the construction of parts of the programme which involve building new lines, yet there is no indication of when the legislation would be required if the (vague) programme timetables in the IRP are to be hit. The principle that more than one hybrid Bill can run concurrently is to be welcomed, but would still rely on sufficient parliamentary time being made available and would depend on the rest of the Government's legislative agenda to be feasible.

6.8. Finally, with a big emphasis on upgrading existing lines, Network Rail / GBR and the whole industry will need to understand the proposed improvements in more detail including the scale of work, associated disruption and how it will be mitigated. In addition to the day to day challenges presented by long periods of disruption to rail passengers, there is also a risk that the disruption is to the extent that some are put off from using the railways in the long term. This risks undermining or slowing down the creation of the new travel culture that national policy priorities demand: a long-term and sustained shift from journeys on road to rail and other forms of public transport and active modes.

7. QUESTION 5: How the rail schemes in the IRP will be integrated and interact with HS2

7.1. Key Recommendation: Clarity is urgently needed on how constituent parts of the IRP will integrate within Greater Manchester so that GM can work proactively with Government and other partners to deliver the infrastructure with as much regard to local people and places as possible.

7.2. The IRP does not explain in any detail how schemes will interact with one another and it is critical for GM to understand how interactions will be designed as they will have implications for how the infrastructure will be

delivered on the ground and how local communities will be impacted, both in construction and in operation. **It is important that GM quickly understands:**

7.2.1. The intended approach to make the link between Piccadilly and Yorkshire at Marsden, East of the Standedge tunnels.

7.2.2. The intended approach to integrate the new line from Manchester to Yorkshire with the Transpennine Route

7.2.3. How the new line from Warrington to Manchester will join with the HS2 line near to Manchester Airport using passive provision within the forthcoming Western Leg hybrid Bill.

7.3. It is also noteworthy that there is generally a poor understanding of how the classic network will accommodate HS2 services in future timetables. The IRP does nothing to correct this. Thus, as the IRP schemes start to be delivered, **it will be important for the Government to be confident that the classic network will be ready to absorb additional services generated**, otherwise there is a risk that any journey times savings and capacity improvements modelled as part of the IRP are not actually delivered when services operate in coming decades.

7.4. It is well known that the current rail network in Greater Manchester suffers from a critical lack of capacity in a number of areas. This has been contributing to poor performance and, without appropriate action being taken to improve the infrastructure long-term, will leave GM with a network that cannot accommodate future growth. While work is ongoing through the Manchester Recovery Task Force (MRTF), it is disappointing that the IRP fails to address these pinch points including the Castlefield Corridor and the network around Stockport. Solving these issues in the short-to-medium term with long-term infrastructure solutions is critical if the network is to be able to accommodate current service level aspirations and contemplate future growth including that required by HS2 and NPR services. It is also critical for levelling up in GM that schemes to make the existing railway work are expedited. It would not be acceptable to wait twenty years when, through the MRTF, there is a rail

blueprint of infrastructure improvements that can be progressed at pace now, will support levelling up and help IRP schemes succeed when they arrive in the future. **The Government needs to ensure that the resolution of the problems in the current classic network are understood as being essential if the services to operate on IRP schemes are able to be feasible, and should quickly commit to delivering the infrastructure required to relieve the constraints to an agreed timeframe.**

7.5. The Oakervee Review highlighted the importance that HS2 stations should be properly integrated with the local transport networks in which they will sit and integrating stations with local and regional transport modes, including active travel options, is a key Sponsor's Requirement⁴. Through the Greater Manchester Transport Strategy 2040⁵, Five Year Delivery Plan (2021-2026)⁶ and wider 'Bee Network' vision⁷ for a fully integrated public transport network, GM is delivering major public transport improvements over the 2020s and therefore it is important that the delivery of inter-city schemes in the IRP complement local intra-city transport policies and priorities. GM has a number of concerns about the extent to which current plans will achieve this on HS2 Phase 2b Western Leg and, with the IRP not providing any reason for these concerns to be allayed, Greater Manchester Partners will be looking to the hybrid Bill process to make the case for the interactions between HS2 and the local transport network to be improved in critical areas.

8. QUESTION 6: How the rail improvement schemes in the IRP were selected, and whether those selections represent equity between and within regions

8.1. Key Recommendation: The Government should publish the analysis and evidence which informed scheme-selection.

8.2. It is unclear how the schemes in the IRP were selected and a clearer understanding of the rationale, backed up with evidence and analysis, is critical if the Government wants to demonstrate a commitment to making evidence-led decisions on strategic transport infrastructure in the long-term interest of the country.

8.3. It is clear, however, that the IRP was informed, at least in part, by the National Infrastructure Commission's (NIC) 2020 Rail Needs Assessment (RNA), and appears to set out a blueprint for the future which is somewhere between the RNA's least ambitious 'baseline' budget envelope and its 'plus 25%' envelope.

8.4. The baseline package was designed to fit within a baseline budget of £86bn which was informed by the Treasury's requirement that NIC's proposals in its National Infrastructure Assessment should confirm to its 'fiscal remit'⁸: that the NIC's recommendations should be accommodated within a scenario where gross public investment in economic infrastructure is 1% to 1.2% of GDP per year between 2020 and 2050.

9. QUESTION 7: Whether the IRP represents value for UK taxpayers

9.1. Key Recommendation: The Government should publish any analysis of the IRP, as a whole and of its constituent schemes, in isolation and, in comparison with any equivalent analysis of the pre-IRP status quo, so that it can be appraised against measures of 'value' including cost benefit analysis and wider strategic and business case analysis, which considers its contribution to wider economic benefits, decarbonisation, levelling up and other public policy objectives.

9.2. In general terms, investing in rail infrastructure delivers good returns to the taxpayer. According to the report 'The Economic Contribution of UK Rail 2021', carried out by Oxford Economics and commissioned by the Railway Industry Association, for each £1 worth of work on the rail network, £2.50 of income was generated in the wider economy.

9.3. It would be helpful for any analysis of 'value' to consider what value may have been lost with changes in the IRP versus the pre-IPR status quo. For example, the opportunity of the Eastern Leg of HS2 to create value, particularly through its Leeds terminus, which has been lost. Given the scale of the investment and the fact that the impacts will be multi-generational, any analysis of value should be undertaken against as wide a set of objectives as possible so as not to omit significant benefits.

9.4. Reflecting the Government's wider public policy agenda and recent changes to the Green Book, any appraisal of value should also, ideally, consider secondary benefits including, for example levelling up and decarbonisation (*also see section 4 above*). It should also seek to understand the economic value of creating new railway capacity which makes the classic network more resilient and able to grow and encourages modal shift from road to rail, and the potential related air quality and consequent health benefits of modal shift to an electric railway.

9.5. Learning the lessons of other multi-scheme rail initiatives such as the Northern Hub, value is more likely to be derived if proper appraisal is carried out at the very start to seek to capture the full future benefit of the package, including the future benefit of additional railway capacity and/or capability. This would reduce the likelihood that a scheme, or collection of schemes, benefiting the same location need to be re-visited again and again to make iterative improvements (a less cost-efficient way of working). Relatedly, where the 'best-value' schemes in a package of improvements are earmarked for early delivery, this comes with the risk that the remaining improvements are relatively lower value (including due to input-cost inflation) and therefore may suffer from downgrading (cost-savings) or removal from the package as a result, with the potential net effect that the overall improvements and return on investment to the taxpayer of the full package of schemes cannot be realised. *Also see paragraph 3.8 above.*

9.6. Finally, considerations of value should also be undertaken based on the whole-life value of a given infrastructure investment, such as a station, which may continue to drive important benefits for the communities it serves for several decades, including when the surrounding land benefits from increased economic activity and land values and the station itself can generate ongoing revenue streams. *Also see paragraphs 4.10 to 4.13 above.*

Endnotes

¹ [Mayor of West Yorkshire joins forces with other Northern Mayors to call on the PM to allow a free vote in Parliament on the Government's Integrated Rail Plan. - West Yorkshire Combined Authority \(westyorks-ca.gov.uk\)](#) and [Northern leaders issue statutory advice in response to Integrated Rail Plan - Transport for the North](#)

² [Northern leaders issue statutory advice in response to Integrated Rail Plan - Transport for the North](#)

³ [17-1060 HS2 Growth Strategy.pdf \(ctfassets.net\)](#)

⁴ [Written Parliamentary Question UIN 97181 tabled 4 January 2022](#)

⁵ [Greater Manchester Transport Strategy 2040 | Transport for Greater Manchester \(tfgm.com\)](#)

⁶ [Our Five Year Transport Delivery Plan | Transport for Greater Manchester \(tfgm.com\)](#)

⁷ [Destination: Bee Network | Transport for Greater Manchester \(tfgm.com\)](#)

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[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/571097/Fiscal Remit 2016.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/571097/Fiscal_Remmit_2016.pdf)