



RTPI

Royal Town Planning Institute

Ambitions for **the North**

**A spatial framework for people
and places in the North of England**

RTPI Research Paper

May 2019

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Executive Summary

There is a well-documented need to narrow the economic performance gap between the North and the South of England. In order to fulfil a transformational economic future for the North, the debate has focused on making key improvements to the skills base, innovation performance, transport and digital connectivity, and agglomeration.

Over the past few years, however, there has been growing recognition that:

- Improving the fortunes of the North of England is not just about narrowing the disparity between the North and the South, or delivering improved transport connectivity and transformational economic growth. There are inequalities across the North that arise from a complex history of post-industrial decline and decades of under-investment in transport and other infrastructure;
- There are range of wider challenges relating to people and place need addressing, including climate and demographic change, making the North more attractive to graduates and young families, tackling the decline of our high streets and 'left-behind towns', and focus on the quality of jobs, as well as the need to create additional jobs;
- Place-based planning is key to delivering the economic, environmental and social benefits that should arise from transformational infrastructure investment. This requires planning positively for the housing and employment growth that can be supported, a commitment to sustainable patterns of growth, and placing the needs of existing and new communities at the heart of planning for the future; and
- Various barriers currently prevent planning from playing this full role, including the absence of a strategic vision for the North, unfinished devolution arrangements, fragmented governance structures, and an excessive focus on the delivery of housing numbers coupled with a lack of planning and funding for the infrastructure needed to create successful places.

This Spatial Framework – which covers the period to 2050 – identifies what needs to be done to overcome the barriers and enable planning to play a wider role in delivering a better future for the people and places of the North. The overarching principles that underpin the Framework are:

- **Spatial planning should be aligned with strategic investment in infrastructure and economic development** to deliver sustainable communities and create long-lasting, positive outcomes for people, the environment and the economy;
- **The planning system should create the conditions in which we can create better, more attractive places** for people to live and work, and for communities to prosper – economically, socially and environmentally; and
- **The planning system should support and enhance the North's cultural identity, protect and enhance its environment**, and increase its ability to confidently adapt to change.

The Framework is non-statutory, and has been prepared in consultation with a wide range of Northern stakeholders. It is designed to work at a pan-Northern level – across the North East, the North West and Yorkshire & the Humber – rather than for a particular local context. The Framework should guide future planning in the North in a way that puts people and place at the heart of the ambition for the North, not just houses and jobs, infrastructure and growth.

The Framework sets a strategic direction for spatial planning in the North to 2050. It does this by proposing a series of 'Ambitions', together with supporting 'Recommendations' that underpin delivery. The Framework establishes a path for future spatial planning within major metropolitan centres, larger urban settlements, and rural and coastal areas. The ambitions and recommendations are designed to work across – and support co-operation between – these different types of place.

Detailed strategies and delivery mechanisms will need to be developed for each of the ambitions and recommendations, and the Framework suggests organisations that could be responsible for each. The current state of governance in the North is complicated, however, and whilst good progress has been made in devolving some powers and budgets to combined authorities, it is widely recognised that this process is incomplete and piecemeal. Some of the ambitions and recommendations can therefore be delivered by existing bodies and groups, whereas others are likely to require new arrangements to achieve their delivery.

Achieving the North's potential

Building on its strengths and addressing its challenges

The North has many opportunities for transformational economic growth

The North achieves £345bn GVA, and is the UK's largest manufacturing region. If it were a country, it would be Europe's 9th largest economy ahead of Norway and Austria.

The North is home to 5 of the UK's 8 core cities, as well as 4 National Parks and 6 Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty full of inspiring landscapes, cultural and industrial heritage

Plans are advancing for major rail investment, providing substantial opportunity for economic growth and new housing

Devolution of governance and funding has begun, fostering an ambitious and collaborative approach to forward planning, with the Great North Plan as one illustration of this entrepreneurial Northern spirit

But to deliver sustainable, fair and equitable growth, there is a need to address the following challenges...

Complex post-industrial decline leading to significant inequalities and poverty across the North

High demand for affordable housing associated with changing demographics, including an ageing population

Technological and behavioural transformation affecting employment, housing, shopping, leisure, education, health, logistics, mobility and more

High availability of brownfield land for development and regeneration, but high cost, low value outcomes affecting ability to deliver

High street decline, falling investment and increasing vacancies that require restructuring and repurposing of town centres

Climate change, poor urban air quality and pressure on the rural economy and landscapes, including declining biodiversity

Fragmented governance leading to barriers to co-ordination of investment, infrastructure, spatial planning and community outcomes

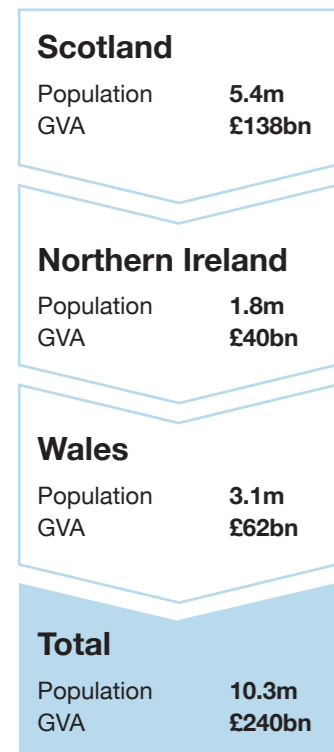
Process-driven planning which follows quantitative targets, rather than focussing on creating places that people want to live and work in

Ambitions for the North



1 An introduction to the North of England

Where vibrant towns, cities and cultures meet magnificent landscapes to create a competitive and sustainable North



The North

A population and economy larger than the devolved nations combined, but with less autonomy over budgets and decision making

North of England	Population	15.4m
	GVA	£343bn

This 'People & Place Spatial Framework' covers the North of England ('the North'): a substantial part of the country spanning the former government regions of the North East, the North West and Yorkshire & the Humber. This differs from the Government's definition of the 'Northern Powerhouse', which also includes north Wales. In headline terms, the North of England:

- is home to over a quarter of England's population (15 million people);
- contains over a quarter of England's workforce (7.2 million people);
- is the UK's largest manufacturing region;
- achieves £343 billion annual Gross Value Added¹, a fifth of the UK total, which would make it Europe's 9th largest economy (ahead of Norway and Austria) were it a country;
- contains five of the eight English 'core cities', and four of the ten English National Parks; and
- contains many of the country's most affordable cities in terms of median house prices.

The North is, therefore, an extremely important and valuable part of the UK in terms of overall economic performance, the size of its resident population and the rich diversity of its environment, culture and places. Despite a historic legacy of under-investment, the North comes from a position of strength, with considerable assets and huge potential.

The scale of the opportunity for the North is substantial and considerable growth is proposed



There is widespread recognition that enhanced, inclusive and sustainable economic growth is fundamental to improving the prospects for the North. In headline terms, the growth that is already planned/proposed, or which needs to be planned for, is as follows:

- Many additional jobs (and improved productivity) are predicted to be needed by 2050 under a transformational economic future for the North (as initial estimate of 850,000 more jobs than under the 'business as usual' scenario is currently under review);
- Substantial improvements to the skills base, innovation performance and transport and digital connectivity will be needed;
- Growth in the knowledge-based sectors² is expected to lead to increases in the number of high-skilled workers employed in urban areas in general and city centres in particular, but there will also be a need for substantial development in out-of-centre locations for advanced manufacturing and logistics facilities, where good access to and connectivity between road, rail and other transport modes is essential;
- Job availability and quality is a key driver of housing demand. Anticipated change under the transformational economic growth agenda will trigger a significant need for conveniently located, good quality and affordable housing to accommodate the anticipated growth in the workforce. Estimates suggest that more than 50,000 additional homes will be needed each year across the North compared with 44,000 under the 'business as usual' scenario;
- Demographic shifts mean that younger generations are seeking to live in more urban locations and thus urban liveability, diversification of housing, quality of place, place-making and re-use of brownfield land are increasingly important issues. The North has a large number of towns and cities with high-quality historic centres which can be positively re-imagined and adapted to cater for this growing trend; and
- Retaining graduates from northern universities is a significant opportunity for the northern economy and should be a high priority. This highlights the need for the right jobs in the right places, supported by good-quality and affordable housing, as well as other key infrastructure.

²Advanced manufacturing (advanced materials, nanotechnologies and processes); energy (generation, storage and low-carbon technologies/processes); health innovation (life sciences, medical technologies, e-health and devolution of health and social care); digital (computation, software, data analytics, smart products, simulation) – supported by improved financial and professional services, logistics (including major port and airport developments) and education (in particular, higher education, to provide the research and knowledge excellence).

¹Sources: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/> and <https://stats.wales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Business-Economy-and-Labour-Market/Regional-Accounts/Gross-Value-Added-GDP/gva-by-measure-welsh-economic-region-year>

The evolving devolution of leadership and decision-making is critical to delivering success

Strategic leadership and direction is a critical factor in attracting investment and making the right locations viable for development, while delivering positive social and environmental impacts for communities.

Devolution is gathering momentum in the North, particularly in the North West where the devolution of strategic planning powers has led to the publication of a draft Greater Manchester Spatial Framework ('GMSF')³. The emerging GMSF is being produced collaboratively between the 10 local authorities across Greater Manchester, thereby enabling key topics to be planned for over the long term at a sub-regional scale, including:

- Setting an overall vision as to how Greater Manchester should develop over the next two decades;
- Identifying the amount of new development that will come forward across Greater Manchester and for each of the 10 districts, in terms of housing, offices, and industry and warehousing, and the main areas in which this will be focused;
- Supporting the delivery of key infrastructure, such as transport and utilities;
- Seeking to protecting the important environmental assets across the city region;
- Allocating sites for employment and housing outside of the existing urban areas; and
- Defining a new Green Belt boundary for Greater Manchester that reflects strategic changes to economic geography.

However, governance arrangements across the North are complex, with multiple bodies fulfilling different roles

These include:

- **Numerous central government departments and agencies**, such as the Department for Transport (DfT), Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) and the Environment Agency, along with the Government's Northern Powerhouse team;
- **Transport for the North**: a statutory sub-national transport body, established in April 2018, with a remit to bring the North's 20 local transport authorities and business leaders together with Network Rail, Highways England and High Speed 2 Ltd, and work with central government;
- **NP11**: the chairs of the 11 Northern Local Enterprise Partnerships, which came together in 2018 to form a government-funded board and represent each of their regions within a modern day 'Council for the North';
- **Combined authorities**: legal partnerships between two or more councils which collaborate and take collective decisions on certain cross-boundary issues. Combined authorities are currently in place across Greater Manchester, Liverpool City Region, Sheffield City Region, Tees Valley, and the North of Tyne;
- **National Park Authorities**, which cut across local authority areas and have planning powers, and cover the Lake District, Northumberland, North York Moors, and Yorkshire Dales; and
- **Local Planning Authorities**: 70+ district and county councils with jurisdiction for their administrative areas.

As well as the official organisations listed above, there are various influencing bodies/groups, including:

- **Northern Powerhouse Partnership**: a body launched in September 2016 to help develop consensus among businesses, civic leaders and others about how the north of England can be more successful;
- **Homes for the North (HfN)**: a consortium of 18 of the largest housing associations in the North, launched in Parliament in 2016 to influence housing policy;
- **The People's Powerhouse** – a movement which seeks to ensure that people and communities are at the heart of plans for the north of England;
- **Think tanks such as the Institute of Public Policy Research North (IPPR North)** which was launched in 2005 as the leading progressive think tank dedicated to the North of England, based in Newcastle and Manchester; and
- **The Great North Plan steering group**, which is chaired by IPPR North and comprises representatives from local and central government, universities, the RTPI, and various public and private sector organisations.

Progress is being made, but...

The desire to collaborate at a pan-Northern level has created a rich and diverse network of formal and informal institutions, which has made some excellent progress. However, there remains a lack of co-ordination when it comes to the direction and nature of spatial planning for growth. The major metropolitan areas benefit from co-ordination via their combined authorities but, even here, governance arrangements and strategic leadership remains patchy. This inhibits the effective planning for land use, infrastructure and investment, negatively impacts on delivery, and makes it harder for the North to address serious social and environmental issues related to public health, poverty, decarbonisation and environmental degradation.

Fig 1: Regions, counties and unitary authorities, 2017⁴

Fig 2: England's Regions and Combined Authorities⁴

Fig 3: National Park Authorities, 2016⁴

Fig 4: Local Enterprise Partnership Boundaries⁴

Fig 1:

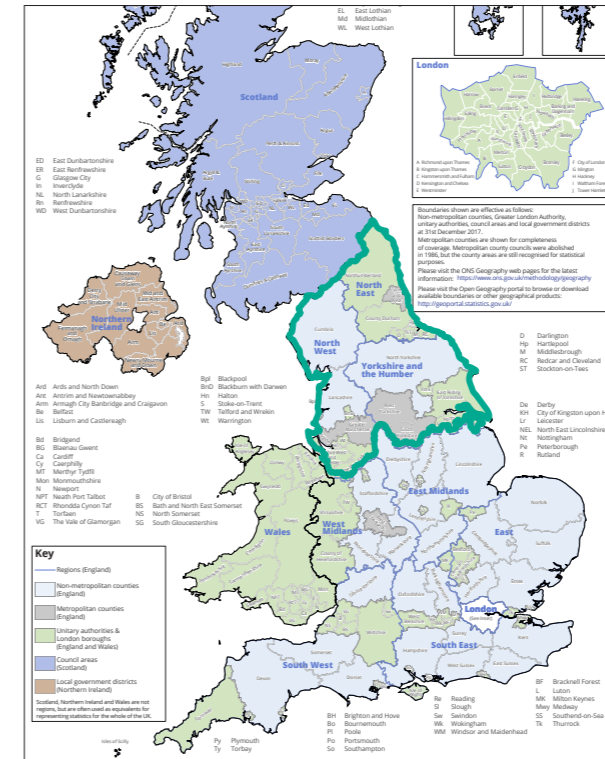


Fig 2:

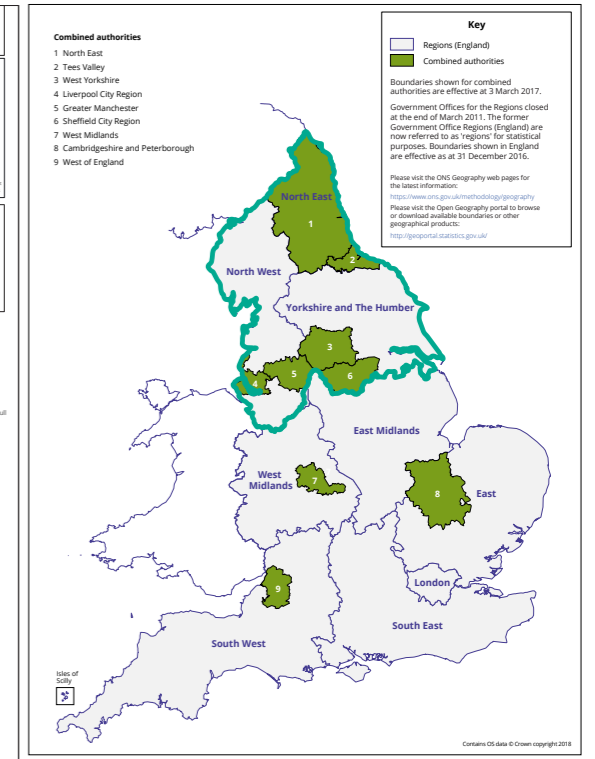


Fig 3:

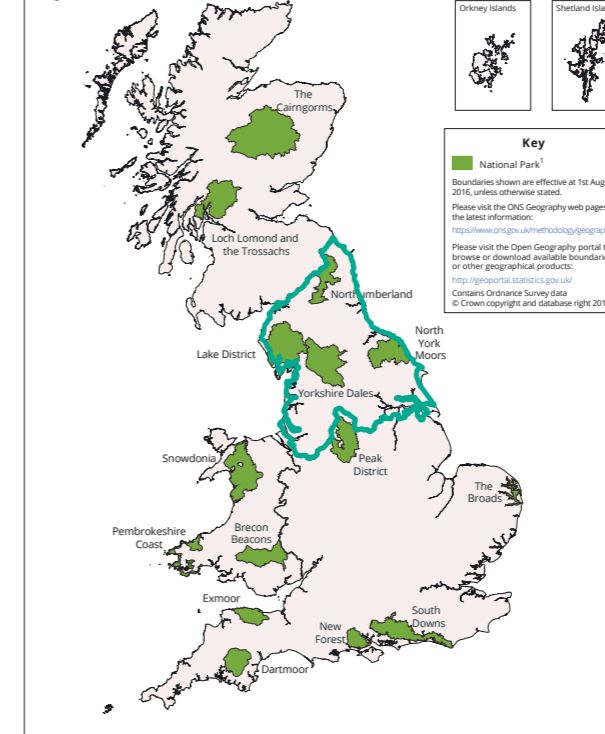
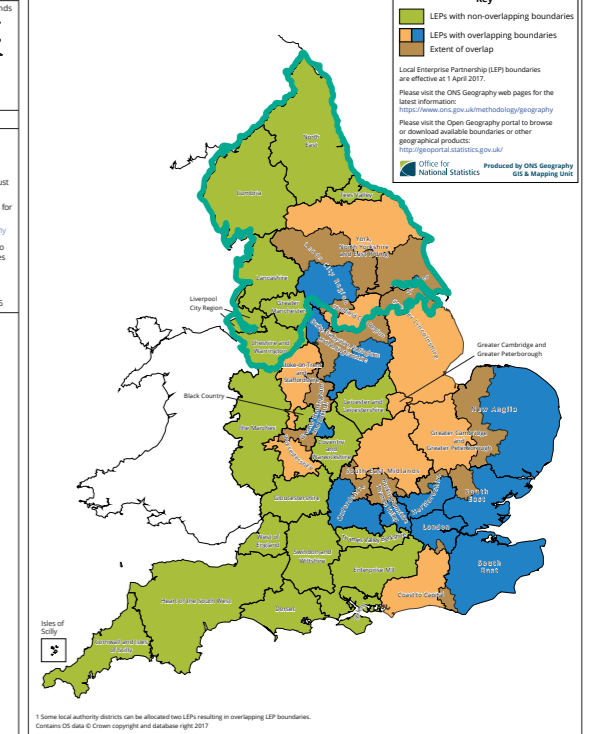


Fig 4:



³At the time of going to press, the responses to a consultation on the Revised Draft version of the Spatial Framework (which closed in March 2019) are being reviewed. Further consultation is expected later this year.

⁴Source of diagrams: <https://ons.gov.uk/methodology/geography>

2 Now is the time to change the narrative

We are at a key moment in time...

Technological development is bringing changes in how we live our lives. It is impacting on how we travel, work, shop, communicate and spend our leisure time. It affects how we imagine and experience our neighbourhoods, cities and natural environment. It brings challenges as well as opportunities.

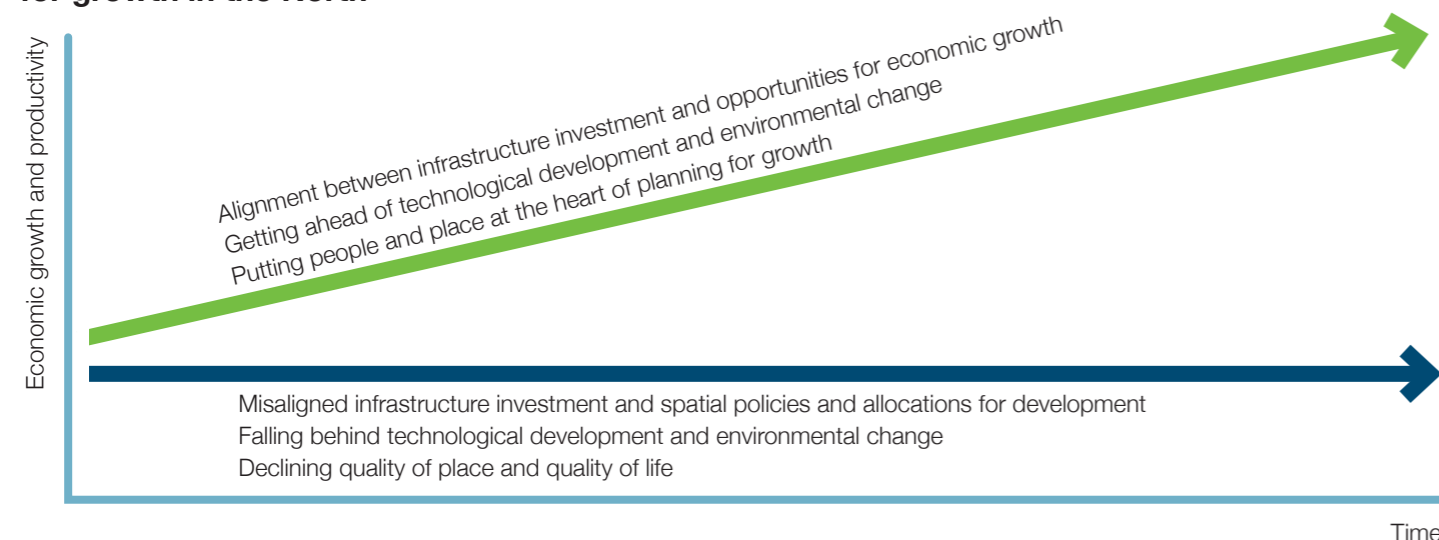
We are at a turning point for the environment and climate. The United Nations has warned that, as global temperatures continue to rise, climate action is lagging and the window of opportunity is closing. The UN identifies spatial and participatory planning as a key lever for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and increasing resilience to environmental risks.

There are also pressing concerns about communities which have experienced a profound sense of being neglected and left out. This makes inclusive approaches to planning more urgent than ever, with outcomes including the need to tackle poverty and poor health, strengthen communities and demonstrably improve quality of life.

The Northern Powerhouse agenda, and devolution to city-regions, have already helped to create a powerful and distinctive narrative for the North, with economic growth driven by improved connectivity and productivity. But the combination of wider social, technological and environmental drivers, coupled with the potential for significant infrastructure investment, will reshape the North.

This requires a more co-ordinated and inclusive approach to spatial planning, based around genuine pan-Northern co-operation, further devolution from Westminster, and a commitment to sustainable and equitable patterns of growth. Such action will build the foundations for successful communities, and help to ensure that those people and places which have been neglected are given the opportunity to thrive within a transformed North.

Possible alternative pathways for growth in the North



We need to seize this opportunity, through improved spatial planning which:

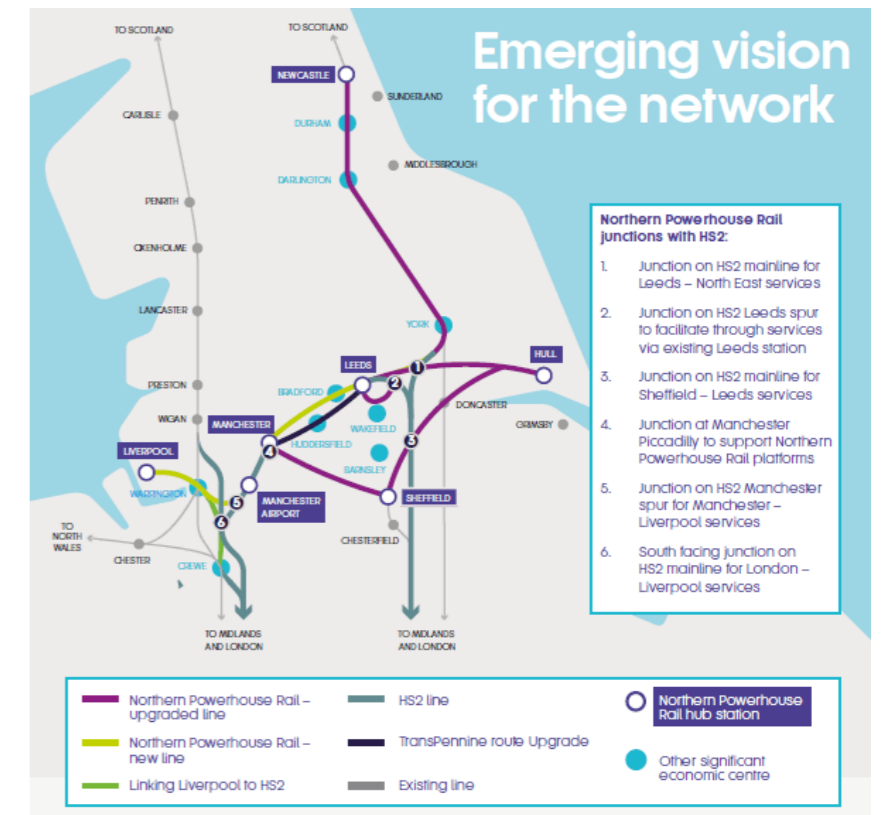
- Capitalises on future investment in rail infrastructure** by enhancing connectivity between and within major urban areas, providing investors and employers with greater access to a talented labour market, and the workforce access to a greater choice of training, employment and housing opportunities;
- Commits to sustainable patterns of growth** which moves away from road-based dispersal of development and numbers-driven planning, both of which to lead to poor health, environmental degradation and unsustainable economic outcomes;
- Gets ahead of technological, societal, environmental and economic change** to enable urban, rural and coastal communities to reinvent their roles to meet the needs of more flexible working families and local businesses, through robust digital connectivity, high quality local services and facilities, set within high quality built and natural environments;
- Integrates plans for spatial development with new opportunities for high-quality social infrastructure** to support higher levels

of education, skills and improvements in healthy life expectancy; and

- Properly addresses key questions including:
 - What will the implications of the anticipated economic stimuli be for the nature and qualities of the North as a place to live, work, visit and invest?
 - What will the implications be for investment, and the spatial effects of development?
 - How do we collaborate with others to make the most of the existing assets of the North and enhance the health, wellbeing and prosperity of the people who live here?

While the focus of this Framework is at the pan-northern scale, there will need to be a commitment to effective spatial planning at the local level to ensure that outcomes benefit communities and enable the delivery of high-quality places across all parts of the North.

Fig 5: Transformational rail investment is planned for the North, if achieved, will help to create significant changes in economic geography.
transportforthenorth.com/northern-powerhouse-rail/



3 The Great North Plan: People and Place

The Great North Plan

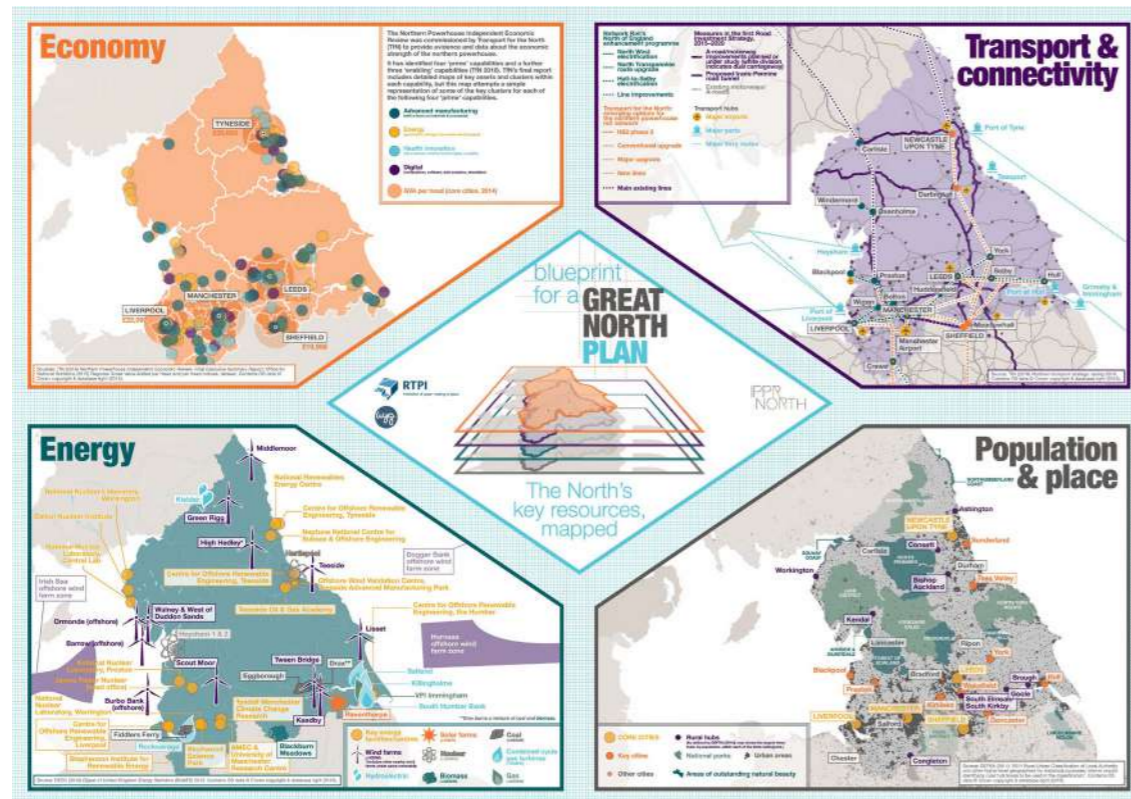
A series of roundtable discussions were held in northern cities during 2015, followed by the first Northern Summit in January 2016 with further plenary debates and interactive voting. The overwhelming response (93 per cent) to the question 'Do we need a Great North Plan' was 'yes'.

'A competitive North in the national & global economy' was chosen as the preferred vision statement by 47 per cent of respondents at the events, ahead of the statement 'Maximising opportunities for people of all ages across the North' (28 per cent). Some 66 per cent of respondents thought that a plan for the North of England 'must recognise the importance of the big cities but also the vital hinterlands that serve them'.

It is clear that there was strong support for the North to compete economically, through an inclusive approach covering people of all ages and in all parts of the North, both urban and rural. The resultant Blueprint for the Great North Plan set out a series of principles to guide how the Plan should be developed; identified the documents that might together form the Plan; and outlined the process for producing the Great North Plan.

The Blueprint identified the need for the Great North Plan to be supported by a Prospectus for the North (serving as an investment plan for national and international investors) and a Governance and Delivery Plan (to oversee the development and implementation of the overall Plan). The diagrams below shows how the various parts of the Great North Plan come together, along with details of project governance.

Fig 6: Blueprint for the Great North Plan
<https://www.ippr.org/files/publications/pdf/blueprint-for-a-great-north-plan>



The overall aims of the Great North Plan are to:

- Ensure that the Great North Plan capitalises upon the opportunity for the North of England to increase its contribution to national economic growth, whilst responding to the challenges of technological, social and environmental change; and
- Provide direction and co-ordination for investment, and create the right conditions for growth so that it leads to good long term outcomes for the communities in the North.

Key principles and objectives set at the outset for the Great North Plan are for it to be:

- High level and strategic;
- Ambitious and transformational;
- Long-term in its outlook (to 2050) but also supported by ambitions and actions that can be achieved in the short – and medium-term periods;
- Evolutionary and collaborative, acting as a reference point for all; and
- Inclusive and pan-Northern – speaking for all places across the North.

Blueprint for a Great North Plan Published June 2016				
The Great North Plan steering group* Established 2016				
Great North Plan workstreams A vision for the North				
	Economic Strategy	Natural Assets Strategy	Transport Strategy	People and Place Strategy
Owned by	Transport for the North	IPPR North, Natural England & Environment Agency	Transport for the North	RTPI
Overseen by	TfN partnership board	Great North Plan Steering Group*	TfN partnership board	People and Place Project Group**
Developed by	SQW	IPPR North, Natural England & Environment Agency	Transport for the North	PBA and Newcastle University
Progress	NPIER published June 2016	Northern Energy Strategy published October 2017	Strategic Transport Plan published February 2019	Ambitions for the North - published May 2019
Next steps	Review of NPIER underway by Steer Economic Development and Cambridge Econometrics	Northern Natural Assets Strategy under development	Discussions with DfT, Network Rail, Highways England about funding and programme	Stakeholder Engagement

***GNP steering group members**

- IPPR North (Chair)
- Department for Transport
- Department for International Trade
- Cities and Local Growth Unit
- Environment Agency
- Transport for the North
- Northern Powerhouse Partnership
- Humber LEP
- Homes for the North
- Great Places Housing Group
- Peak District National Park
- RSA
- Manchester University
- Atkins
- KPMG/ICE
- Peel Group
- RTPI

****People and Place project group members**

- RTPI Yorkshire (Chair)
- RTPI North West
- RTPI North East
- RTPI Young Planners
- RTPI Policy Practice and Research Committee
- Northern planning schools
- IPPR North
- Independent planning consultants

The Spatial Framework for People and Place

Case Study

The Northern Powerhouse Independent Economic Review

June 2016

Northern Powerhouse Independent Economic Review: Overview. Transport for the North, (SQW and Cambridge Econometrics)



The Northern Powerhouse Independent Economic Review identifies four prime capabilities:

- **Advanced Manufacturing** with a particular emphasis on materials and process
- **Energy**, in particular expertise around generation, storage and low carbon technologies, especially nuclear and offshore
- **Health Innovation**, with a focus on Life Sciences, Medical Technologies/ Devices, e-health and emerging new models of service provision
- **Digital** focussing particularly on computation, software tools/ design and content, data analytics and simulation modelling, and wider media strengths

These four prime capabilities are supported by three enabling capabilities, which play a crucial role in supporting growth and development

- **Financial and Professional services**
- **Logistics**
- **Education** (primarily Higher Education)

It is inevitable that a framework for 'People and Place' will straddle a multitude of overlapping themes, including transport, connectivity, energy, natural assets, housing, town centres and place-making. This presents a significant opportunity for planning to play a part as the glue which makes ambitions a reality.

However, this framework is non-statutory and so it challenges plan-makers and other bodies to grasp the huge opportunities referenced in the Framework and deliver truly transformational growth through collaboration.

Some of the overlapping areas referenced here are addressed by other strands of the Great North Plan and so whilst we refer to them in this Framework, we stop short of making recommendations that are better dealt with in other parts of the Plan. For ease of reference some headlines from the key documents are as follows:

- **Northern Powerhouse Rail** is the centrepiece programme of the Strategic Transport Plan. The stated purpose of NPR is to deliver a transformed rail network in the north of England and bring new opportunities to millions of people and businesses. The STP seeks to rebalance decades of underinvestment, with up to £70 billion of investment by 2050 contributing towards an additional £100 billion in economic growth.
- **The Northern Energy Strategy** highlights the North's strategic advantages in key areas such as hydrogen, tidal and marine energy, as well as emerging forms of energy storage. The NES sets a vision that the north of England will be the leading low-carbon energy region in the UK by 2050, with an energy economy worth £15 billion per annum and 100,000 green jobs providing affordable, clean energy for people and businesses across the North.
- **The Northern Powerhouse Independent Economic Review** identified a need for key improvements to the skills base, innovation performance, transport connectivity and agglomeration. Four 'prime' capabilities for the North were identified, along with three 'enabling' capabilities to support the prime capabilities. The IER envisaged that the Capabilities will combine to create a distinctive and coherent offer for the North.

The North's 'Quality of Life' was identified as a critical underpinning asset supporting its economic capabilities, particularly in providing lower-cost housing compared to London and the South East, varied sporting and cultural offers, and easy access to the coast and countryside. The specific figures in the IER relating to growth in jobs/ productivity and so on are currently being reviewed but it is clear that substantial improvements are anticipated.

- **Natural Assets North** is a new project led by IPPR North (funded by Hull City Council, Natural England, The Environment Agency, United Utilities and Yorkshire Water) which explores the natural potential of the north of England, including the quality of its landscape, water and coastlines. The natural capital of the North is immense, but its full potential is not yet being realised. The first output from the work was a briefing (December 2018) on the importance of the North's uplands.

A more joined up approach to driving sustainable, fair and inclusive growth is needed.

'Ambitions for the North' is the name given to the People & Place Spatial Framework component of the Great North Plan.

Given the absence of an overseeing body charged with leading change in the North, it is essential that a way is found for planning in the north of England to take place in a more co-ordinated and effective way, thus supporting the objectives of good growth which facilitates healthy, safe and prosperous lives for the people who live there.

Much more joined-up thinking and strategic place-based spatial planning is needed than under the existing system whereby the statutory development plan-makers are tasked with creating single plans for their own areas under a numbers-driven system, or where the myriad of other bodies with relatively narrow remits progress their own plans without a common spatial planning vision.

The production of the People and Place Spatial Framework has involved collaboration across a wide range of statutory and non-statutory organisations, which enabled various drivers of change to be identified and explored.

The process we followed involved the following strands:

- review of key evidence documents and initiatives produced over recent years;
- our own research;
- identification of key drivers of change and common themes, which we tested through stakeholder workshops held at six locations across the North;
- overarching strategic aims were also explored through the stakeholder workshops;
- the discussions at the stakeholder workshops were structured around the broad 'themes' based around the 'keys drivers of change' ensuring that key topics were explored in sufficient depth; and
- a call for evidence.

'Ambitions' and 'Recommendations' for people and place emerged from the process outlined above, which were tested and refined through follow-up meetings with a broad spread of stakeholders as well as the People & Place Project Group and the Great North Plan Steering Group.

Key issues for the People and Place Spatial Framework

- Essentially a **framework for spatial planning. (non-statutory & non-plan);**
- Covers the **whole of 'the North'** (the regions of Yorkshire & the Humber, North-West and North-East);
- Centred on the **spatial implications of 'People' & 'Place';**
- Needs to consider factors such as **predicted demographic, social, cultural and technological change...** and their consequential impacts;
- **Long-term** and **'pan-northern'** focus;
- **Fosters co-operation and collaboration** across the North; and
- **Influence the way we plan for the future**, so that we create the best possible places for future generations to live and work.

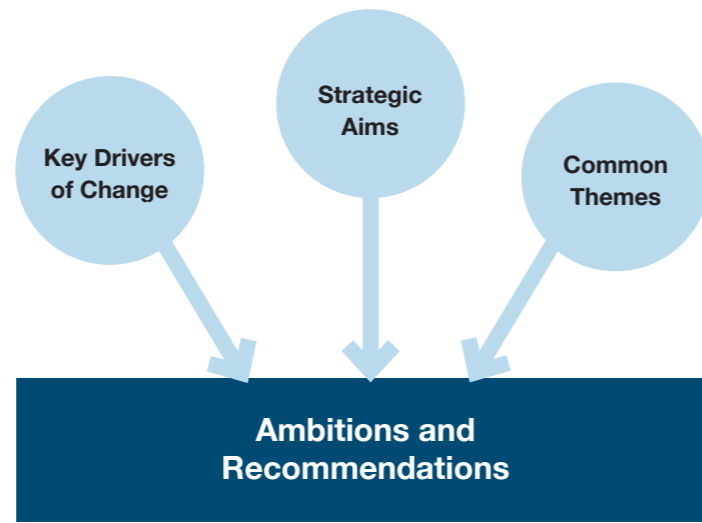
4 Identifying Northern Ambitions

Ambitions for the North were developed through an iterative process of research and engagement. There were three components of this process:

- Key Drivers of Change;
- Common Themes; and
- Strategic Aims

Initial research aimed to establish the key factors that should be addressed through a spatial framework, and identify how these relate to key issues or concerns for the North.

Stakeholder workshops discussed these **key drivers of change** and **common themes** in more detail, and explored the potential **strategic aims** that would define the nature of ambitions and recommendations relevant to the progress in each area.



Key Drivers of Change

Key drivers of change emerged through the initial research stage of the project, and evolved through discussion with stakeholders. For simplicity, the drivers of change that broadly relate to 'People' are grouped under the headings 'Demographics', 'Employment' and 'Housing' and those that more broadly relate to 'Place' are grouped under the themes of 'Town Centres', 'Rural and Coastal Towns' and 'Natural Assets'.

The themes inevitably overlap and interact with each other but presenting the drivers of change in this way is useful given the extensive and complex geographical area that comprises the North.

Stakeholder workshops Key themes	People	Place
	Responding to demographic change Creating employment and jobs Delivering quality and affordable housing	Enhancing rural and coastal communities Securing the future of town centres Harnessing northern assets
Cross cutting themes	Connectivity and infrastructure	
	Quality of life, health and wellbeing	
	Quality of built and natural places	
	Environment and climate change	
	Prosperity and inequality	
	Digital impacts on jobs and travel	

Key Drivers of Change are discussed with reference to diagrams and graphs on pages 19 – 22. Fig 7 – 14 and 16 – 18 are sourced from Office for National Statistics Licence under the Open Government Licence v3.0 Adapted from data from the Office for National Statistics Licence under the Open Government Licence v3.0
 Fig 7 – 10, 12 – 14 and 16 – 18 contain Ordnance Survey data © Crown Copyright and database right 2018
 Fig 15. Growth in Retail Sales - Source: Experian Retail Planning Briefing Note 16, December 2018

Drivers of change: People

Demographic change

Below is a summary of what delegates at the stakeholder workshops saw as the main drivers of change relating to people that need to be addressed by planning:

- **The North grows more slowly than the South** – projected population change is 50% of the England average. Migration is a significant component of population growth in the South, much less so in the North. **This has a significant implication on the potential for growth;**
- The population in the North is predicted to grow, but in rural areas, population is predicted either not to grow, or to lose population over the next two decades. **Attracting young people and families to rural areas is important in maintaining the rural economy;**
- **The UK population is ageing.** The North generally ages in line with the England average, but parts of the North – largely the rural areas and the 'far North' – age more quickly. **Spatial planning has an important role to play to provide for this changing demographic;**
- The North does well at attracting students to study, but fails to keep them – they drift back south post-graduation (the North West has begun to buck this trend). **Retaining students should be a priority.**

Fig 7: Projected Population Change (2016 based)

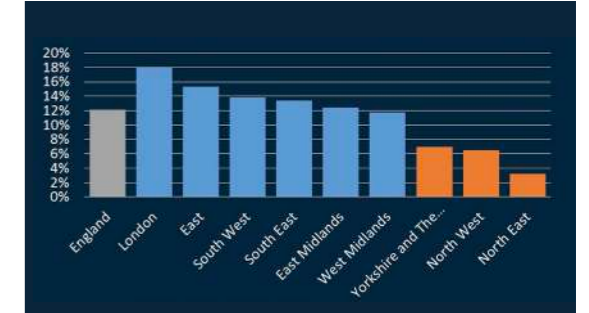


Fig 8: Old Age Dependency Ratios – the North & England

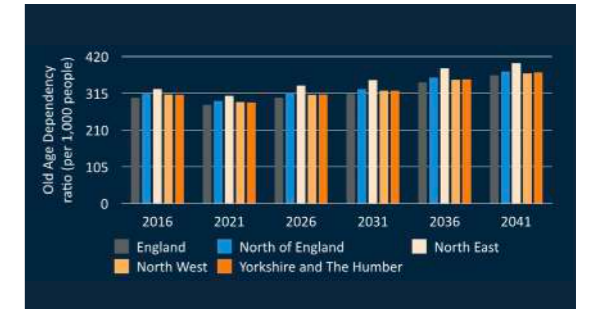


Fig 9: Migration Flows between Regions (2017)



Fig 10: GVA per capita

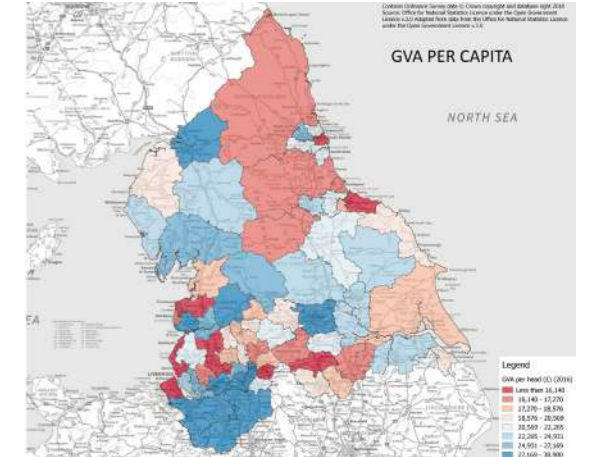


Fig 11: Median wages by region (2018)



Employment

- The North is less productive than England average, and wages are lower. There is significant variation across the North – the strongest performance is generally in the urban areas – with over half of the GVA generated in the North West. However, a focus solely on closing the economic gap with the South has the potential for unintended consequences. **The prosperity of people in the North is the key issue - there should be more focus on 'per capita' measures, rather than 'total growth' or a comparison with the South;**
- Providing sites for new employment activities across the prime and enabling capabilities will need high quality and well connected sites in urban areas, as well as out of centre for industrial and logistics uses. Inadequate transport connectivity is a barrier to attracting investment and particularly in growing skilled sectors – firms in the South can tap into a huge and connected labour market to get the skilled workers they need, but this is not so easy in the North. **This is a barrier to the productivity and attractiveness of northern city-regions, and limits job / career choices available to residents.**

- **Transport connectivity is often poorer in coastal and rural locations** and needs to improve as residents cannot easily be matched to available jobs. Digital technology offers alternative working and living patterns, and an opportunity to become more competitive. However, poor rural broadband connectivity drives people out of the rural areas and hinders the rural economy more widely. **The North needs to be digitally enabled and cater for flexible employment patterns;**
- While the North has high proportions of highly educated population (24%), it is lower than the England average (27%). Conversely, the proportion of people with no qualifications is higher. The urban/rural divide, with a halo around the urban areas, underpins the pattern across the North. **The North needs to bolster the role of universities as centres of learning in attracting a skilled workforce to the North – essential to fulfil the Northern Powerhouse economic growth strategy around prime and enabling capabilities.**

Fig 12: Level 4+ Qualifications

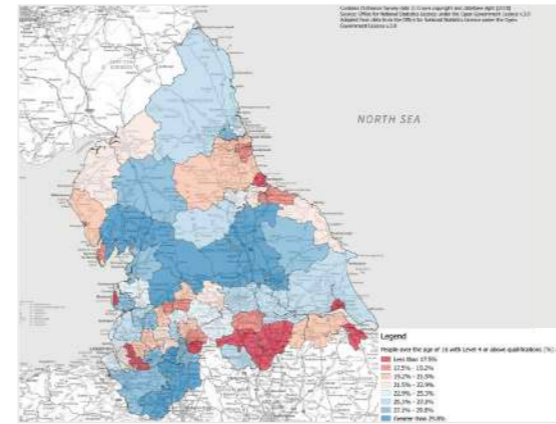


Fig 13: Median House Price by region

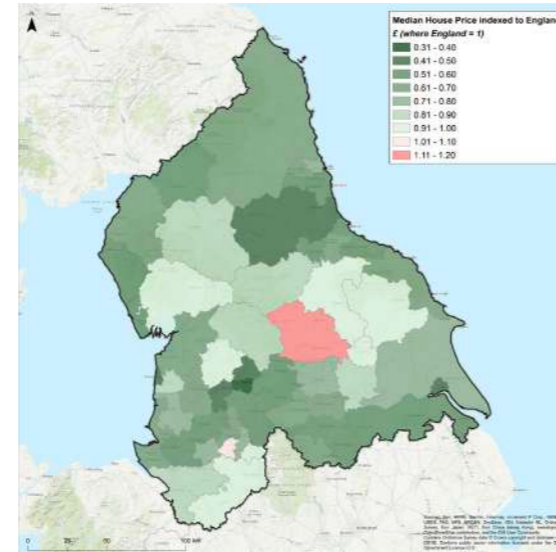
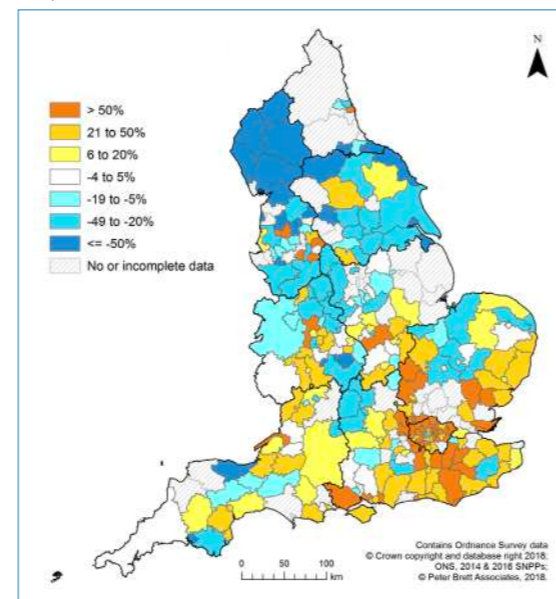


Fig 14: Updated standard housing need estimate compared with current Plan number



Drivers of change: Place

Town centres

Below is a summary of what delegates at the stakeholder workshops saw as the main drivers of change relating to place that need to be addressed by planning:

- **Retail expenditure continues to grow**, but the share of 'special forms of trading' (mainly online shopping) has been growing more quickly, **and the role of the high street continues to decline;**
- **Vacancy rates are relatively high compared to the rest of the UK**, with the North West and North East having the highest persistent vacancy rates over 3 year period;
- **Town centres need to be places to meet and to do business** – quality of place is critical. Retailers are investing in a smaller number of higher order centres, and it is likely that this will disproportionately affect the North. **More radical approaches are needed to repurpose our town centres;**
- Demographic shifts are increasing the tendency for more urban living and commuting by public transport. This presents opportunities for certain centres, but not all centres will benefit that way. **Bespoke/creative ideas will be needed. Not all reinvention means residential.**

Fig 15: Growth in Retail Sales

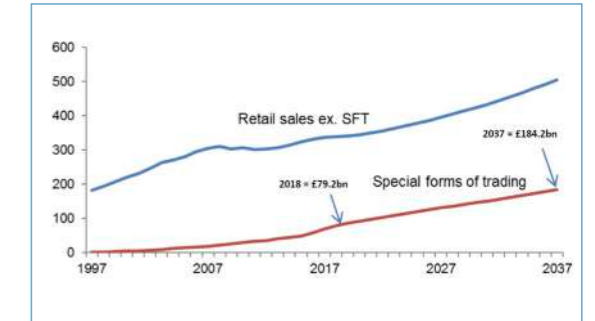


Fig 16: Population Growth 2016 – 2041

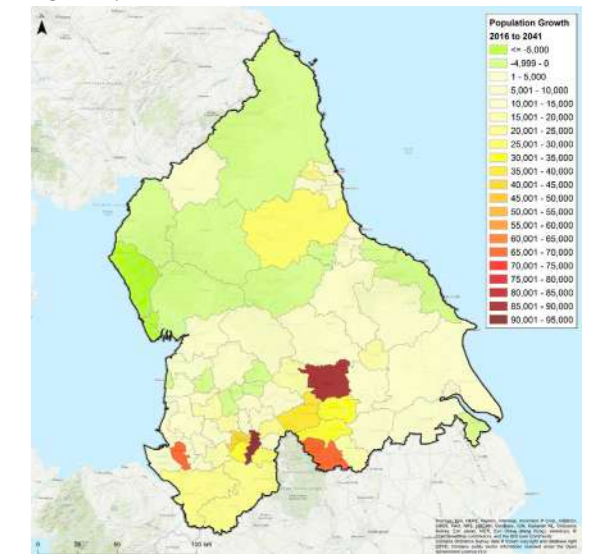
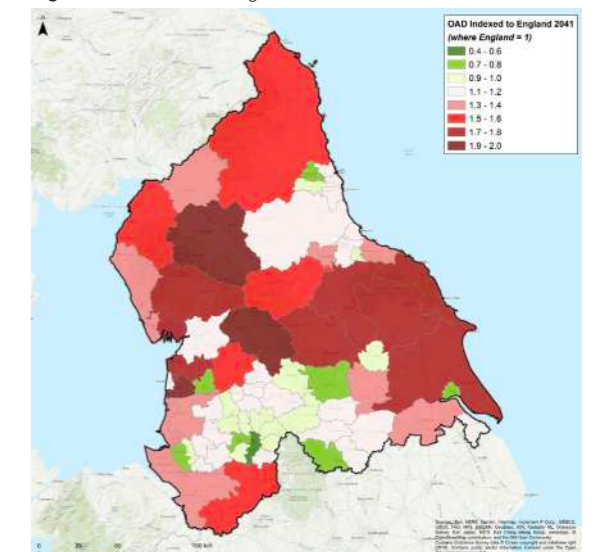


Fig 17: OAD Indexed to England 2041



Rural and coastal towns

- **The North grows more slowly than other parts of the country**, and this is more apparent in coastal and rural areas. Also, rural and coastal communities age more quickly than elsewhere, probably because younger people migrate to urban areas;
- **Many coastal and rural towns are experiencing continuing decline following loss of industry/ employment/ investment.** Conversely, some rural and coastal areas do well – possibly related to power stations or single industries, or because of particular tourism factors;
- The withdrawal of national and international investment needs to be replaced, and finding a (multi-industry) role for the local community's entrepreneurialism will be key. **A local vision for places, taking account of the economic context of the area – will be critical to establish buy-in to change and adaptation;**
- Many rural and coastal communities fall outside of the major metropolitan areas and Combined Authorities where there is a strategic layer of planning to provide direction. **Devising a way of developing collaborative local visions to guide the reinvigoration of rural and coastal communities should be a key priority.**

Housing

- **Not enough housing is being planned for in the North under the Standard Methodology⁵**, which is out of step with the transformational economic agenda. **This could lead to profound social and economic consequences if left unchecked;**
- **The North is a very affordable place to live** – regarded as a key strength. However, young people don't have sufficient options for living in rural areas. **More new homes are needed, in locations where people want to live and at a price that residents can afford;**
- Urban liveability, diversification of housing, quality of place, place-making and re-use of brownfield land are increasingly important drivers of change. **The North has a large number of towns and cities with high quality historic centres which can be adapted to cater for this growing trend**, with the potential for declining centres to be re-imagined;
- However, social infrastructure is often poor in the North's secondary towns with limited investment – adding to a perception that these are declining/run down. **Investment in place making should be a key part of future plans;**
- Land values are generally lower in the North, and the cost of regenerating difficult urban sites identified for housing is high, making viability a real barrier to delivering new homes away from higher value locations. A more strategic approach to the location of new housing is required. **This needs to move away from a 'five-year supply' numbers exercise to integrated planning for housing, economic development and infrastructure.**

⁵The Standard Methodology for assessing local housing need. Guidance: Housing and economic needs assessment, 20th February 2019.

Natural assets

- **Natural assets are central to quality of place for the North of England.** They differentiate the North, underpinning its attractiveness as a place to live, and its competitiveness as a place to invest;
- They generate significant social, economic & environmental value, through carbon storage, water supply, flood risk management, biodiversity, and supporting health & wellbeing. **They also generate significant economic value through tourism, minerals, energy generation, agriculture, forestry, eco-system services, and ports & logistics uses;**
- **Government's 25 year plan to improve the environment represents a major opportunity** for the North's natural assets to play a more integrated and essential role. There is scope for the North's natural environment to provide natural capital and biodiversity gain services, as well as providing the natural spaces that are important components of a good quality of life;
- **Despite the importance of these assets, the planning and governance of natural assets is disassociated from planning for people.** The assets are not engaged in devolved administrations and decision-making. The integrated planning of our natural and built environments is needed to get the best of the interdependencies between the two;
- **It is felt that the North's natural assets deserve a seat at the decision-making table;** a place-based approach and a collaborative approach to action; and co-ordinated investment and aligned incentives.

Common themes emerged around quality of life and quality of place.

These themes are relevant to all the drivers of change, and are important in informing the outcomes and requirements we might be looking for from the Ambitions for the North.

Quality of life outcomes

Environmental: the urgent need to respond to climate change/ carbon reduction, cutting across planning for development, regeneration of our towns and cities, and the role of our natural assets.

Health & Wellbeing: the emerging understanding of the impact of a car based, low activity society on health and wellbeing and the benefit of good design, public realm, green spaces.

Prosperity: the decline of our town centres and high streets, the barriers of low accessibility to training and employment opportunities, and the opportunities of creating the conditions for new emerging business models through more flexible standards for the built environment.

Fig 18: National Parks

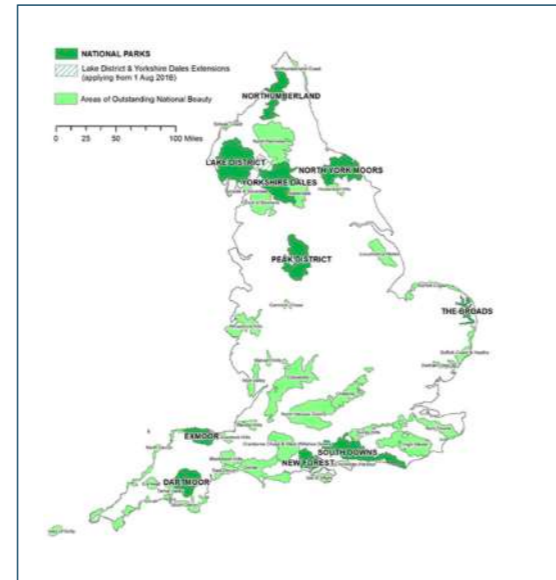


Fig 19: A Green Future



Quality of place requirements

Connectivity to local facilities, education and health: connectivity can be provided through good transport connections, but how this is done may vary over time. We need to allow some flexibility in approach, and focus on delivering good local connections for active modes, allowing smart mobility solutions to emerge and make efficient use of existing infrastructure as much as possible.

Digital connectivity will be essential for rural and coastal towns, and rural communities – whilst the trends towards urbanisation appear irresistible now, there is an opportunity for less well-connected settlements to develop a prosperous future through digitally enabled employment and cutting-edge local businesses.

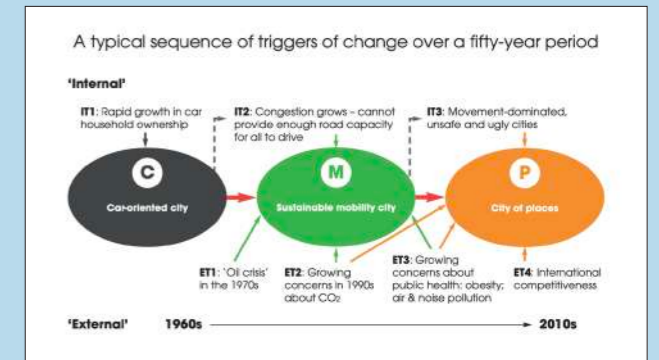
Quality of the built and natural environment is at the heart of creating attractive places which people want to live and work in. It is widely recognised that current business case methodologies make it difficult to justify investment in pure economic terms, and so the strategic case is fundamental to success. A local vision is therefore a critical requirement.

Two further common themes arose through stakeholder engagement...

Firstly, there is an increasing recognition that the planning process is failing to deliver sustainable, healthy and prosperous communities. Research from a range of organisations, including Public Health England and the Foundation for Integrated Transport is pointing towards car-based development leading to poor health and wellbeing, environmental and economic outcomes.

There is strong support for a move towards a more place-based approach to planning, based around a clear vision for future communities and an adaptive approach to delivery. This was seen by stakeholders as being an important aspect of future planning in the North, putting the future needs of communities at the heart of the process, and equipping them to adapt to future change.

Secondly, the significant reduction in available skills and resources in Local Planning Authorities (in particular), with the brief and empowerment to engage in these wider issues. Whilst direct funding levels is not the whole story, there is a consistent picture of skills and resources being a major impediment to putting in place the necessary frameworks for good growth.



CREATE: Urban Mobility: Preparing for the Future, Learning from the Past

CREATE is an EU Horizon 202 and Civitas project which looks at past transport and land use planning policy development across a range of European Cities. It identifies a common trend from 'car based' cities, through 'sustainable mobility cities' to 'place based' cities.

It also looks forward to the development of 'Integrated Cities' which respond to 'smart city' principles, seek to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of its networks, and adopts a comprehensive systems approach to urban planning.

The study advocates comprehensive 'place based' city visions to guide, and governance to lead the development of liveable places, which are safe and attractive places to live, where people can take part in economic, social and community activities.

Local authority spend on planning (minus income from planning fees)⁶

Difference in spend in 2009/10 and 2017/18 (%)

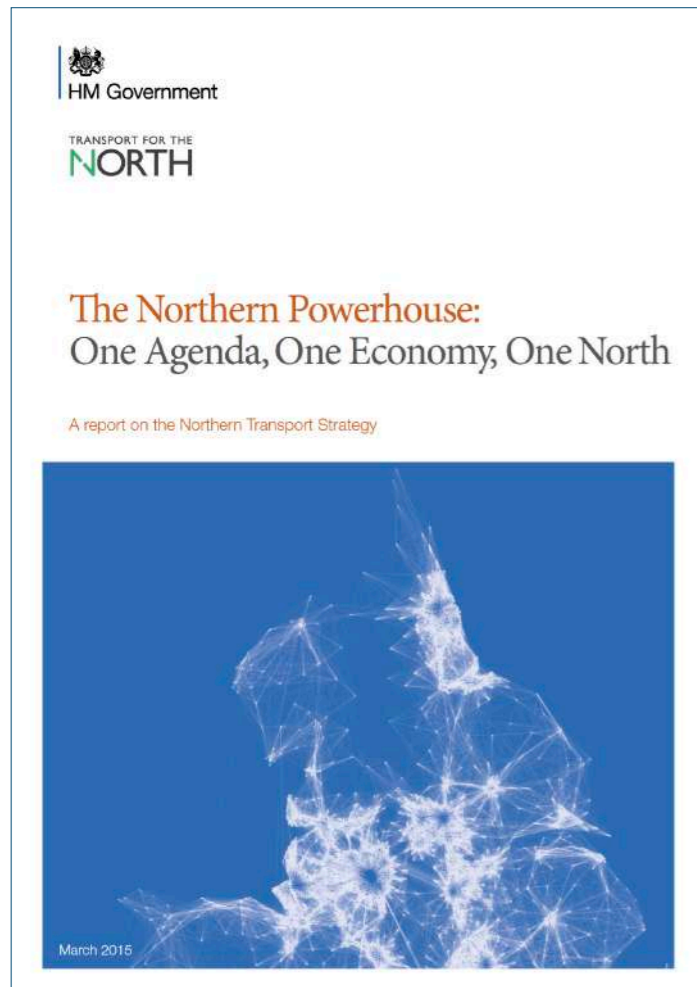
North East Total Planning Cuts (NET)	- 66%
North West Total Planning Cuts (NET)	- 62%
Yorkshire and Humber Total Planning Cuts (NET)	- 60%

⁶ Unpublished RTP1 analysis of MHCLG data on local authority revenue expenditure and financing, available from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/local-authority-revenue-expenditure-and-financing>

5 Ambitions for the North

Strategic aims informing nature and tone of a vision for the Spatial Framework.

Fig 20: The Northern Powerhouse, One Agenda, One Economy, One North – A report of the Northern Transport Strategy, March 2015, Transport for the North



A key underpinning element of the Great North Plan is an underpinning vision for the North. At this stage of the work, this has not been fully defined, but there were some very interesting and informative messages that came through the stakeholder engagement about the nature and tone of the vision that should inform the Spatial Framework, and the ambitions and recommendations it contains.

Stakeholders urged us to break away from previous trends rather than perpetuate them and, in particular, to move away from three prevailing northern narratives:

- Away from what the challenges are, towards how we build on the North's considerable strengths.
- Away from a focus on things outside of the North's control – such as the North/ South divide – and to focus more on addressing inequalities across the North and improving competitiveness and quality of place.
- Away from a focus only on Core Cities and major metropolitan areas, towards a more inclusive, collaborative approach to metropolitan, suburban, rural and coastal towns and deep rural communities.

The strategic aims proposed therefore reflect a positive and forward-looking vision of the future for the North of England, in which spatial planning:

- Responds to major infrastructure investment aimed at improving the North's competitiveness (for skills, investment, productivity and jobs), and reducing intra-regional inequality.
- Supports investment in sustainable transformation, creating new communities focussed around access to the rail network and other sustainable transport modes, protecting capacity on the road network, and enabling investment in creating better places.
- Supports co-operation across boundaries and organisations, to make the most of inter-dependencies and to support the development of tailor-made solutions to the delivery of good growth.
- Provides a planning framework for the delivery of better places, which in turn can provide the foundations on which healthier, more sustainable, more prosperous communities can be built.

There are three distinct types of places across the North of England and the 'Ambitions' and supporting 'Recommendations' on the following pages are designed to work across all of them, and to enable all of them to grow sustainably. The refreshed approach to spatial planning that is needed across three place typologies is as follows:

- Influencing spatial planning in the places within and between the major metropolitan centres that will be experiencing major change as a result of transformational investment in infrastructure, thus experiencing a major change in terms of their economic geography, providing the opportunity to create to deliver sustainable patterns of growth and a more competitive North;
- Establishing the basis for a forward looking and co-ordinated vision for healthy, sustainable and prosperous growth in those larger urban settlements which fall outside of the influence of major new infrastructure investment, and which do not benefit from a strategic spatial plan based on its local economic and social function;
- Creating the conditions for the regeneration, repurposing and revitalisation of rural and coastal settlements in the North through a place-based approach to planning, to enable them to become more attractive places to live and work, and confident about their future – working with the extraordinary natural assets of the North of England to ensure that strategic plans for rural and coastal communities reflect an integrated and synergistic approach to the mutual benefit of the environment and local communities.

Given the scale and complex, diverse nature of the North of England, relatively few initiatives/actions can realistically be implemented at the pan-Northern level. There is, however, a glaring need for an over-arching spatial planning vision for the North, with a series of more detailed spatial plans at appropriate functional geographies.

The ambitions and recommendations are structured on that basis.

Fig 21: Transport for the North economic corridors – <https://transportforthenorth/strategic-development-corridors>

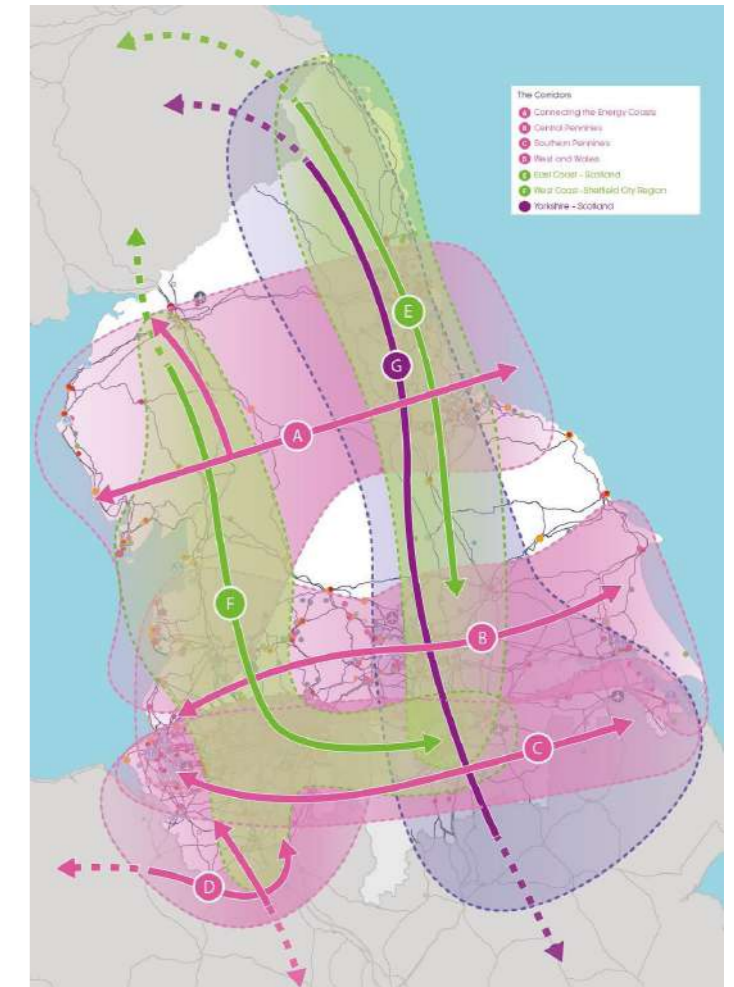
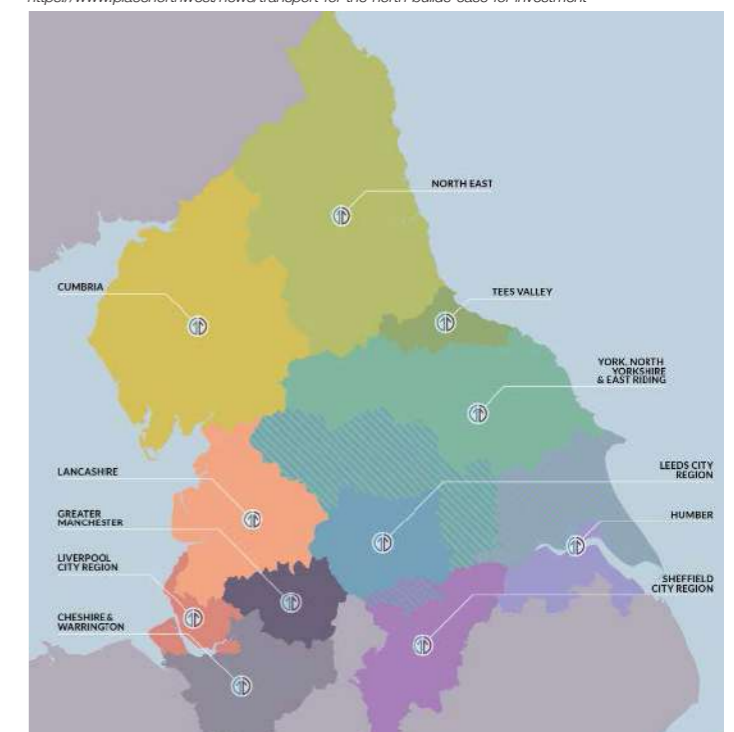


Fig 22: NP11 LEP boundaries – <https://www.placenorthwest/news/transport-for-the-north-builds-case-for-investment>



Ambition 1

To become a globally competitive, sustainable and attractive North of England

There is a need to establish a compelling vision which aligns strategic opportunities for housing and economic development with available investment and infrastructure proposals to deliver a globally competitive and attractive North. The vision will need to:

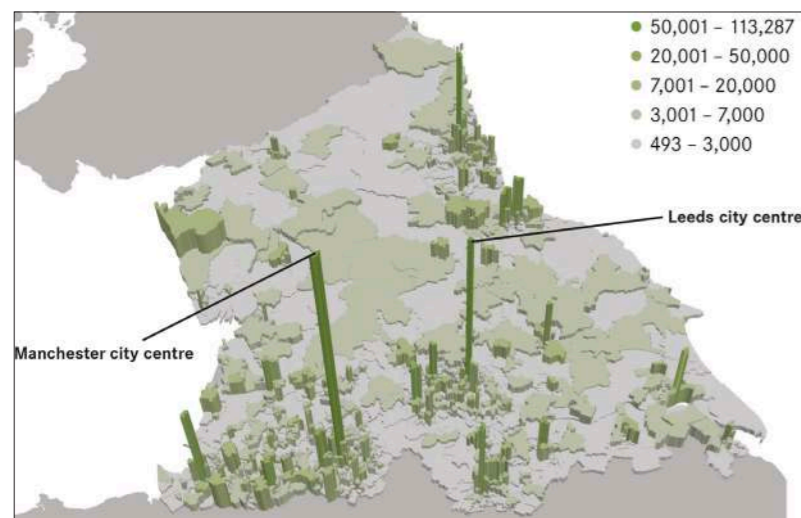
- Capitalise on the opportunity provided by anticipated investment in the existing rail network, HS2 and Northern Powerhouse Rail to connect economies, improve productivity, and enable inclusive, sustainable and competitive growth.
- Ensure that sub-regional and local connectivity is improved/ provided to connect people with employment, education and training opportunities, to create attractive opportunities for investors and empower local economies to better compete in the national and international markets.
- Capitalise on the opportunity of major infrastructure investment to deliver high-quality places and build successful communities around the new stations, which deliver healthy and sustainable outcomes.
- Be inclusive, embracing the need to foster high-quality rural and urban environments that contribute to the North being an attractive place to live, whilst creating a wider choice and opportunity for young people starting out on their careers.

Case Study

Building the Northern Powerhouse:

Lessons from the Rhine-Ruhr and Randstad, Centre for Cities

June 2016



Research into the economies of the Rhine-Ruhr in Germany and the Randstad in the Netherlands was undertaken to draw lessons for the Northern Powerhouse. Reflections on the key lessons learned were summarised as:

Jobs – especially knowledge based jobs – benefit from proximity and are concentrated in a few places, notably in the major cities. **Cities and city-regions are important for growth.**

Labour markets – neither the Rhine-Ruhr or the Randstad operate as one labour market, but as a number of them.

Frequent local transport is important to connect people with jobs.

Economic growth – performance is not simply about better transport, it is also about places being attractive to investors. **Quality of place is an important for success.**

The North of England is a complex, polycentric area. Clearly the cities are important, but what is the **vision** for the whole of the North, and how could this help to align **'people and place'** with its changing economic geography?

Recommendations

Considerations

Leaders & Enablers

1.1

A Spatial Vision for the North, to guide the spatial strategies at the functional area level (Ambition 2). At the heart of the Spatial Vision should be the aim of achieving transformational growth: a substantially strengthened and more prosperous Northern economy. The Vision should focus significant investment within economic corridors linked by high quality rail infrastructure to take advantage of the changes in economic geography that this will result in, together with other sustainable transport networks.

The Spatial Vision for the North should cover sustainable development, sustainable mobility, transformational housing, planning for zero-carbon, and enhancing cultural heritage and identity.

There is currently no single body with spatial planning and economic powers for the North. This key governance gap urgently needs to be filled.

The process should involve a partnership of local leaders. A dedicated working group/ joint planning committee comprising chief planning officers etc could be established to develop a collaborative Spatial Vision.

While the important functions of Green Belts need to be maintained, the Spatial Vision should provide an improved framework for conducting strategic Green Belt reviews across the North, which are aligned with the objectives of the Environment Plan and safeguards the critical functions of Green Belts while balancing this with the significant changes to economic geography which are taking place.

Leadership from the Convention of the North and Transport for the North, working with:

- Treasury/ BEIS/ DfT & MHCLG/ NIC
- Environment Agency & Designated Areas
- Metro Mayors, Combined authorities and County Councils
- NP11 & Northern Powerhouse Partnership
- Homes for the North
- Infrastructure providers
- Local communities

1.2

A truly transformational vision for housing in the North, moving away from planning by numbers and towards incentives for ambitious, high quality, affordable and sustainable housing provision. This strategic approach should focus on delivering more housing in sustainable locations, and meeting viability, quality and affordability objectives with pan-northern housing deals across the North.

There needs to be a Northern alternative to the government's standard methodology for assessing housing need: one which is closely aligned with the transformational growth agenda for the North.

This process should recognise the radical changes to the economic geography of the North that are arising from investment in rail infrastructure, technological development and the potential for co-locating housing and economic growth close to transport hubs outside existing urban areas, balancing this against the North's distinctive built and natural environment.

Leadership from Metro Mayors, Combined authorities and Homes for the North,

working with:

- Treasury, MHCLG, Homes England
- Local authorities and builders
- Infrastructure providers
- Local communities

1.3

A Ports, Logistics, Airports and Industrial Strategy, integral to and flowing from the Spatial Vision for the North, to take advantage of new rail capacity for intermodal freight and the industrial economy, ensuring alignment with global markets and international trade routes.

This will build on John Cridland's review of international connectivity for the Northern Powerhouse, and the recommendations of the National Infrastructure Commission for sub-national transport bodies to play a greater role in planning. It should include the deployment of electric and hydrogen transport infrastructure for freight, across all modes.

The Strategy should take account of significant new development as well as recognising the importance of supporting major existing capabilities, such as Teesport and Manchester Airport.

Leadership from NP11, Transport for the North working with:

- The Northern Powerhouse Partnership
- The National Infrastructure Commission, Treasury, DfT, BEIS
- Infrastructure providers

Recommendations Considerations

1.4

A Strategic Infrastructure Tariff:

Additional powers for combined authorities to establish Strategic Infrastructure Tariffs, or other land value capture mechanisms, to ensure that the value of public investment in infrastructure is captured for the benefit of local communities, and specifically to enable enhanced development around railway stations to better capitalise on economic development opportunities.

Leaders & Enablers

Possible models may align with the Strategic Infrastructure Levy which formed part of recommended changes to the Community Infrastructure Levy, or the London Mayoral Levy

Leadership from Transport for the North, Combined authorities, NP11

working with:

- Treasury, MHCLG, DfT
- Northern Powerhouse Partnership

Ambition 2

To deliver the vision for the North by coordinating planning and investment across functional areas

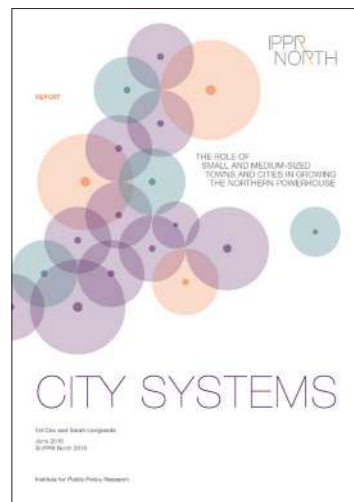
There is a need to co-ordinate investment across housing, employment, infrastructure, technology, environment and community, to deliver distinctive, attractive, healthy and prosperous places to live, which deliver the transformational Vision for the North.

- Delivering the transformational Vision for the North – of a strengthened and more prosperous Northern economy – will only happen if the fragmented governance of the North is addressed head-on.
- Spatial strategies will need to be produced for appropriate functional geographies. The GMSF provides a prototype that should be replicated across the North.
- The spatial strategies should not cover the National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, for which separate plans should be produced (with the same status).

Case Study City Systems:

The role of small and medium sized towns and cities in growing the Northern Powerhouse

IPPR North, June 2016



The 20 small and medium sized towns and cities (SMCs) with populations of more than 75,000 represent nearly one third of the North's economy, and of its population; Growth in these cities since 2009 has been 34% which is comparable to the core cities.

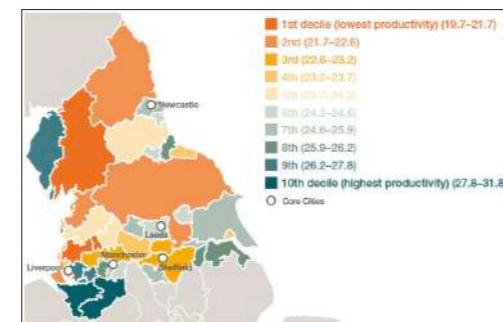
SMCs such as Warrington, Wakefield and Durham all have growth rates that exceed the core city neighbours, and Wigan and Burnley have higher labour productivity rates than nearby Manchester. It is suggested that this is because they have local economic clusters that complement urban hubs, but benefit from non-urban locations.

Despite their combined strengths, SMCs face significant challenges. Case study evidence from Wigan, Burnley, Doncaster and Carlisle suggested that the problems of peripherality can be overcome by maximising the benefits of local economic assets, strengthening human potential, addressing institutional weaknesses and enhancing collaboration and connectivity with big-city neighbours.

With these needs in mind, IPPR made six recommendations, including a call for changes to the Green Book appraisal process to properly reflect the contributions of SMCs and the benefits of local connectivity; and for Transport for the North to take account of the diverse and complex nature of the northern urban ecosystem and wider economy.

The regions within the North that have the highest labour productivity are not those that the big-city narrative would lead you to expect

Nominal GVA (£ per hour worked, excluding rental income) at NUTS 3 geographies in the north of England, 2004–2014



Case Study Greater Manchester Spatial Framework

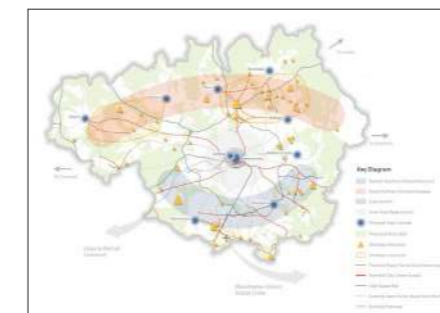
The Greater Manchester Spatial Framework ('GMSF') is a spatial planning framework that covers ten local authorities which form the Greater Manchester Combined Authority. It sets an overall vision as to how Greater Manchester should develop over the next two decades.

The GMSF is being produced collaboratively by the ten local authorities. The plan allocates sites for residential and employment uses; supports the delivery of key infrastructure, including for transport and utilities; and protects important environmental assets across the region.

The GMSF has the benefit of a Local Industrial Strategy and Transport Strategy which align with the overall vision, supporting an evidence based approach to allocations for employment and housing sites inside and outside of

the existing urban areas, and a review of green belt that reflects anticipated changes to economic geography.

As part of Greater Manchester's devolution deal they have access to a number of funds which will support the delivery of their plan, including a £600m small sites fund to support councils and developers release smaller sites.



Recommendations

Considerations

Leaders & Enablers

<p>2.1</p>	<p>A Spatial strategy for each functional area in the North should be produced, following the GMSF model, which is based on collaborative strategic planning across a sub-regional area.</p> <p>Each spatial strategy should be consistent with and flow from the overarching Spatial Vision for the North. It should be consistent with other plans such as the Local Industrial Strategies and Transport Plans, and provide an integrated, ambitious strategy for economic and housing development, and supporting transport and other infrastructure.</p> <p>Innovation will also be needed to build new funding and investment models which enable the redevelopment of brownfield land. Housing Growth Packages should be central to the strategies.</p>	<p>Spatial strategy should build on the National Infrastructure Commission's recommendation that Metro Mayors should develop and implement long-term strategies for transport, employment and housing in their areas. These principles should be extended to functional areas beyond the combined authorities so that all areas have the opportunity produce a plan which can align development and infrastructure plans with the strategic vision to deliver the prosperity dividend for northern places.</p> <p>The spatial strategies should strive to build Northern communities, fit for the future, by encouraging collaboration and innovation in the built and natural environment, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encouraging strategic approaches to new settlements, urban extensions, and urban regeneration - Holistic green/ blue & brown planning, balancing development in the urban fringe and regeneration in the urban centres, with and access to green spaces, flooding, bio-diversity enhancement in rural and urban settings 	<p>Leadership from the Convention of the North, Metro Mayors & Combined authorities, County Councils and NP11</p> <p>working with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Treasury - MHCLG, Cities and Local Growth - National Park Authorities and AONBs - Infrastructure providers - Local communities
<p>2.2</p>	<p>Local Connectivity Plans to ensure the delivery of important connections from strategic transport infrastructure to growth opportunities and local communities.</p>	<p>This should include a strategy for smart mobility solutions, including the need for complementary measures to manage demand for movement by car – and the development of green and blue corridors for cycling and walking.</p>	<p>Leadership from TfN</p> <p>working with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Combined authorities - Local Authorities - Infrastructure providers - Local communities
<p>2.3</p>	<p>Strategic Opportunity Areas should be identified for station-led regeneration, environmental improvement and growth.</p>	<p>These opportunity areas could be modelled on the London Opportunity Area approach providing clarity about powers for planning, funding and land acquisition in support of transformational development proposals associated with Northern Powerhouse Rail, and accessing an initial joint borrowing facility to kick start housing growth. The potential for development corporations with a remit for guiding growth around station hubs should be explored.</p>	<p>Leadership from Convention of the North, TfN, NP11, Combined authorities, County and District Councils</p> <p>working with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Treasury - MHCLG, Cities and Local Growth Unit - Infrastructure providers - Local communities
<p>2.4</p>	<p>Establish a new spatial planning observatory aimed at providing a single open source platform for local plan data, evidence and supporting documents. The observatory should also provide the basis for a pro-active approach to collaboration and innovation.</p>	<p>There could be one observatory in each functional area, with an overall 'hub' responsible for connecting the various observatories across the North together.</p>	<p>Northern Universities (including the N8),</p> <p>working with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Convention of the North - Treasury, MHCLG - Open Data Institute - Connected Places Catapult

Ambition 3

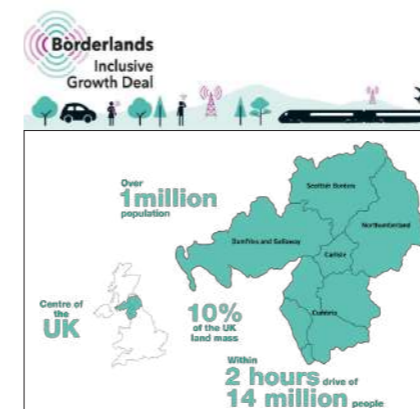
To narrow the disparities within the North, creating rural and coastal communities that are attractive places to live, work and visit

There is a clear need to provide better, more co-ordinated place-based planning for the rural and coastal towns of the North, so as to:

- Seize the opportunities presented by the move towards greater devolution and local funding, establish 'place based' visions for local communities, and adopt an adaptive approach to delivery in small and medium sized rural and coastal towns, and an adaptive approach to delivery to create better, more attractive places to live, work and visit.
- Address the polarisation of investment in town centres (where fewer larger centres are receiving investment at the expense of smaller centres which are often in decline), by adopting a strategic approach to repurposing the high street, and protecting its role as a place to meet and do business.
- Adopt a strategic approach to investment in high-quality public realm, open spaces and community facilities, creating the high-quality settings for communities, prioritising active modes as a means of travel to encourage healthy and sustainable lifestyles, and promoting wellbeing and community engagement.
- Get ahead of transformational change in the high street, employment, transport, energy and digital connectivity to provide attractive places for talent capture and retention, investment and inclusive growth.

Such principles of good planning are widely applicable, but of particular importance for the rural and coastal communities where change has been, and has the potential to have significant impacts on local communities.

Case Study The Borderlands Partnership



The Borderlands Partnership has been established to unlock the potential for sustainable and inclusive economic growth across the South of Scotland and North of England.

The Borderlands Partnership brings together the five cross-border local authorities of Carlisle City Council, Cumbria County Council, Dumfries and Galloway Council, Northumberland County Council and Scottish Borders Council to promote the economic growth of the area that straddles the Scotland-England Border.

The £345 million Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal is focussed on delivering thousands of new job opportunities, millions of extra tourists to the area,

improved digital connectivity and unlocking investment in towns across the region, generating a predicted £1.3bn return on the government's investment.

It has six key programmes; Digital, Borderlands Energy Investment Company, Destination Borderlands, Quality of Place, Knowledge Exchange Network and Business infrastructure Programme. There are also four place based and other additional transport infrastructure projects.

Recommendations

Considerations

Leaders & Enablers

3.1

Create an informal ‘place’ network for northern rural and coastal local authorities, to foster collaboration and innovation in local planning, to

- properly tackle ‘left behind places’ and to
- address the decline in skills and resources in Local Planning Authorities

This should embrace a move away from numbers-driven predictive planning by putting the needs of local communities at the heart of the planning process:

- Creating transformational place-based visions and deliverable strategies for development and infrastructure planning
- Embracing a strategic approach to infrastructure planning and an adaptive management approach to delivery

This may require a dedicated working group or joint planning committee of chief planning officers to spearhead the work of the ‘place network’ on a shared issues of local importance:

Properly tackle ‘left behind’ places – a focus on working with the new spatial planning observatories to (i) collate (and keep updated) broad time-series data/key indicators for the North’s town centres/high streets, and its coastal and market towns; and (ii) spearhead collaborative visioning and spatial planning for those places which the data suggest are being left behind, including the divides within cities where inequality and the greatest numbers of those in poverty are still highly concentrated

Address the decline in skills and resources in Local Planning Authorities to better deal with the challenges of local planning and delivery, and in particular to support the adaptive management and delivery of complex development, infrastructure requirements and environmental improvements.

Cuts to planning departments are making it increasingly difficult for LPAs to address long-term challenges – such as climate change – which is a key issue for coastal rural and communities. This could include provision of a dedicated resource to support the bidding for national funding programmes to meet their specific challenges, thus avoiding the drift towards solutions that don’t meet the requirements of local communities.

Leadership from NP11 and Local Planning Authorities

working with:

- MHCLG
- NP11,
- Infrastructure providers
- Environmental organisations
- Environment Agency
- Housing associations
- Local communities

3.2

Provide alternative models for collaborative planning, partnership working and funding to support the delivery of brownfield regeneration and high-quality built environments.

This could be led by the ‘Place’ network, working with the spatial planning observatory. It could include considerations, such as:

- Pragmatic approaches to ‘greenfield-brownfield’ agreements to boost the delivery of affordable homes in and around our settlements
- Town Centre Investment Zones/ Local Industrial Strategies/ Opportunity Areas/ Enterprise Zones/ Tax Increment Finance schemes
- New models for lifetime and inter-generational housing, live-work accommodation, flexible mixed-use buildings

Leadership from NP11

working with:

- Local Planning Authorities
- MHCLG

Recommendations

Considerations

Leaders & Enablers

3.3

Co-ordinate existing Local Transport, Public Health and Green Infrastructure Plans, taking full account of the need to establish a strategic approach to place making with high quality built and natural environments, and promoting healthy, active travel.

These plans should be delivery focussed, and provide an understanding of cost, risk, programme, governance, planning and land requirements. They should provide the basis for justification of funding, and establish the basis for its Strategic Case.

These plans should take account of work with national transport innovators (Connected Places Catapult etc) to develop appropriate smart mobility solutions for rural and coastal towns and their hinterland. For example, demand Responsive Transit solutions provide short term solutions to the need to provide better rural passenger transport, whilst Connected and Autonomous Vehicles might be the future.

- NP11
- Local Planning Authorities

working with:

- DfT
- MHCLG
- Public Health England
- Northern Powerhouse Partnership
- Infrastructure providers
- Transport operators
- Connected Places Catapult
- Local communities

3.4

Spatial Plans for National Parks and AONBs, which capitalise on and improve the extra-ordinary natural assets of the North of England. These plans will have the same status as the spatial strategies for the functional economic areas (Ambition 2).

The plans should identify opportunities for environmental enhancement, flood risk management, natural capital services and biodiversity net-gain, to enable these invaluable places to support the over-arching objective of transformational but sustainable Northern growth.

National Park Authorities and AONBs

working with:

- Environment Agency
- MHCLG
- DEFRA
- Infrastructure providers
- Local Communities

Case Study The Observatory Concept:

Newcastle University, Urban Observatory



Newcastle University, Urban Observatory (‘UO’) is the largest set of publicly available real time urban data in the UK, their sensors gather data across the city with over 50 data types.

The UO is committed to open data which means it is readily accessible for local authorities, developers and researchers. The UO also offers a bespoke monitoring service and work with a range of business, government and industry partners.

Research is at the core of the UO. The UO also assists with the deployment of

new sensors to support new research projects and provide tools to manage and visualise data in real time.

ODI Leeds is a pioneer node of the Open Data Institute. It was created to explore and deliver the potential of open innovation with data at city scale. It works to improve lives, help people and create value.

Pioneer nodes bring together communities, host events, produce open data projects and help promote understanding of open data in the region and worldwide.

Acknowledgments and References

The Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI)

The RTPI champions the power of planning in creating prosperous places and vibrant communities. We have over 25,000 members in the private, public, academic and voluntary sectors. Using our expertise and research we bring evidence and thought leadership to shape planning policies and thinking, putting the profession at the heart of society's big debates. We set the standards of planning education and professional behaviour that give our members, wherever they work in the world, a unique ability to meet complex economic, social and environmental challenges. We are the only body in the United Kingdom that confers Chartered status to planners, the highest professional qualification sought after by employers in both private and public sectors.

Report authors

This report was prepared by PBA, now part of Stantec, and the Global Urban Research Unit at Newcastle University, on behalf of the Royal Town Planning Institute and the Great North Plan: People and Place Project Group

About Peter Brett Associates

PBA, now part of Stantec, is a leading consultancy of planning and environmental consultants, engineers and economists working on local and strategic development planning and infrastructure projects. PBA has 13 offices located around the UK. We aim to plan, design and deliver better places for the communities in which we work.

About Newcastle University, Global Urban Research Unit

Newcastle University is a Russell Group University, ranked in the top 150 of universities in the world and achieved a Gold Award for its teaching excellence. The Global Urban Research Unit combines traditional and innovative approaches to analyse cities and towns, to better understand place and its potential creative and sustainable transformation.

Further information
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RTPI
Royal Town Planning Institute

Ambitions for the North

A spatial framework for people
and places in the North of England

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