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**HS2**

**Economic Growth  
Conference**

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# HS2 Economic Growth Conference

*National Voices for HS2*

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# Conference Report

**Tuesday, 3rd September 2019**

New Dock Hall, Leeds

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 Built Environment Networking

[www.built-environment-networking.com](http://www.built-environment-networking.com)

**#HS2EGC19**

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# Foreword



**Keith Griffiths,**  
Managing Director,  
Built Environment  
Networking

This is the second year that Built Environment Networking has organised the official HS2 Economic Growth conference; building off the success in 2018, it was Leeds’s turn to host some of the most influential voices from across the planned route. They provided an update on progress for what will be the UK’s biggest infrastructure project in a generation.

I’d like to start by thanking our conference partner Atkins for working with us on delivering this event.

With questions being raised over the East Midlands and Leeds leg of HS2 in the media recently, our conference provided the ideal rallying platform for public and private sector to come together and shout from the rooftops: HS2 needs to go ahead in its entirety and it needs to be delivered soon. Moreover, HS2 and Northern Powerhouse Rail are symbiotic.

Making his first conference outing since he was appointed as Chair of HS2, Allan Cook added a whole new dynamic to proceedings. It was refreshing to see a figure of national significance wandering around the conference floor and engaging with as many delegates as he could; Allan made a point of mentioning that he was there to listen and learn from our delegates to ensure HS2 works for everyone.

One of the key takeaway’s from the event was that the narrative needs to move away from discussing journey time and the imperative of focusing on the jobs and inclusive growth created in regions that HS2 passes through.

With insight and consensus from across the political spectrum it is clear that momentum is building in support of HS2, the day started with

an impassioned call from Judith Blake, Leader of Leeds City council who left our audience on no uncertain terms as to the importance of the project to the city. An undoubted star of the day was Maria Machancoses, who as Director of Midlands Connect always delivers rational, thought leadership focused solutions to what are undoubtedly complex issues.

The day was punctuated with a huge media presence- our conference was covered by the BBC, Sky News and ITV who joined our 400+ delegates to collect Vox pops and interviews with our stellar line up of speakers.

HS2 will remain an ‘in-vogue’ topic for the many years to come and here at Built Environment Networking we value our ongoing collaboration with HS2 Ltd to deliver events like this, where all the pertinent topics surrounding the development can be discussed and solutions suggested by our delegates. The event will return in 2020 with details to be released in early November 2019 across all of our social media channels and website, so please make sure you continue to follow our company on all the relevant platforms. We have a range of partnership opportunities available for any organisation that wants to expose it’s brand, experience exclusive networking opportunities with our speakers or position themselves a thought leaders, I’m always willing and able to discuss in more detail if you contact me on my email address below.

I look forward to seeing you all at one of our conferences in the near future.

**Best wishes,  
Keith**

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# From the Keynotes



**Councillor  
Judith Blake**

Leader, Leeds City Council

[@LeedsCC\\_News](#)



## LEEDS LEADER URGES REVIEW TO SHIFT FROM ‘OBSESSION’ WITH SPEED

The review of HS2 should rule out only building the line as far as Birmingham, the leader of Leeds City council has urged.

Cllr Judith Blake told delegates that she is “very concerned” that the terms of reference of the exercise, which is headed by HS2 Ltd’s former chair Douglas Oakervee, contains an option for building phase one from London to Birmingham only.

“We want to make sure the review rules out that option and delivers fully to Manchester and beyond,” she said during the opening keynote speech at Built Environment Networking’s HS2 conference.

**THE EVIDENCE FOR THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL BENEFITS OF HS2 ARE CLEAR. IT WILL HELP TO REBALANCE THE UK, PUMP BILLIONS OF POUNDS OF INVESTMENT INTO THE ECONOMY AND WILL PAY FOR ITSELF MANY TIMES OVER IN TERMS OF INCREASED PRODUCTIVITY.**

The leader of Leeds City Council said that HS2 and NPR are both vital for reducing congestion on the North’s rail network, which sees more than 40% of passengers using Trans Pennine services via Leeds having to stand at the busiest time of the day.

She added that Leeds station is already the busiest station in the North, with projections suggesting that it will be handling more passengers than King’s Cross by 2023.

HS2 will be a “catalyst” for accelerating progress on the Leeds South Bank, where the regeneration of 250 ha is due to deliver 35,000 jobs and at least 8,000 homes. Cllr Blake said: “Many property schemes depend on HS2 going ahead: we can’t be put in a position where another big infrastructure scheme is cancelled.”

The review of HS2 also offers an opportunity to refocus attention away from the “obsession” about speed onto the wider

social and economic benefits that it will deliver, she said.

Cllr Blake told delegates that she welcomed the review into the project:

**SCRUTINY OF A PROJECT OF THIS SIZE IS IMPORTANT: WE ALL NEED TO MAKE SURE WE ARE LOOKING AT EVERY SINGLE DETAIL AND UNDERSTAND ITS IMPACT.**

“We should use the review as an opportunity to move away from the obsession with the improved speed it will bring. Clearly it is an important aspect, but it has overshadowed the impact on the economy and the climate change as well as the social benefits it will bring, unleashing the pent-up potential of places like Leeds.”

She said the council remains a firm backer of HS2, which it wants to see “delivered as rapidly as possible”.



**Richard George**

Independent Railway Expert, Sponsored by Atkins

[@atkinsglobal](#)

**ATKINS**

Member of the SNC-Lavalin Group

## “ANTIQUATED” RAIL NETWORK BLAMED FOR 2018 TIMETABLE NIGHTMARES

The “antiquated” nature of the North’s rail infrastructure was the root cause of last year’s botched new regional timetable introduction, according to the independent expert appointed to oversee improvements to the train network.

Richard George, who is also group managing director of SNC Lavalin’s Rail and Transit business, told the conference that the region’s rail services are relying on infrastructure built during the Industrial Revolution. He said:

**THE NORTH CURRENTLY HAS A RAILWAY THAT IS FUNDAMENTALLY ANTIQUATED. IT IS BASICALLY VICTORIAN ERA INFRASTRUCTURE NOW NEEDING TO BE CONVERTED INTO SOMETHING MORE MODERN.**

“We’ve spent the last 60 years since Beeching stripping the stuffing out of the railway,” George said, referring to the controversial post war government report that led to the closure of much of the rail network.

“It’s going to be difficult. Pushing new rolling stock and services onto a system that was not ready for change has proved very difficult and was fundamentally at the root of the 2018 timetable problems,” he said, referring to the severe disruption to services following a revamp of northern rail timetables last year.

And both HS2 and the region’s existing infrastructure require improvements, George said:

**TURNING THIS INTO A ROBUST AND WELL-CONNECTED DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM THAT TAKES ADVANTAGE OF HS2 IS VITAL.**

“We have to improve connectivity, but we won’t do that unless the system around it improves.

“Making the railways around HS2 fit for purpose is going to be key” he said, adding that the new high-speed line will have to be integrated with existing development and transport plans.

But HS2 is “unquestionably a good thing, George said: “Like many great projects there are arguments about economics.

“One day people will be wondering why anyone ever doubted that it was the right thing to do.

**WE HAVE TO SEIZE THE OPPORTUNITIES AND ENSURE THE ECONOMIC BENEFITS ARE MAXIMISED IN THE NORTH.**



# Leeds – Developing for the arrival of HS2

## Panel Members:



**Chair: Simon Toplass**

Chief Executive, PAGABO

[@Pagabo\\_](#)



**Lynda Shillaw**

Group Property Director, Town Centre Securities

[@TCS\\_PL](#)



**Tom Riordan**

Chief Executive, Leeds City Council

[@LeedsCC\\_News](#)



**Lorna Pimlott**

Director of Sponsorship and Policy Phase 2, HS2 Ltd

[@HS2Ltd](#)



**Professor Peter Woodward**

Chair of High-Speed Rail, University of Leeds

[@UniversityLeeds](#)



**Liz Hunter**

Head of Transport Policy, West Yorkshire Combined Authority

[@WestYorkshireCA](#)



**Richard Gregory**

Senior Advisor and Honorary Yorkshire Bank Chair, CYBG

[@cybgplc](#)

## LEEDS CHIEF CHALLENGES HS2 CRITICS TO DEVELOP BETTER CURE FOR NORTH-SOUTH DIVIDE

The chief executive of Leeds City Council has thrown down the gauntlet to HS2's critics to come up with a better solution for tackling the North-South divide.

Referring to the history of failed attempts to overcome regional inequalities, Tom Riordan said: "If you want something that is going to stabilise the economy and give certainty in a period when we have uncertainty in the national picture, why ditch this project that is nailed on to provide huge numbers of construction and supply chain jobs? If you don't do HS2 what is the solution?"

Boosting the North of England is important to prevent London's economy from overheating, he said:

**LONDON NEEDS HS2 BECAUSE IT NEEDS THE NORTH TO PUNCH ITS WEIGHT.**

"London may be the world's financial capital but it's overheating and needs the rest of us," he said, adding that Leeds is holding an event with the London Borough of Camden to explore synergies between the two places that lie at opposite ends of the proposed HS2 route.

HS2 also provides an opportunity to improve rail connectivity within England's regions, which is often worse than that between the core cities and London, Riordan said: "The rail network was built to serve London and that's the way it has developed over generations: now we have the opportunity to correct some of those challenges in connecting up the midlands and the North." And Riordan told delegates that supporters of the high-speed rail project should not be afraid of the Oakervee review, announced by transport secretary of state Grant Shapps in August.

He said: "This review is a really good opportunity to nail down the true costs of the project and not allow that to be a running sore: we should embrace that and make the case that's needed.

**IT'S REALLY IMPORTANT THAT THE COUNTRY HAS CONFIDENCE ABOUT WHAT THIS PROJECT IS GOING TO COST AND THE TIMESCALE.**

Richard Gregory, honorary chair of Yorkshire Bank, expressed hope that the Oakervee review would take a wider-angled view of the HS2 than the Green Book process used by the Treasury for vetting infrastructure projects.

"I hope that the economic justifications for HS2 don't just confine themselves to what the Green Book dictates but capture all the different benefits and regeneration opportunities that HS2 will be able to deliver.



**I HOPE THE REVIEW WILL ADDRESS BUDGET OVERRUNS, COME UP WITH A FINAL BILL AND SAY HS2 IS THE RIGHT THING TO GO AHEAD WITH AND INVEST IN.**

Gregory, who is also a senior advisor at start-up bank CYGB, said the potential reductions in travel times would support firms' efforts to attract new and retain existing staff.

It would also help companies to access new specialised pools of staff, like those possessing the digital and technical knowledge that banks increasingly rely on, he said: "Accessing those sources of talent will be crucial: not all core cities contain the specialist skills that future industries will require so accessing those skills is fundamental to business development."

Accessing a wider labour pool is crucial for occupiers, Lynda Shillaw, group property director at Town Centre Securities (TSC), agreed.

"The individual city isn't big enough to provide skill pools for major occupiers coming in therefore people need to be able to get between major cities as frequently and reliably as they can," she said, pointing out that people earning under £20,000 per annum won't generally commute longer than 25 minutes.

She revealed that TSC is about to kick off phase two of 2 Whitehall Riverside, where it has planning consent for around 167,000 sq ft of office buildings and car parking on a 4.5-acre site next to Leeds mainline station.

Peter Woodward, chair of high-speed rail engineering at Leeds University, showcased the development of its new high-speed rail institute, which will incorporate the world's first full-scale high-speed track and vehicle test facility. He described the facility, which can simulate track anywhere in the world, as a "giant leap forward in testing capability."

Liz Hunter, head of transport policy at the West Yorkshire Combined Authority; said that the body is looking at development growth corridors for onward journeys from the HS2 terminal at Leeds.

The authority is looking forward to further work by Transport for the North, she said: "We shouldn't lose sight of how projects can fit into existing networks."

Lorna Pimlott, sponsorship director for Phase 2 of HS2 Ltd, said:

**THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT HS2 WILL PROVIDE THE FOUNDATIONS FOR WHAT NORTHERN POWERHOUSE RAIL WILL DELIVER.**



# Conference Photos



# London; An update on Progress

## Panel Members:



**Chair: Phil Laycock**

Phil Laycock, Director, Built Environment Networking  
@BENetworking



**Bek Seeley**

Commercial Finance Director, Lendlease  
@Lendleaseuk



**Mark Witham**

Head of Commercial Development, HS2 Ltd  
@HS2Ltd

Plans to upgrade Euston Station to house the HS2 terminal are necessary in order to prevent the existing station from becoming dangerously overcrowded, the conference's London session was warned.

Mark Witham, head of commercial development at HS2 Ltd, told delegates that the classic station is over capacity by about three-fold.

"It needs the HS2 station to open in order to keep a good service going while the 1960s station is redeveloped," he said.

**IF HS2 DIDN'T PROCEED AT EUSTON THERE IS A PROBLEM FOR NETWORK RAIL ABOUT REDEVELOPING EUSTON WHILE KEEPING LONDON MOVING.**

Witham also predicted that there is unlikely to be much progress on Crossrail 2, which is designed to create a new route between North East and south west London, for another three to five years.

He said: "Until you see Crossrail 1 you won't see the benefits. Views will change as time goes on but as things stand today it's a difficult one to put forward."



When quizzed on the lessons learnt from previous showpiece rail projects, like St Pancras and HS1, Witham said: "HS1 had a rough passage. We've learnt the lesson that you have to be quite resilient."

"You need to get somebody like Lendlease on board with a long-term view and a strategic vision," he said referring to HS2's development partner at Euston.

But he said that a big difference between the plans for the HS2 terminal and St Pancras is that the new station will feature over-platform development.

Responding to the same question, Bek Seeley, chief operating officer at Lendlease, said:

**WHAT HAS ENABLED KING'S CROSS TO BE SUCCESSFUL IS BEING CLEAR ABOUT THE RAIL SOLUTION YOU ARE ULTIMATELY GOING TO DO.**





## COLLABORATING IN LONDON TO REDUCE HOMELESSNESS

CSJv is working on the High Speed Two (HS2) Enabling Works, where they are taking an innovative and collaborative approach to reduce homelessness. Head of Legacy, Louise Dailly, shares her team's holistic approach to tackling homelessness and leaving a positive legacy.

Homelessness is a growing problem across England, with major cities such as London, Birmingham and Manchester all having the highest figures recorded. Across England, rough sleeping has increased by 165% in the past eight years according to government figures, with around 3,500 people sleeping on the streets in London between October and December 2018; an increase of 18% year on year.

Nearly 650 homeless people have died in London alone over the last five years. With the life expectancy of rough sleepers at around 44 years for men and 42 years for women, this situation has become a real concern for Costain Skanska joint venture (CSJv).

CSJv is working on the High Speed Two (HS2) Enabling Works programme in London, covering two boroughs with the highest homeless figures, Camden and Westminster.

Over the course of the programme, HS2 will create around 30,000 new job opportunities across the route between London and Birmingham and will require a wide range of skills and experience to support these roles, ranging from relatively low skilled roles to professional occupations.



Bringing together our supply chain and charity partners in the area, CSJv continue to be committed to supporting people experiencing homelessness into sustainable jobs and careers on HS2. Partnering with Centre Point and local homeless charity in Camden, C4WS, CSJv continues to support the training of individuals and offers placements and job opportunities on the programme.

**IT IS CRUCIAL FOR OUR INDUSTRY, AND FOR SOCIETY AS A WHOLE, THAT WE ENCOURAGE AND ASSIST PEOPLE FROM DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS TO WORK WITH US. WE BELIEVE OUR WORK IMPROVES PEOPLE'S LIVES BY PROVIDING AND IMPROVING VITAL INFRASTRUCTURE. HOWEVER, WE MUST NOT FORGET OUR WIDER CONTRIBUTION THAT IS REQUIRED TO IMPROVE THE LIVES OF THOSE THAT ARE FINDING DIFFICULTY, FOR WHATEVER REASON, TO FIND THEM EMPLOYMENT THAT CHALLENGES THEM AND ALLOWS THEM TO GROW**

Peter Jones, HS2 Enabling Works Programme Director, CSJv.

CSJv and its supply chain have been working closely with local homeless charities to offer roles to those people who are ready to enter into full time employment. Since January 2019, the programme has helped five people into full time employment, including Nahom who is currently working for Danny Sullivan, a tier 2 contractor on the HS2 Enabling Works.

Originally from Eritrea, Nahom found his life completely changed when he came to the UK. When he struggled to find work and subsequently was unable to find a place to stay, Nahom got in touch with C4WS to seek help. C4WS provided him with advice and skills, and put him in contact with Danny Sullivan who were able to offer him a role as General Operative.

**MY LIFE WAS STRESSFUL. I HAD NO WORK AND I WAS UNDER JOB CENTRE PLUS. NOW HS2 HAS CHANGED MY LIFE BY PROVIDING ME WITH WORK. I AM NOW SAVING FOR MY FIRST HOLIDAY**

Nahom, General Operative at Danny Sullivan



### GOING BACK TO BASICS

Employment is a big factor when it comes to supporting homeless people to get back on their feet, however CSJv recognises that that is just one part of their journey into a better life. Together with St Mungo's, CSJv provided accommodation for 26 people in the first ever floating homeless hub on a construction site. Situated on one of our Camden sites, CSJv transformed an empty building into a homeless shelter and welfare facility for those in need.

The shelter ran over a three-week period, giving the charity time to get to know those that using the service, and helping to find them permanent accommodation and any other support they may need. During that time, St Mungos identified a missing person and was able to reunite her with her family which shows how important taking the time to dedicate to people is, and using all resources available to do what we can.

Saskia Prichard, Floating Hub Manager for St Mungo's praised the effectiveness of this collaborative and joined up strategy.

**THIS EXPERIENCE HAS DEFINITELY HAD AN IMPACT ON MY VIEW OF HOW INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS COULD SUPPORT THE COMMUNITY. THE BUILDING PROVIDED TO US BY CSJV REQUIRED US ALL TO WORK TOGETHER TO CREATE THE HOMELESS HUB, HOWEVER THROUGH JOINT PARTNERSHIP IT SHOWS HOW ORGANISATIONS FROM DIFFERENT SECTORS CAN WORK TOGETHER TO ACHIEVE GREAT OUTCOMES. IT'S REFRESHING TO SEE ORGANISATIONS THINKING CREATIVELY IN WAYS THAT HELP THE LOCAL COMMUNITIES THEY WORK IN, WHICH DOESN'T JUST INVOLVE DONATING MONEY BUT LOOKING**

**AT RESOURCES THEY HAVE AVAILABLE AND WORKING WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS TO DELIVER POSITIVE OUTCOMES.**

### HOW CAN OTHER CITIES SUPPORT HOMELESSNESS?

This new, unique approach to supporting homelessness is a model that can be replicated up and down the country to help people off the street and into sustainable employment. It creates additional social value to the communities we support which in turn has a positive impact on local councils' resources. In major urban areas similar to London such as Birmingham, Leeds and Manchester, the potential for using similar resources and partnerships is great.

Tackling homelessness is a huge undertaking, one that can't be achieved by one organisation overnight. We have all walked passed people sleeping or begging on the streets. It can be hard to imagine how that person ended up there. However, sleeping on the street is only part of the problem. Homelessness doesn't stop there, it also includes displaced people who have been displaced, kicked out or moved on. It includes the 'hidden homeless' who sofa surf, stay at friends' houses 'just for a couple of nights' or sleeping in hostels. It's not always immediately visible, but it is just as real.

Many organisations shy away from supporting vulnerable groups, not because they don't want to, but because they don't know where to start. It is daunting knowing how to support in ways other than fundraising, but by linking with local organisations, hostels and charities that understand these issues and deal with them first hand, we can make a real difference in the cities we work in.

It is essential that contractors support the social sustainability of the communities we work in to ensure we can deliver additional social value and bring benefits which truly benefit the communities around our project sites. This model demonstrates that through developing the right partnerships, we can support the most vulnerable to achieve a more positive future.



# The West Midlands is ready for HS2

## Panel Members:



**Katie Trout**

Executive Director,  
Greater Birmingham  
& Solihull LEP

@GBSLEP



**Maria Machancoses**

Director, Midlands  
Connect

@MidsConnect



**Tony Williamson**

Group Operations  
Director, NEC Group

@thenecgroup



**Jonathan Bretherton**

Managing Director,  
Urban Growth  
Company

@UGCSolihull

## BORIS JOHNSON BRANDED HS2 AXE AS 'POLITICAL SUICIDE'

Boris Johnson admitted that cancelling HS2 would be 'political suicide' at a meeting just days before he became prime minister, according to a leading West Midlands businessman.

Steve Hollis, chair of the West Midlands HS2 Growth Delivery Board, told the conference's West Midlands panel that he and the conurbation's elected mayor Andy Street had met Johnson a few days before he was elected as the party's leader by Conservative members to discuss the project.

### HE SAID IT WOULD BE POLITICAL SUICIDE TO CANCEL HS2

he said.

HS2 is crucial to the economic success of the whole UK as well as his own region, Hollis said: "I cannot see how we can continue to deliver the level of activity that HS2 has already delivered. There's no way that flight trajectory can continue unless we have HS2: it's as simple as that.

"We are kidding ourselves unless we can create modern infrastructure, it will not work. This is not only critical to the Midlands. If we are serious about rebalancing the economy, we need to get our digits out and get that fixed.

"My fear is that if Doug and his report result in something we don't want to hear, it's going to set us back in the Midlands and this country for decades.

**THE INTERNATIONAL AUDIENCE IS LOOKING AT THIS COUNTRY: HS2 IS A HUGE VOTE OF CONFIDENCE BY THE GOVERNMENT THAT WE ARE OPEN FOR BUSINESS**

he said, adding that the project had already helped to increase the region's attractiveness to overseas investors.

And Hollis, who is a former chairman of Aston Villa FC, expressed concerns that any delay to the project will be more protracted than the three years suggested by HS2 chairman Allan Cook in the report that he had presented to transport secretary Grant Shapps.

"If there is a plan to slow this down, I would suspect that it won't as be as straightforward as three years."

Jonathan Bretherton, managing director of the Urban Growth Company which is spearheading development around the mooted HS2 Birmingham International Station, urged Johnson to have the "courage of convictions", pointing to the new prime minister's past track record of support for large infrastructure projects.

Maria Machancoses, programme director of Midlands Connect, agreed with Hollis that investors would take a dim view if HS2 is held up.



**Ben Gray**

Project Director,  
Arden Cross



**Steve Hollis**

Chair, West Midlands  
HS2 Growth Delivery  
Board

@WestMids\_CA



**Tom Wilne**

West Midlands  
Project Director,  
HS2 Ltd

@HS2Ltd



"Business tells us that delay is not helpful. Let's make it happen and keep that momentum, we don't want it to slow down."

She said that capacity released on the existing rail network by HS2 will create space for an additional 5,000 more seats in and around Birmingham every day.

Machancoses added that Midlands Connect has plans to double the hourly operation of trains to Birmingham International Station from Solihull, Leamington, Banbury and Reading.

Ben Gray, project director of the Arden Cross, said that cutting the surface car parking from the levels proposed in HS2's



masterplan for Birmingham International could double the amount of floorspace that can be delivered at the site.

He said that Arden Cross is using a development appraisal to examine how cutting the number of surface car parking from the current number of 7,400 spaces could increase the development area from 33 ha to 66 ha.

Tony Williamson, group operations director at the NEC Group told the event that its 2030 masterplan had already "massively" changed as a result of HS2.

The NEC will be developing its estate for more business, retail and leisure in order to capitalise on HS2, he said:

**IT'S BEEN A HEADACHE BUT A GOOD ONE AND CAUSED US TO THINK BIGGER AND IN A MORE INNOVATIVE WAY.**

The conference also heard that the proposed station at Curzon Street, which is about half a km long to accommodate HS2's 440m long trains, will be bisected in order to improve connectivity in the surrounding neighbourhood.

Tom Wilne, West Midlands project director for HS2 Ltd, said: "We need to make sure we don't build a wall, which would cut off that part of Birmingham so we will have lot of walking and cycling routes through."



# The importance of connecting the Midlands



**Maria Machancoses**

Director, Midlands Connect

[@MidsConnect](#)

HS2 is all about giving people choice. That's what good infrastructure does. It's what led me to make life-defining decisions, like the ones I took 23 years ago which brought me to the UK to make the Midlands my home. They have led me here, leading a Sub-national Transport Body and arguing with all my might for HS2 to be delivered in full.

Then and now, connectivity continues to influence my life choices in a big way, the same way it does for millions of other people every day.

This is what HS2 offers the next generation. It means that living, learning and staying in the Midlands will be a better choice for millions of young people both in this country and abroad.

Our towns and cities are already affordable, enjoyable, culturally-rich places to live.

Because of HS2, massive redevelopment around Birmingham Curzon Street, at Interchange in Solihull and Toton in the East Midlands will mean there are even more brilliantly connected places for people to live, work and play.

It will bring the same benefits for the North too, for cities like Leeds, allowing more talent to flow from the crowded capital to the UK's regions.

But HS2 is about more than just the places with dedicated stations. The Midlands is ready for HS2, but we need the support of government to spread the benefits as widely and as soon as possible. Midlands Connect is working hard to ensure the high-speed network is plugged into the existing network.

For example, 60 locations across the region will benefit from Midlands Engine Rail, our £3.5 billion improvement plan to revolutionise the region's rail network, through faster, more frequent or new direct services. The seven projects within the portfolio either utilise capacity released by HS2, uses actual HS2

infrastructure, or is underpinned by connectivity to HS2 stations.

We are making sure that towns and cities that may never see an HS2 train still see the benefits in their existing train journeys, reducing the crowding that plagues rush hour commutes, and the delays and cancellations caused by the limitations of our Victorian infrastructure.

The Oakervee Review has given all supporters of HS2 the opportunity to reflect on exactly why high-speed rail is so important to the future of our country. It's galvanised us all again to make our case that bit more strongly and leave the government in no doubt about our position, or the catastrophic impact that scaling back or, worse still, cancelling HS2 would have on our communities.

My hope is that 20 years from now, when there's a young person faced with the choice I was all those years ago, that they choose the Midlands, encouraged by their ability to reach friends and family on dramatically improved high speed or existing rail networks.

HS2 isn't really about the new trains, stations, office blocks and homes it will provide. It's about the millions of people who benefit from that infrastructure, and the many millions more whose existing rail journey will be that bit more reliable, less crowded and more frequent as a result of the extra capacity HS2 provides.

HS2 will give all those people more choice, a brighter future, and life-defining opportunities.

Midlands Connect will do all it can, and I will personally see to it that as many people as possible can reach HS2 from across the Midlands.

Inspiring leaders across the Midlands and the North of England are doing the same thing.

Let's work together to make it happen.



# East Midlands – Connecting the South with the North

## Panel Members:



**Chair: Phil Laycock**

Phil Laycock, Director, Built Environment Networking  
@BENetworking



**Cllr Kay Cutts**

Chair, Toton Delivery Board  
@NottsCC



**Paul Morris**

Director, St James Securities  
@StJamesSecLtd

## BUILD LEEDS AND MANCHESTER HS2 LEGS TOGETHER, NOTTS LEADER URGES

The last two legs of HS2 should be developed in tandem rather than one after the other, the leader of Nottinghamshire County Council told the East Midlands session.

Cllr Kay Cutts, who also chairs the delivery board for the development planned around the proposed East Midlands Hub station at Toton, called for the Manchester and Leeds legs of the line to be developed in tandem rather than sequentially as HS2 currently plans.

“Let’s start both of the lines into the Midlands together and do them in parallel.

“This is the opportunity. Let’s join together and stop arguing about which bit is more important than the other.

**THIS ISN’T A COMPETITION BETWEEN US. THIS IS ABOUT GETTING INVESTMENT INTO THE COUNTRY, THIS IS ABOUT MAKING OUR COUNTRY A BETTER PLACE.**

“It’s about time to lift our heads above the parapet. We need the government, and they need us.”

Recalling how the bouncing bomb used by the ‘Dambusters’ had been developed rapidly, the Nottinghamshire County Council leader said: “We have to get on and not find ways of stopping ourselves: all these things can happen as long as you have a will to do it.” And Cllr Cutts insisted that progress on the Toton project had not been derailed by the wider uncertainty surrounding the government. She said:

**NO-ONE IS TAKING THEIR EYES OFF THE BALL AT TOTON: WE HAVE GOT ON WITH THE WORK**

Andrew Pritchard, director of policy & infrastructure at the East Midlands Councils umbrella group, said that work had already begun to prepare the ground for the new station at Toton.

The plans to route both HS2 and conventional rail services through the hub station opens up scope for new links between the East Midlands and both the North East and the Oxford to Cambridge Arc, he said: “This has the ability to transform the economic geography of Britain.”



**Leonie Dubois**

Head of Consultation and Engagement – Phase B, HS2 Ltd  
@HS2Ltd



**Professor Nigel Wright**

Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Nottingham Trent University  
@TrentUni



**Andrew Pritchard**

Director of Policy and Infrastructure, East Midlands Councils  
@EMCouncils

Pritchard told delegates that the HS2 station’s proposed connections to surrounding centres included an extension of Nottingham’s tram network that will terminate nearby.

This and other connections would help integrate HS2 into plans to upgrade rail services between the East and West Midlands, he said:

**YOU START TO MAXIMISE THE BENEFITS BY INTEGRATING IT MORE FULLY INTO EXISTING RAIL. LET’S GET ON WITH IT.**

Pritchard also defended the hub station’s out of town location on the grounds that it reflects the relatively dispersed urban geography of the East Midlands, which is not dominated by a single city, unlike other conurbations like West Yorkshire and Greater Manchester.

Leonie Dubois, head of consultation and engagement for phase 2B, agreed that Toton had been chosen to serve the wider East Midlands rather than individual cities like Derby or Nottingham.

She also said that HS2 is working “incredibly closely” with Northern Powerhouse Rail and Midlands Connect on their plans. But the delivery of HS2 should not be bundled up with other rail projects, she warned.

Responding to a question suggesting that the delivery of HS2 should be integrated into these projects, she said: “If you try and tie everything together it becomes too big and becomes impossible to manage.

“We shouldn’t lose sight if we try and do too much in one go,” she said, noting that the hybrid bill for phase two of the line had been the biggest ever presented to Parliament.

Paul Morris, director of Leeds-based developer St James Securities; said it “would be nice to start” the line in his home city and build southwards, partly in order to demonstrate to people living along the route that the project is delivering benefits.

**WE NEED TO SEE ACTION AND THAT WE ARE GOING TO GET ON WITH IT**

he said, adding that the UK is “rubbish” at building large infrastructure because of its tendency to “prevaricate”.

Morris also outlined progress on the company’s Becketwell development, which covers six acres, comprising 3.5% of the total land area within Derby’s core ring road.

The scheme is designed to claw back some of the commercial and retail activity, which has been attracted out of town to Pride Park and the Intu shopping mall on the edge of the city centre. He said that St James has submitted a hybrid application for the site where it is planning to create a new urban quarter, including 310 build to rent apartments that will be focused around a new civic square.

Previous plans for the site, which has blighted the surrounding part of Derby city centre for several years, included an indoor ice rink, which Morris described as “the worst idea you could have” in terms of regeneration.

Prof Nigel Wright, deputy vice-chancellor at Nottingham Trent University, told delegates about plans for a high value ‘Innovation Campus’, which will create 11,000 jobs, at Toton.



# The North West – Developing for the arrival of HS2 and NPR

## Panel Members:



**Chair: Gregg Barton**

Account Leader,  
Mott MacDonald  
@MottMacDonald



**Tim Smart**

Phase Two Managing  
Director, HS2 Ltd  
@HS2Ltd



**Sir Richard Leese**

Leader, Manchester  
City Council  
@ManCityCouncil



**Rob Valentine**

Director, Bruntwood  
@Bruntwood\_UK



**Annette McDonald**

Deputy Managing Director,  
Tatton Group  
@TattonGroup

## ‘NO EXCUSE’ FOR SECOND CLASS MANCHESTER TERMINUS, SAYS COUNCIL LEADER

There is “no excuse” for the North of England not to have the same high standard of rail projects recently seen in London, Manchester City Council’s leader has said.

Cllr Richard Leese told the HS2 conference’s North West session that the HS2 upgrade of Manchester’s Piccadilly should be of a similar grade to the work carried out to improve London Bridge and St Pancras stations in the capital.

“There’s no excuse why the North of England shouldn’t have the same sort of quality,” he said.

**THERE’S NO EXCUSE FOR DOING SECOND BEST AT PICCADILLY BECAUSE IF WE DO, WE WILL BE PAYING THE PRICE FOR 100 YEARS OR MORE.**

And Cllr Leese warned that Manchester’s growth prospects would suffer if HS2 did not come to the city.

HS2 can generate 40,000 jobs. If we don’t have HS2, we will not have that rate of growth. I’m sure that Manchester will continue to grow successfully but we simply won’t have that rate of growth if it does not have that improved connectivity and capacity linking to Leeds and Liverpool and down to London.

And the UK as a whole would benefit from the project, he said: “If we are really serious about being a first-class nation, we need some first-class high performing infrastructure to go with it. HS2 is part of how we deliver that.”

Pointing to estimates that HS2 would benefit Greater Manchester’s GVA to the tune of £6bn, which would result

in knock on boosts to tax revenues, Cllr Leese said: “The exchequer will quickly realise that whatever HS2 will cost over its lifetime it will more than easily pay for itself.”

But northerners should be “very angry” about the failure to deliver much-needed improvements to the existing network, he said: “The Trans Pennine upgrade was supposed to be complete by this year and it hasn’t ever been started. HS2 and NPR are really important, but we need improvements now: things that should be happening now and in the next couple of years.”

These include two new platforms at Piccadilly, describing those at 13 and 14 as “probably two of the “most overcrowded in the country” and “dangerous”.

Cllr Leese also said the platforms at Oxford Road station must be lengthened in order to accommodate the bigger trains serving the station, while improvements are required at Ordsall junction and around Stalybridge to reduce congestion on Manchester’s wider rail network.



He added that Piccadilly’s position at the middle of the North of England’s rail network means that it was important for authorities across the rest of the region to develop strategy for the station.

This includes improvements to Trans Pennine freight routes. It is “absolutely ridiculous” that moving freight from Liverpool to Hull by rail requires going either via Scotland or the south midlands, Cllr Leese said:

**WE NEED TO THINK IN MULTI-MODAL TERMS AND TO GET THAT FREIGHT OFF THE ROAD AND ONTO RAILWAYS.**

Investment is also required in services between Manchester city centre and surrounding commuter towns, which should not be dismissed, he said: “Towns with lots of commuters tend to have more inclusive economies and start-ups. If you look around, the places that have been doing the best are small towns and cities around London with the highest rates of commuters.”

Annette McDonald, deputy managing director of the Tatton Group; expressed concern that the planning of HS2’s phase B between Birmingham and Manchester did not take into account the surrounding area’s growth needs.

She said: “While transport projects’ ultimate objective has to be growth, we see no plan for growth.”

She said that £2.5bn worth of economic benefits could be unlocked by developing the Manchester airport growth corridors, but there are currently no plans to link into the new railway.

Rob Valentine, a director at developer Bruntwood, said the need for greater rail investment is “undeniable”, adding that the existing state of the North’s rail network is “absolutely shocking”.

“We have a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to get it right. If we get it right as can be seen at St Pancras, it can attract long-term investment that can transform cities.”

Tim Smart, Phase Two Managing Director of HS2 Ltd said large infrastructure projects had always been plagued by issues surrounding affordability, pointing to the Jubilee Line and Channel Tunnel.

**BIG INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS BOLD DECISIONS. WE’RE CONVINCED THAT THE COUNTRY NEEDS HS2 AND NPR AND NEEDS THEM TOGETHER.**



# Sheffield – The Steel City & HS2's Impact

## Panel Members:



**Chair:**  
**Harriet Chapman**

Director of Transport,  
PBA now part of Stantec  
@PeterBrettLLP



**Ben Morgan**

Director, AMRC  
@AMRC



**Rt Hon.**  
**Richard Caborn**

Chief Executive, Sheffield  
Olympic Legacy Park  
@OLPSheffield



**Iain Thomson**

Head of Investor Relations  
and Communications,  
Harworth Group  
@HarworthGroup



**Liam Brooker**

Project Sponsor – Phase 2b,  
HS2 Ltd  
@HS2Ltd

## EX-OLYMPICS MINISTER URGES HS2 TO GRASP COST INCREASE NETTLE

HS2 must learn the lesson from the 2012 Olympics that it is important to grasp the nettle about cost increases, according to one of the ex-ministers at the heart of London's winning bid.

Richard Caborn, Minister of Sport when London submitted its successful bid in the early Noughties, said that the Games budget had increased from £2.4bn at the bid's outset to £9.3bn.

Referring to the HS2 Ltd's admission that that costs will rise from the original budget of £56bn, he said: "Even though it will get headlines and they won't be that favourable, sometimes you have to grasp the nettle and be absolutely realistic.

"When embarking on a project of this size and magnitude and with an impact on all our lives and many generations to come, you need realism, honesty and to say to the public this is in your interest because it is in the nation's interest. It's a major step to addressing the North-South divide.

**TO SLOW DOWN OR CANCEL HS2 WILL BE THE BIGGEST VOTE OF NO CONFIDENCE IN THE NORTH OF ENGLAND THAT ANY GOVERNMENT COULD CREATE. IT IS IMPORTANT THAT THE MESSAGE IS SENT OUT LOUD AND CLEAR.**

But the former Sheffield MP said another lesson from the Olympics was that the private companies delivering HS2 should be subject to a tough performance regime.

"Broadly speaking the private sector will deliver but if it doesn't, it will get penalised and very heavily.

**IF THEY DON'T DELIVER, THEY WILL PAY THE PRICE FOR IT AND PAY HEAVILY INDEED. THE OLYMPICS CAME IN ON TIME AND BUDGET, WHICH IS THE TYPE OF DISCIPLINE YOU NEED ON THESE BIG PROJECTS.**

Caborn told delegates that HS2 is "integral" to plans for Sheffield's Olympic Legacy Park, which he is project lead on, because it will help to address the city's traditional poor connections with London and the Midlands.



The park aims to deliver 1 million sq ft of new health and well-being related employment floor space, bringing in £200m of private sector investment and boosting the GVA of the Sheffield economy to the tune of £1.7bn by 2042.

The private sector capital investment, which includes a £50m Centre for Child Health Technology, would help to deliver 3,500 jobs by 2030, he said.

The project also includes more than 500 new homes.

But Caborn pleaded with HS2 to ensure that the new line's rolling stock is designed and manufactured in the UK.

"If we can do it with Boeing, we should be able to do it with trains," he said, referring to the aerospace giant's decision to tap Sheffield's capability in high-value manufacturing by locating its new wing flap factory at the South Yorkshire AMRC.

Ben Morgan, director of the AMRC, said there is "no question" that the UK should be building this rolling stock, pointing to research showing that three quarters of the tunnelling equipment being used worldwide could be manufactured in the UK.

Iain Thomson, head of investor relations and communications at Harworth Group, called for better use to be made of the

region's rail connected sites in order to relieve pressure on the North's congested road network. He said better use of these sites could take pressure off through movement of goods to ports and other key locations, including SIRFT.

Thomson said that most of the region's existing rail infrastructure dates to the Victorian era. But he said HS2 would increase the number of rail-connected sites that could be made available for rail, 16 of which Harworth owns, including the former Kellingley Colliery.

But only two of its rail-connected sites are currently operational, Thomson said: "More needs to be done to get these back into use and promoted to national and international occupiers.

**WE OUGHT TO BE MAXIMISING THE POTENTIAL OF THOSE SITES AND FOR GOVERNMENT TO SUPPORT AS MANY OF THOSE SITES BEING BROUGHT FORWARD AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.**

The company's sites include Harworth & Evans' Gateway 45 Leeds, which has been selected as the location for HS2's rolling stock depot.

In addition, a ten-acre plot at the Gateway 45 Leeds development has been bought by the University of Leeds for a new engineering and technology campus specialising in high speed rail research and development.

The campus, which received planning permission in March 2019, will feature the Institute for High Speed Rail and System Integration, showcased earlier during the HS2 conference's Leeds session.

The AMRC's Morgan said that the delay caused by the Oakervee review provided an opportunity to take stock of the project and examine the scope for how innovation and different technologies that have yet to be explored could benefit the project.



# Northern Powerhouse Rail

## Panel Members:



**Chair: Tom Meacock**

Tom Meacock, Client Director, Strategic Rail, Atkins

[@atkinsglobal](#)



**Joanne Hyde**

Strategic Director Corporate Services, Bradford City Council

[@bradfordmdc](#)



**Henri Murison**

Director, Northern Powerhouse Partnership

[@NP\\_Partnership](#)



**Andrew Cobden**

Managing Director, Vastint

[@vastintuk](#)



**Cllr Martin Gannon**

Transport Lead, North East Combined Authority

[@NorthEastCA](#)



**Conrad Jones**

Area Manager Phase 2b, HS2 Ltd

[@HS2Ltd](#)

## POLITICIANS WARNED THAT NORTH WILL BE KEY IN UPCOMING ELECTION

Whoever wins the upcoming general election will have to take northern concerns seriously, the conference was told.

Henri Murison, director of the Northern Powerhouse Partnership (NPP), told the Northern Powerhouse Rail session that he had “never known” as much unanimity of political leadership across the North despite the cuts that the region’s councils have suffered in recent years.

And arguments about rebalancing the country have never resonated so strongly across the political spectrum, he added.

This unanimity has been “very persuasive” on the government, Murison said: “Whoever is prime minister it’s becoming non-negotiable. Whoever runs this country is going to have to make a deal with the North about what the North needs because otherwise they won’t get the job or keep it very long. That political reality has certainly dawned.”

And northern decision makers must have greater control of the purse strings over areas like transport and skills, he said: “Better use of money already being spent is as important as getting more investment.”

**WE NEED A TRANSFER OF POWER AND RESOURCES FROM WHITEHALL TO THE NORTH: WE NEED TO SEE NORTHERN POWERHOUSE RAIL GENUINELY BEING A RESPONSIBILITY OF OUR NORTHERN CIVIC LEADERS**

Murison said, adding that there is no question that the delayed Trans Pennine Rail upgrade could have been delivered if northern decision makers had more control over it.

Noting how some residents of Gateshead lack adequate bus connections with the neighbouring Tyneside borough of Newcastle, this devolution of decision making must extend beyond large capital projects to local services, he said: “It’s not just about NPR and HS2, we need budgets devolved to mayors and combined authorities.”



And rebalancing between the North and the South will only be achieved by northern decision makers exercising greater control over funding, Murison said.

Citing research carried out by the NPP, which shows that organisations and businesses currently put off operating or expanding in the North of England would be more likely to do so if improved connectivity is delivered, he said: “People will make different investment decisions if we give them better connectivity,” he said,

But Cllr Martin Gannon, the leader of Gateshead Council, warned against the risk of devolving responsibilities without adequate resources.

“We need to recognise there are limited resources,” he said.

Gannon, who is also transport lead for the North East Combined Authority, described rail connections between his region and the rest of the North as an “absolute disgrace”, adding that he “would rather walk from Newcastle to Manchester than take the train because the journey is so slow.”

Cllr Gannon said that spending “relatively small amounts of money” to install extra track on the east coast main line and



widen bridges would enable freight and local stopping services to be removed, removing impediments to high speed services.

Andrew Cobden, managing director of Vastint, said the proposals for NPR and HS2 had played a big part in the company’s decision to invest in Leeds, where it is regenerating 9ha on the city’s South Bank.

**LEEDS HAS SEEN FANTASTIC GROWTH OVER THE LAST FIVE YEARS AND MANCHESTER HAS SEEN THE SAME. THESE INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS ARE WITHOUT DOUBT A CATALYTIC GAME CHANGER**

he said, while adding that the company is keen to get on with the project.



# A view from ATKINS

Member of the SNC-Lavalin Group

## HIGH-SPEED RAIL: PEOPLE, PLACES, REGENERATING SPACES

### HOW HS2 AND THE NORTHERN POWERHOUSE RAILWAY WILL BE A CATALYST TO REINVIGORATING OUR TOWNS AND CITIES

HS2 and the Northern Powerhouse Railway (NPR) are more than new railways. They represent new, critical national infrastructure, that can reshape the economic landscape of the UK. Every station on the route represents a development and regeneration opportunity, presenting an opportunity to work strategically, maximise the value of the investment, and create exciting new spaces and places for people. Many more stations with no direct HS2 service would also benefit from the improved capacity created by the new railway. The extra capacity provided by the new high-speed line will create space on the existing network to introduce faster and more frequent services, new direct rail links and reduce crowding.

**Liam Harrison, marketing director for stations and transport-orientated development, Mike Gardner, practice manager for architecture in the North, and Colin James, head of urban design and masterplanning, within SNC-Lavalin Atkins' business put forward the case.**

With major investment in the nation's infrastructure comes a huge opportunity to do things differently and to do things better. HS2 and the NPR will have the power to positively influence not just rail travel, and not just economic impact, but also the social, financial and environmental fibre of the towns and cities en-route as well as those benefitting from released capacity on the existing network. Traditionally, railway stations were nodes along a railway network. Places where passengers were moved along so that they could get on the next train as quickly as possible. But transportation in the twenty-first century is about so much more than simply moving people around.

Stations can play the role of hubs of economic growth, gateways to a town or city and a symbol of its identity; a place where we, as travellers discovering a new destination, can feel excited about when we arrive. In stations, we now talk much more about 'users', a broader spectrum of people than just 'passengers' – and a spectrum that includes city-dwellers,

visitors, tourists as well as commuters and long-distance business travellers. Stations are now being redefined by people, rather than being defined by rail systems.

#### Redefining the role and purpose of our stations

People, businesses and investors want to inhabit space close to stations. This is evidenced by the research that shows the demand for commercial space located within 400 metres of a great railway station has the potential to increase its value by up to 30%. And this is where the challenge lies: how do we leverage that value increase to support the transport investments that are essential to modernising our infrastructure. Within this, is a great opportunity to redefine the role and purpose of our railway stations. To start using them in different ways, to underpin improvements in social and financial infrastructure, and to make them far more pleasurable places to spend time in. To do this to optimum effect requires developing a holistic vision – a master plan. That means looking at the strategic overview of where true value can be created and captured. It means identifying opportunities to work much more collaboratively with operators, owners, national government, regional and sub-regional authorities and local councils to look at how a station should integrate better with existing economic, social and environmental landscapes.

It's important to examine how the value of major infrastructure investments, like HS2 and NPR, can be maximised to benefit the places they connect, impact or influence. By overlaying the different requirements of a station from the first masterplan we can consider if it is an effective transport interchange, if it works efficiently for all users, and encourages a modal shift towards sustainable travel. Stations must work harder to generate greater economic activity – and it's this, the role of railway stations as hubs to help promote economic growth, that is crucial to the HS2 and NPR discussions.

Getting this right will mean all parties benefit. If a local authority can understand the attractiveness of the asset, and the case for development, if the plan can encourage and influence the right type of development and get commercial businesses and landlords to sign-up, it will become a commercial success. We've already seen this in the value uplift created by Crossrail in central London.

Once it was announced, developers very quickly picked up on its potential. Almost immediately, they started to build around the stations, long before the line had been built. Because they knew that major investment in infrastructure would create exponential value change in the surrounding area. Leeds is already experiencing similar effects from development in the South Bank being brought forward in eager anticipation of HS2 and NPR. Birmingham too is experiencing a major injection of investment in and around the new HS2 station site at Curzon Street, and through the transformation of Birmingham New Street.

#### Investment potential from many more sources

This is highly significant, because bringing in a breadth of stakeholders means investment potential from many more different sources and reducing the need to ask HM Treasury for infrastructure funding at a time when public expenditure is constrained. So, any model must be focused around creating a sensible, strong, and long-term financial platform. One that allows the private sector to get engaged, that allows the local authorities to lead the propositions, that lets the project come together and be more than the sum of its parts. And the model must determine and control how value is curated and captured; so that value can demonstrate the capital and revenue advantages of the programme – and to then drive the investment propositions that act as magnets to attract funding and finance from multiple directions.

Getting this right means configuring the stations in the right way, making strong and purposeful connectivity with the wider urban area beyond, and successfully coalescing all that footfall into commercial development. Obviously, the greatest element to getting this right is good design – to create a holistic view of what that station hub can be, while considering the 'healthy tension' between functional and pleasurable space.

We should ask how we configure that station space in the most efficient way, but also in the most appealing way to people who arrive there or leave from it. There are many retailers that would kill for the footfall that goes through the UK's train stations, but if you can remodel the space effectively, you will be able to bring many inspirational, visionary retailers to it, who can see what retail opportunities there will be in the future. This is backed by the growth in the 'experience economy' – and people who travel by rail taking a photo opportunity, shared across social media, that says 'look at me, I can travel, I can choose to travel, I can afford to travel, I can be where I'd like to be' – there is a place in our stations for experience-based retail. But it's not only about transactional, traditional retail, it's about capturing that spirit, making stations desirable places to be.

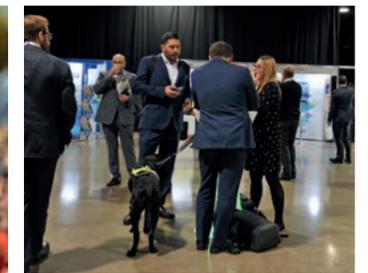
#### Making the station a destination

Retail is just one dimension; similar shaping can be done with food and beverage outlets, leisure facilities, workplace and meeting spaces. When configured in the right way, efficiently, effectively and intelligently, we can transform the station experience and social fabric of our cities and towns. How long is it going to be before we see car dealerships in the station because people want to touch and feel the stuff they know they can get cheaper from buying on the internet? There's that human connection with the products we buy, that hasn't gone away, it probably never will.

The decision for the UK to invest in HS2 and NPR is momentous. By moving opportunity up the line and connecting people with the brands they want to sample, we will see large-scale, long-term exciting change to our towns, cities and regions. This is transformative change that will rebalance the north-south economies and create new commercial clusters to boost national productivity.



# Conference Photos



# Conference Photos



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