

Leeds City Council Note to the Inspector on the Government's Integrated Rail Plan

The Government published its Integrated Rail Plan (IRP) for the North and Midlands on 18 November 2021. The IRP outlines how major rail projects, including HS2 and Northern Powerhouse Rail will be delivered and confirms that the Government will build 3 new high-speed lines.

The IRP confirms that the government will not build HS2 to Leeds within the current proposals, but that it will look at ways to run HS2 trains to Leeds in the future (see Appendix 1, para 3.47 and 3.48) The plan also confirms that the Safeguarding Directions for the proposed HS2 route to Leeds remain (see Appendix 1, para 3.49) whilst this work is carried out.

The Council's evidence on employment land supply (para 4.9 in Appendix 1 of CDREM1/3) sets out that there was a deficit of 53.6 hectares between the current employment land supply position and the employment land requirement and that the majority of this (50.2 hectares) is brought about by the Safeguarding Directions.

The Government's IRP, published after the close of the SAP Remittal hearing sessions, does not change the Council's evidence, because it clearly sets out the Government's intent to look at options to run HS2 trains to Leeds and retains the Safeguarding Directions.

Appendix 1: Extract form Integrated Rail Plan (emphasis underlined)

East Midlands to Leeds: rationale and alternatives considered

3.47 In the light of the cost increases seen on HS2 since the Phase 2b route was confirmed in 2017, as identified in the Oakervee review, the Government believes a wider range of options need to be considered. As well as the improvements to the East Coast Main Line above, and the new high speed service from Birmingham to Leeds and the North East via Manchester, we will look at the most effective way to run HS2 trains to Leeds. We will allocate £100m, along with additional sums going to West Yorkshire Combined Authority, to start work on the metro, as well as looking at options on how to take HS2 trains to Leeds. We are funding quick-win upgrades around Leeds station. On top of this, we will carry out enhancements at Leeds station as part of NPR. We will undertake a study to understand the most optimal solution for Leeds station capacity – particularly in light of post COVID-19 demand and our commitment to the first phase of the West Yorkshire Mass Transit System.

3.48 We will look at the most effective way to run HS2 trains to Leeds and start work on the new West Yorkshire Mass Transit System

3.49 This work will inform decisions about future-proofing to be reflected in the hybrid Bill design for the East Midlands high speed line (if necessary, during its passage) to minimise the risk of costly changes later; and on safeguarding of the current route. However, pending conclusion of the work set out above, the Government does not intend to lift safeguarding on the previously proposed HS2 route at this time. Safeguarding Directions are kept under review and updated periodically to reflect the latest route design, and keeping the current provisions in place this will ensure that affected residential property owners retain access to the various support schemes.