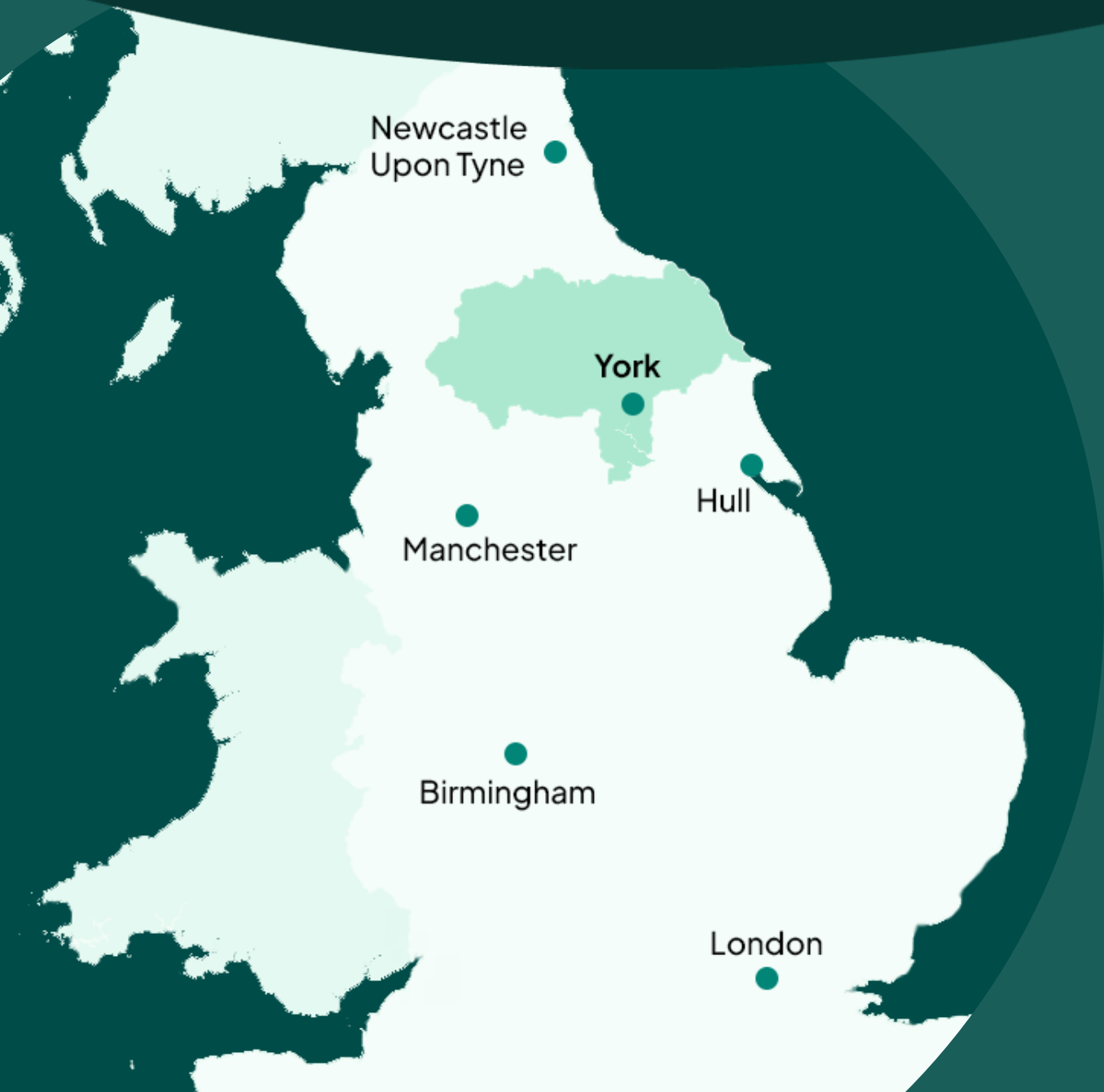


York & North Yorkshire Combined Authority

York & North Yorkshire Strategic Transport Framework



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Mayor's Foreword

Whether it's getting to work, accessing healthcare and leisure, or spending time with family and friends, transport underpins almost every part of our daily lives. The quality of our transport system shapes not only our economy and the strength of our communities, but all aspects of people's lives in York and North Yorkshire.

This is a remarkable place to live, work and visit. But for too long, too many people have faced barriers to getting where they need to go. Our public transport network is not as joined-up, accessible or reliable as it should be, and opportunities for safe walking, wheeling and cycling are not always available or convenient. These challenges hold back the full potential of our region.

This plan sets out a clear and ambitious direction for change. It lays the foundations for an integrated, sustainable transport system that puts people first and gives everyone more choice in how they move around our region. It recognises the need for an integrated transport network, where buses, rail, active travel and the road network work together to support vibrant places and thriving communities.

An affordable, accessible and well-connected network will help people move around our region, and beyond, with more seamless journeys. Transport is key to unlocking growth for our residents and businesses.

This plan is a bold and ambitious framework for building a healthier, more inclusive and better-connected future for our region.

David Skaith,
Mayor of York and
North Yorkshire

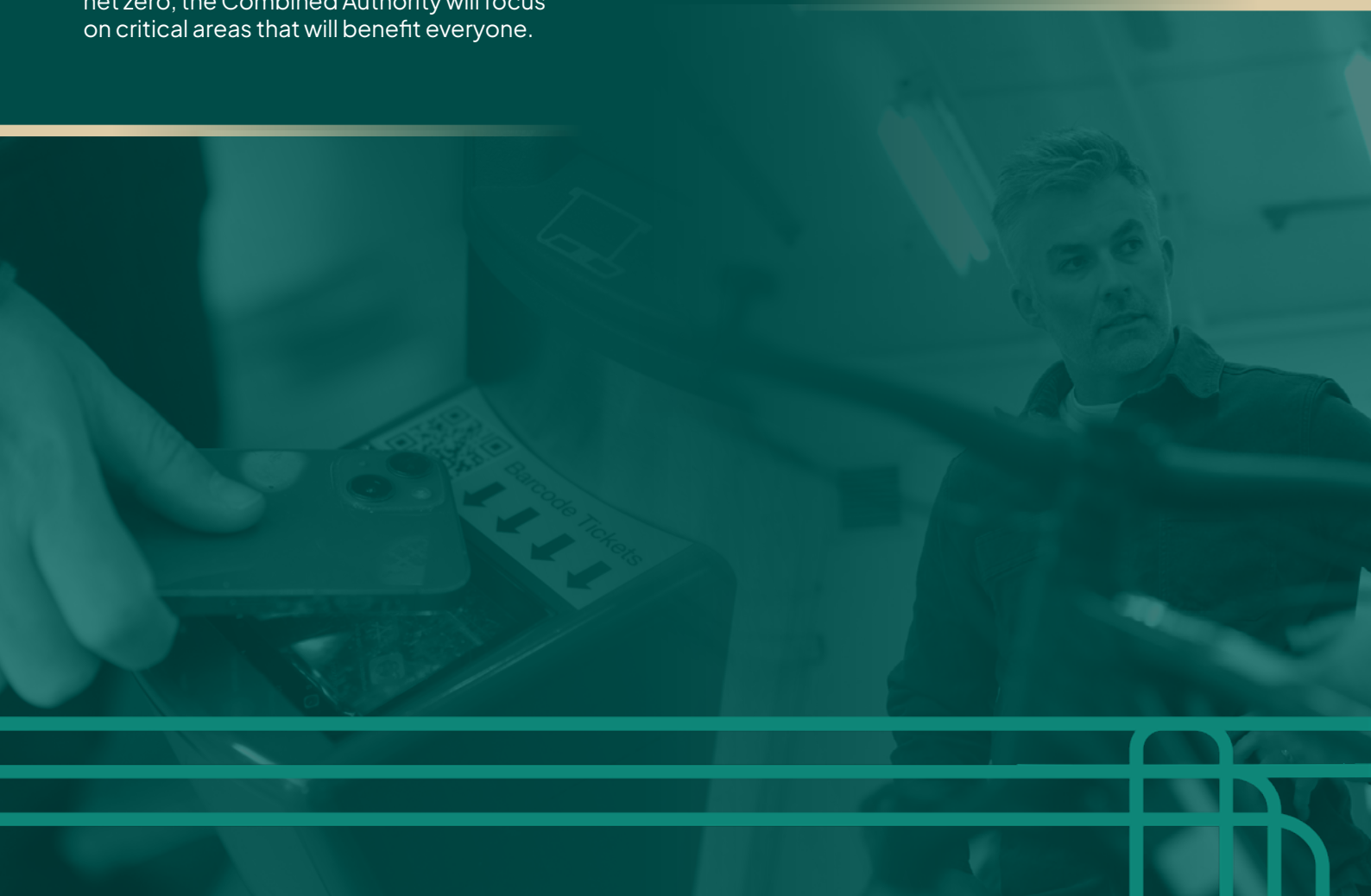


New Strategic Opportunities

The York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority was formally established on 1 February 2024, meaning that decisions and funding will move from Westminster to the Combined Authority, led by an elected Mayor who understands our region's needs and aspirations.

Our devolution deal secured over £540 million of investment over 30 years – together with the devolved Local Transport Grant from April 2025, this will empower the Mayor to drive impactful projects across the region that will attract further investment. From improved transport and housing to enhanced skills and a smoother transition to net zero, the Combined Authority will focus on critical areas that will benefit everyone.

Our economic ambitions around growing our businesses, innovation and driving our global aspirations, require that we are well connected to neighbouring ports and airports (Teesport, the Humber ports, Leeds Bradford and Manchester Airports) and key economic centres – in the North, in the Midlands, London and across the UK. Achieving a modern, well-connected economy unlocks and enables employment and skills opportunities, allowing businesses to create digital innovations and minimise carbon emissions.



A well-connected economy means having strong infrastructure in place.

Our key strategic transport assets are the East Coast Main Line (particularly our national rail hub at York), the trans Pennine rail route and the A1, A19, A66, A63 and A59 road corridors, as well as the connection to the M62. The Combined Authority's work on transport will focus on these strategic transport connections as they are fundamental to support our growth ambitions.

- Road links
- Rail links
- Population size within built up area* >10,000
- Population size within built up area* <10,000
- Key urban centres outside YNY (not to scale)
- Airport
- Port
- University
- Power Station
- Protected landscape



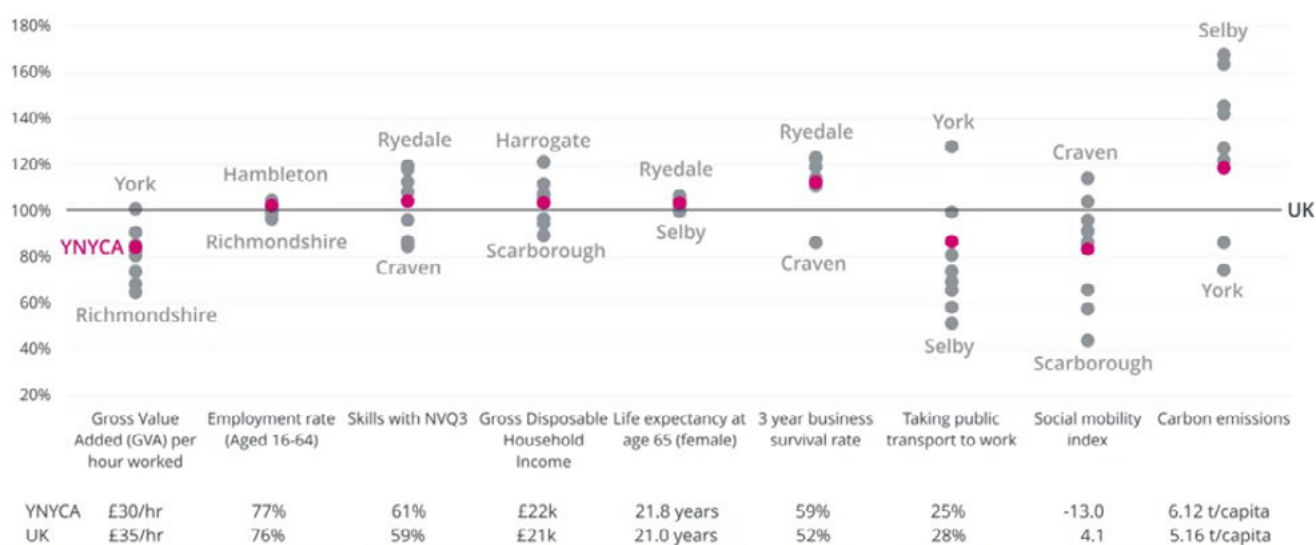
... York and North Yorkshire as a whole is above the UK average in some key economic indicators...

To shape, influence and accelerate the development and delivery of the strategic transport interventions that the region needs, the Combined Authority will work in partnership with Government and its agencies such as Network Rail/ Great British Railways and National Highways, to promote the necessary strategic transport investment. In some cases, the Combined Authority may co-invest with Government where it means better integration with local needs and also where this will accelerate the delivery of infrastructure enhancements which are seen as important.

The Combined Authority will make best use of its resources and key data to make and influence strategic decisions and prioritise investments based on local

needs, giving the region a much stronger voice than it has ever had before with pan-regional bodies such as Transport for the North (TfN).

Analysis by the Institute for Government (illustrated below) suggests that York and North Yorkshire as a whole is above the UK average in some key economic indicators including disposable household income, skills and employment rates, but lags behind in terms of labour productivity, social mobility and public transport commuting. So we are starting from a strong base, but still have much to do.



Source: Institute for Government analysis of various Office for National Statistics measurements, 2018-21. Notes: Values greater than 100% indicate greater than the UK average. Seven local authorities (Craven, Harrogate, Hambleton, Scarborough, Richmondshire, Ryedale and Selby) were combined into a single unitary council (North Yorkshire) in 2023.

The Combined Authority recognises that there is no single set of solutions for such a diverse region and so we will be developing a range of interventions to meet the needs of different communities. Our constituent local authorities have developed and delivered transport services and networks at the local and neighbourhood level, and this should continue.

This Strategic Transport Framework is a first step in setting out how the Combined Authority will achieve a well-connected economy, putting the people and communities of York and North Yorkshire at the heart of any future plans for the transport network that our region needs in order to function effectively as

a single economic space. It highlights where the Mayor will concentrate efforts to shape a transport investment pipeline of the most important transport improvements that meets the needs of residents, businesses and visitors alike.

Economic Framework

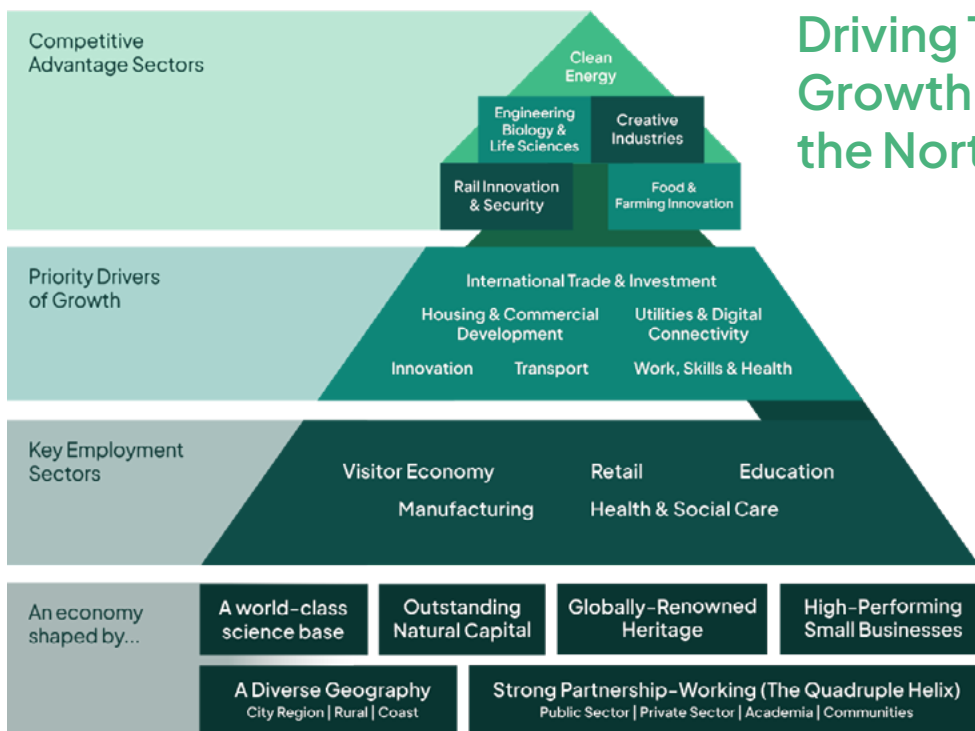
York and North Yorkshire is a mix of historic centres, thriving market towns, rural communities, seaside resorts and National Parks. Since transport is a derived demand, the economic, social and environmental outcomes that the Combined Authority is seeking to achieve will be a fundamental driver of any future strategy – although this will need a flexibility of application to reflect the different types of “place” within York and North Yorkshire.

Alongside this Strategic Transport Framework, the Combined Authority has prepared a Economic Framework, aimed at providing a clear strategic focus for its activities. This Framework builds on the strategic plans from the

City of York Council and North Yorkshire Council alongside existing sub-regional strategies, such as the Routemap to Carbon Negative, all developed from wider consultations and robust evidence bases.

A key aim of the Framework is to improve York and North Yorkshire’s function as a single economic space which is easy to travel around, into and out of, to access education, training, health, employment and leisure facilities. This will reduce the disparities between the different parts of the region and improve economic performance throughout the region.

The Economic Framework is illustrated below.



Driving Transformative Growth for the UK in the North

The Framework is underpinned by three strategic ambitions:

Transition to a carbon negative region: A carbon negative, circular and more resilient economy

Deliver good economic growth: A global, innovative, productive economy with strong and thriving businesses

Increase opportunities for all: A thriving and inclusive economy.

Health and wellbeing has been embedded across the Framework, recognising the role in supporting the wider determinants of health (e.g. transport/air quality, good housing, good jobs etc.). Strategic transport will play a key role in delivering our ambitions – good economic growth in a way the moves us towards being a carbon negative region, but with opportunity and better quality of life for all.

In order to deliver the strategic ambitions, the Framework sets out 8 priority themes under which investment plans will be developed:

1. **Great Places**, both rural and urban, sit at the heart of the plan, reflecting their importance to the economy of York and North Yorkshire and reflecting they often act as the link between the other seven investment themes
2. **A Well-Connected Economy**, reflecting the importance of transport and digital in connecting businesses and people to opportunities
3. **Housing**, with a particular focus on increasing affordable and sustainable homes
4. **A Thriving Workforce** will develop clear opportunities and skills pathways for all
5. **A Green & Circular Economy**, reflects the value of our natural capital and economic potential of a sustainable energy sector
6. **A Global Economy**, will develop the inward investment potential of the region prioritising high growth sectors
7. **A Productive & Innovative Economy** will drive the performance of established core sectors, whilst innovation and R&D
8. **Culture & Heritage** reflects the world leading status of our assets and will seek to strengthen and increase investment into our cultural assets.



Although a future investment plan for transport will sit under the second of these

ambitions, transport has clear links to all of the others, in particular the delivery of “great places for all” and improved health and wellbeing.

The key question when developing the transport investment plan is therefore: *“What transport solutions are needed to deliver the strategic ambitions that underpin the region’s distinctive proposition?”*



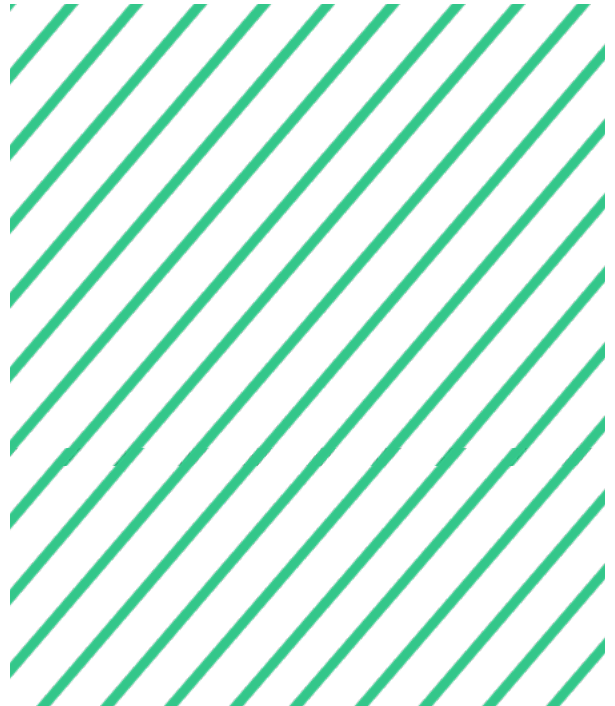


Primary Elements of the Vision for Transport and Mobility

The existing Local Transport Plans prepared by the two constituent local authorities articulate the current challenges with transport across our region. The recent “Our Big Transport Conversation” undertaken by City of York Council and “Let’s Talk Transport” survey for North Yorkshire Council provide evidence on the main issues that the Combined Authority’s future transport strategy needs to address.

Recurring strategic transport challenges that emerge include:

- Resilience, both the impacts of climate change and the legacy of recent road maintenance funding settlements.
- The ability to provide real alternatives to the private car for many journeys in the region, notably the longterm sustainability of the bus networks and the costs of retrofitting improved provision for pedestrians and cyclists to existing road networks.
- Decarbonisation of the transport network.



These transport challenges align with a number of the wider challenges facing the region identified by the Institute for Government research referenced on page 2 of this document, particularly:

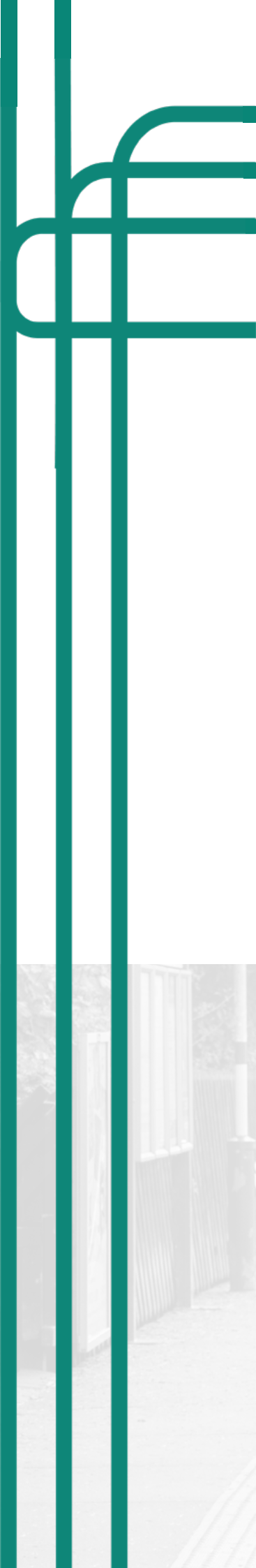
Lower than UK average labour productivity

High car dependency and low public transport/active travel use

Low social mobility and an above UK average ageing population

Higher than UK average carbon emissions per person

We also need to be mindful of the increasing need to connect to our identified strategic sites and growth areas and international gateways (ports and airports).



Drawing these strands together, and mindful of the Economic Framework, suggests three primary elements of a vision for transport and mobility across our region. This is illustrated in the figure below:



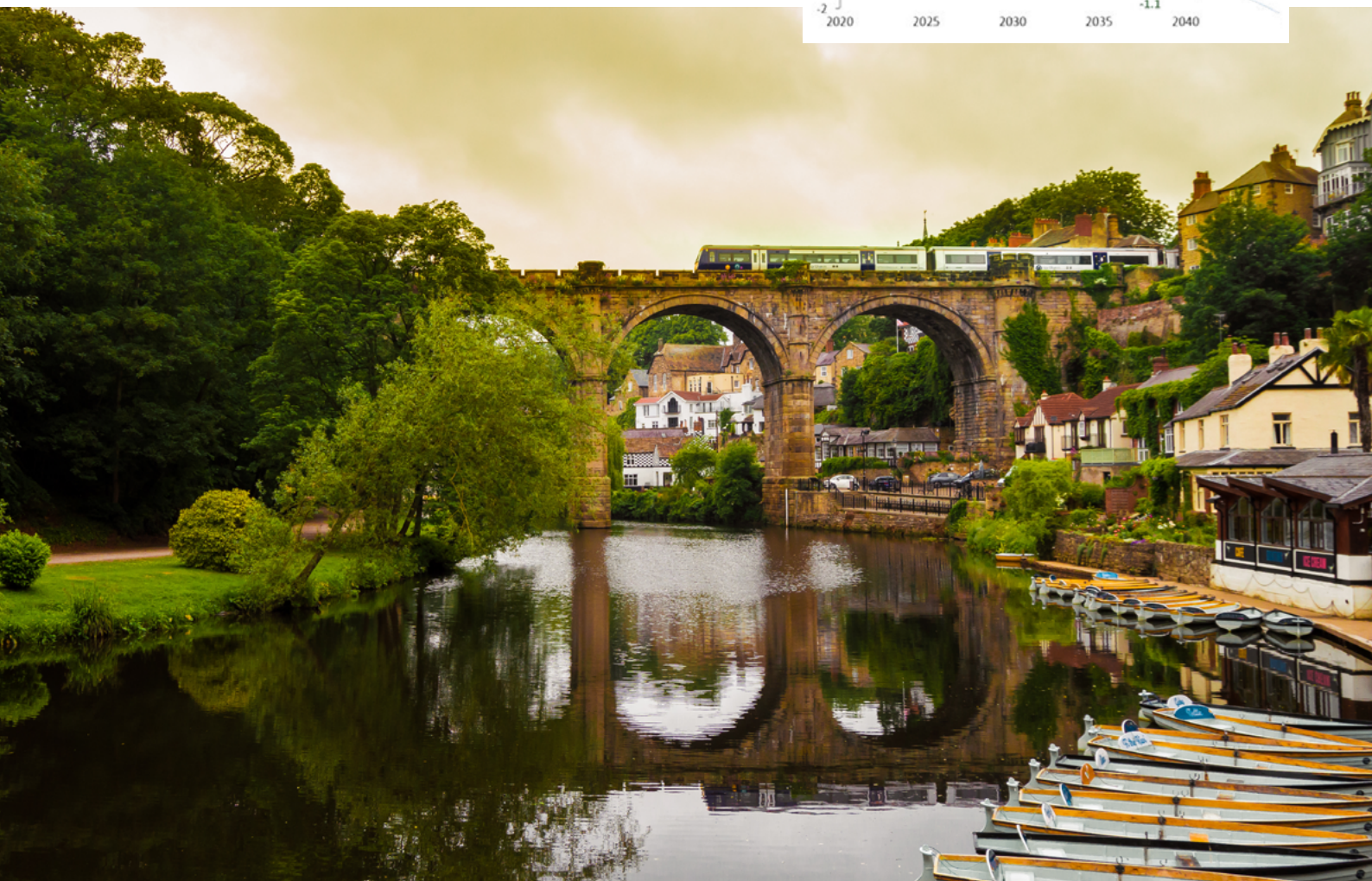
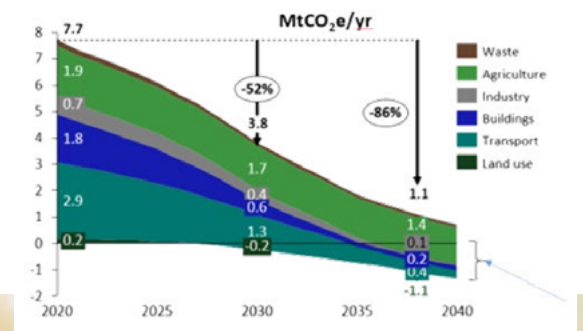
Decarbonisation of Transport

...place-based carbon reduction solutions are needed, promoting locally relevant solutions...

There is no route to a Carbon Negative economy in our area without decarbonising the transport network. But our distinctive places also mean there is no single solution for the York and North Yorkshire area, and so place-based carbon reduction solutions are needed, promoting locally relevant solutions, particularly in rural areas.

This means recognising that there will be an ongoing role for private vehicles across much of the region and enabling electric and other non-carbon solutions for cars, vans and other vehicles is a

crucial area for the Combined Authority to develop effective plans. It will be important for the Combined Authority to influence changes in travel behaviour, including more efficient car use, and communicate the clear benefits of a decarbonised network.



Mobility Choices

To improve choice, it is vital to understand people's needs for travel...

Too many people in the region have a limited transport choice, or worse still, no choice at all. This affects their ability to access employment opportunities, education, health services and other facilities, their social welfare and wellbeing, and to enjoy leisure and tourism attractions.

To improve choice, it is vital to understand people's needs for travel, as well as how data and technology can be used to inform any strategy and future transport interventions to create

attractive, efficient and cost-effective choices that meet the needs of all.

The Combined Authority is exploring how it can act as a data broker/repository to help plan transport and make the case for its policies and interventions to get the best solutions for the whole region. This will include consideration of how the principal urban areas, development sites and visitor attractions can be accessed by rail, bus, active modes and private vehicles.



Network Availability

The concept of availability has two important elements – the scope of the transport network, to be as accessible as possible for everyone; and the ability for that network to be used for as much of the time as possible.

Ensuring that the network is available and accessible will be critical to the success of any strategy – we have seen the adverse impact of climate change on our transport network and so we need to build more resilience.

The Combined Authority will be developing its plans linked to land use and economic activity, supporting planned areas of growth, planning for flexibility in demand and aiming to minimise disruptive events to ensure that people need to be able to go about their business in the most convenient and affordable way, wherever they are in the region.

...[ensuring] that people need to be able to go about their business in the most convenient and affordable way, wherever they are in the region.





E.C.I.C.

M.R.P.I.C.



Creating an Integrated Strategy

The three primary elements of Decarbonisation, Choice and Availability do not exist in isolation – they are each equally important to develop a transport network that supports our growth ambitions and achieves our wider economic, social and environmental objectives.

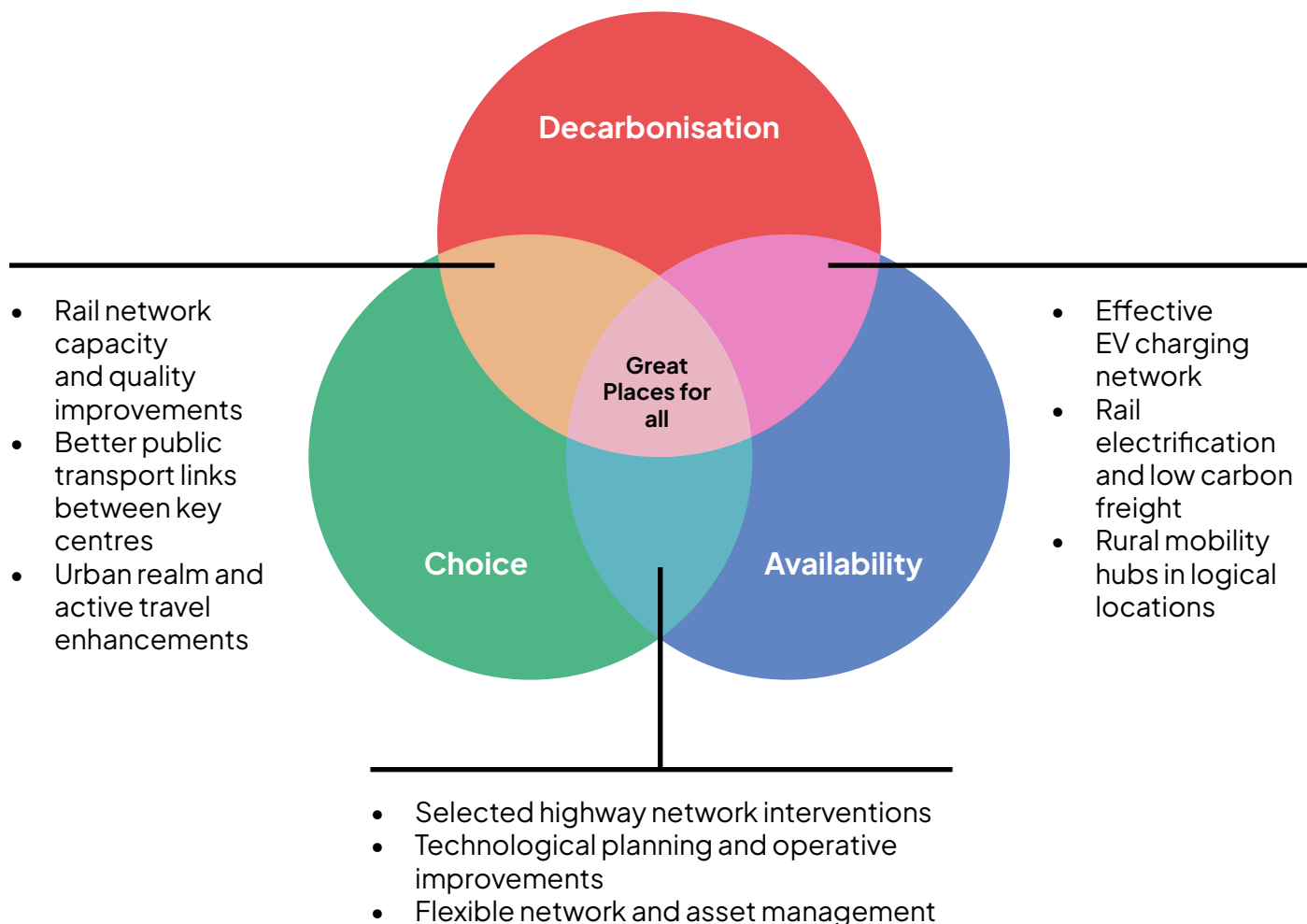
Bringing the elements together allows us to start to identify the

types of strategic transport interventions that we will need, and how this Strategic Transport Framework links to our Economic Framework to deliver “great places for all” and improved health and wellbeing.

Where overlaps occur between the three primary elements,

we have started to identify a number of high-level strategic transport priorities where the Combined Authority is best placed to lead. This approach is illustrated below.

Beneath these high-level priorities lie a series of more specific interventions and the following pages take each of the overlapping areas in turn to provide more detail.



Emerging Interventions: Decarbonisation & Choice

The following are the emerging strategic interventions that the Combined Authority will be looking to lead on:

- East Coast Main Line and York station capacity – York station and the East Coast Main Line are the region’s primary rail connections to London and the rest of the UK, via a number of key interchanges, and the rail industry has identified the need for capacity improvements for these vital assets to accommodate future demand and deliver greater reliability. We will work with Government and its national agencies to ensure that these national connections are enhanced, as well as York station having the necessary capacity to continue to act as a national rail hub.
- Line speed and capacity enhancements York to Scarborough and Leeds / York to Selby – the current Transpennine Route Upgrade programme runs through to York and yet the train services continue beyond York, including to Scarborough and Selby. We need address the challenges of east-west strategic connections for our coastal communities and growth areas by providing a high-quality rail alternative to the private car to make rail a more attractive choice for longer distance journeys and act as a feeder connection to major hub stations.
- Enhancements at key stations such as Harrogate, Northallerton, Scarborough, Selby, Skipton and Thirsk, plus selected new stations such as Haxby – rail stations are far more than just transport interchanges – they act as gateways into their immediate surroundings and the wider area. We will invest in these places will be important to provide a clear indication of all the region has to offer, as well as supporting new stations where there is a clear benefit for our growth ambitions.
- Bus improvement plans in Harrogate, Scarborough and York, as well as corridors between main centres – bus connections between and within our main centres will provide not only a means of accessing these centres by public transport, but also to access the wider network to support choice and decarbonisation. We will accelerate our plans for improving bus services across our core network and consider whether there is potential for bus rapid transit or light rail on the busiest corridors in the area.
- Innovative rural public transport solutions – bus service provision outside our main centres is often infrequent and unreliable, but a fixed network pattern is not financially sustainable and does not meet the needs of rural communities. We will develop innovative and forward-thinking solutions as part of a new approach to rural public transport that is affordable in the long term.

In addition to these strategic interventions, we will continue to invest in urban realm enhancements in our key centres to deliver “great places” for all through aligning transport and regeneration. We will also develop an effective and accessible cycling and walking network to consider how each principal urban area, development and visitor attraction can be accessed by rail, bus, active modes and private vehicles. In order to make using public transport easier and more affordable for everyone, we will work with public transport providers on digital ticketing, information and fares initiatives.



Emerging Interventions: Availability & Decarbonisation

The following are the emerging strategic interventions that the Combined Authority will be looking to lead on:

- Leeds – Selby – Hull (including Sherburn Chord) and Harrogate Line electrification – whilst hybrid rolling stock and alternative fuels can play a role in achieving a decarbonised rail network, there are still some important ‘gaps’ where electrification is not currently planned. We will promote the clear benefits of filling the ‘gaps’ in the electrified rail network in our region to help transform rail journeys between important centres.
- Rail loading gauge enhancement – providing freight with the opportunity to use the rail network in line with business need is crucial to reducing the volume of HGVs on our main roads as well as encouraging a range of business investment in our region. We will develop and pursue interventions that allow modern containers to use the rail network to access our growth hubs and international gateways, particularly between Leeds and York, as well as Northallerton to Middlesbrough/ Teesport.
- Comprehensive electric vehicle (EV) charging strategy for rail stations, interchanges and park and ride sites – at present, the provision of EV charging facilities has either been led by the market or focused on providing chargers at homes or in urban centres. We will take a lead on decarbonising the first part of a journey that can be made by private car to a public transport hub.
- Low carbon public sector fleet strategies – as the Mayor assumes responsibility for the police and fire service in York and North Yorkshire, there will be a significant increase in our fleet of vehicles. We will embark on a large scale move towards a low carbon fleet for our public sector vehicles and continue the work done so far by York and North Yorkshire Councils in electrifying bus networks.
- Rural mobility hub development – complementing the flexible rural public transport offer is a need to provide hubs at logical locations within rural communities where people can access the wider transport network, but which also support the continued development of those locations by attracting people into them. We will develop a concept for such hubs and prepare a rolling programme for their deployment.

In addition to these strategic interventions, we will continue to invest in our existing local rail lines, such as the Esk Valley Line and promote selective new rail connections and re-openings. We will use longer-term funding settlements to develop a zero embedded carbon maintenance programme to improve the resilience of our road network.



Emerging Interventions: Choice & Availability

The following are the emerging strategic interventions that the Combined Authority will be looking to lead on:

- A64 to Scarborough delivery plan – improvements to this strategic route, including Hopgrove Junction, have been developed over a number of years, yet the narrow focus on the transport-related benefit: cost ratio has meant that a scheme has never received funding. We will look at a different way of phasing the delivery of the required improvements, making the wider economic and social case for investment.
- A1(M) and A19 Route Strategies – as with the East Coast Main Line, these routes provide our national connectivity and whilst both have had investment in recent years, we need to ensure that they have the necessary capacity to continue to support our growth plans. We will influence National Highways' future plans for the routes as their route strategies are developed.
- Key Route Network and diversionary route planning strategy – our road network is extensive, but some are more important in terms of their connections and purpose. We will implement a Key Route Network of roads to ensure that we have the maintenance and investment strategies that befits their status and provides effective diversionary routes if required.
- Northallerton level crossings – the current track layout in Northallerton means that as rail service frequencies increase, there will be more 'down time' for the level crossings in Northallerton, causing delays, congestion and poor air quality nearby. We will develop an equitable and affordable solution for this issue in promoting other strategic rail improvements.
- National Park Management Plans – our National Parks will remain at the heart of our tourism and visitor economy, yet the demands placed on the transport network in these areas fluctuates across the year and makes overall planning and the promotion of public transport difficult. We will make sure that future plans for our National Parks are a core part of the future strategy, particularly in reducing carbon emissions in these areas.

In addition to these strategic interventions, we will continue to invest in a modern approach to transport data collection and management to make best use of the infrastructure that we have and provide up-to-date and relevant travel information in support of tourism and business ambitions. We will also continue to deliver local road safety improvements across our transport network.







Making the Case for Investment

The Combined Authority will work with Treasury, the Department for Transport and its agencies, and TfN, to promote and develop the business case for funding strategic transport interventions. We will also work with the constituent local authorities to prepare funding plans for local transport needs that improve health and wellbeing across our region, reducing pollution, increasing levels of physical activity, improving access to services and reducing social isolation. It will be for the Mayor and local leaders to decide on priorities and interventions as they are the ones who know their areas best.

The most likely sources of the capital funding required will be:

- National Government investment programmes for rail and road that operate on five-year cycles
- Private sector investment (possible but can often be limited)
- Innovative funding opportunities.
- New devolved funding settlements, such as the Local Transport Grant, due to start in April 2025
- Targeted Government funding rounds linked to outcomes such:
 - Decarbonisation
 - “Levelling Up”
 - Active travel and public transport
 - Reduction in car use

As the Combined Authority becomes more established, the opportunities to access, and have control over, the various funding sources, will increase from the top to the bottom of the list above. However, in the immediate future, the top two will be the focus.

This will mean the Combined Authority doing a number of things, including:



- Articulating to Government how the Combined Authority is going to help deliver the necessary enhancements and demonstrate a return on investment
- Working with businesses to articulate the proposals and giving them confidence that the transport network being developed meets their future needs
- Agreeing how the constituent local authorities can integrate economic and planning policies for place making and future development that embeds zero carbon from the outset through the planning process
- Consulting with the public to inform options and build consensus for specific projects at a place level
- Creating opportunities to learn and evolve to secure more efficient and better outcomes in the future



Beyond developing this Strategic Transport Framework into a more detailed Strategic Transport Plan to sit alongside the individual Local Transport Plans that each of our constituent local authorities are required to deliver, this

will involve initially updating the evidence required to support our case for investment. Our ultimate goal is to deliver an integrated transport network across all modes that promotes key priorities and delivers Decarbonisation, Choice and

Availability for the different communities in York and North Yorkshire. We want to encourage sustainable transport choices through a system that is:



Easy to use and reliable



Affordable



Quick and convenient



Safe (or feels safe)



To achieve this, the Mayor and the Combined Authority will need appropriate resources and skills and an appropriate enabling regulatory framework. However, the establishment of the Combined Authority is the starting point for the work required, and the production of this Strategic Framework is the first step in what we need to do.

We will use the Combined Authority's initial devolved revenue funding for transport where necessary to build the case for our priority interventions to make the case to Government to include them in future programmes. In particular, before April 2025 we will:

- Begin the work of considering rail connectivity across the York and North Yorkshire area, including the significant movements to and from West Yorkshire, South Yorkshire and the North West.
- Work with our partners in the East Coast Mainline Authorities group to ensure that the future investment programme for the route meets our needs and develop a York Station Masterplan alongside LNER.
- Produce further evidence on the social, economic and environmental benefits of the dualling of the A64 and prepare an initial delivery plan for Government and National Highways that sets out how the improvements could be phased over successive funding periods.
- Establish a Key Route Network and prepare our own initial route strategies for key corridors such as the A59, A63, A165 and A171, working with cross-boundary Partners in the Tees Valley, West Yorkshire and East Riding and Hull to develop agreed improvements across boundaries that benefit our regions and adjoining communities, connecting strategic sites and supporting growth.
- Develop a programme for an EV charging strategy focused around rail stations, key interchanges and park and ride sites, working with TfN.
- Use committed and development, related funding to develop and implement bus priority improvements in Harrogate, Scarborough and York and review what the core bus network connecting our main centres needs to be in the future.
- Examine potential models for a flexible public transport funding offer and develop a concept for a rural mobility hub.





York & North Yorkshire Strategic Transport Framework

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About us

The York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority has been created by the City of York Council and North Yorkshire Council and is a legally recognised, single body. Our role is to use some of the money and powers, that up to now have been held by central government, and work with local leaders and communities to invest in ways that will help to make York and North Yorkshire a better place for you to live, work and do business.