

# Executive Summary: Powering the Midlands Engine

March 2017



Midlands Connect  
Powering the Midlands Engine



# Foreword



## Sir John Peace

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Chairman of Midlands Engine and Midlands Connect

I am honoured to introduce the Midlands Connect Final Strategy, which outlines this region's vision to become an engine for growth through investment in transport infrastructure for this generation and the next.

With this strategy we aim to improve the quality of life for those living in the Midlands as well as attract even more international businesses to the region. We believe that investing in this region's transport can benefit the whole country and create a positive ripple effect to boost the development of industry, skills and housing.

Back in July, we launched the Picking Up The Pace report, which set out a case for accelerating the planning and design stages of key transport projects in the Midlands so they can be built during the first half of the 2020s. This was the first stage of a journey which laid the foundations for the strategy set out here.

Along that journey, the route for Phase Two of HS2 was announced. This was a landmark moment that will ensure the Midlands and the UK will become major economic players on a global scale and must not be stalled if the wider UK economy is to prosper. Additionally, the announcement of the Government's Industrial Strategy highlighted the importance of infrastructure improvements to the success of the UK economy. And the Government's endorsement of Midlands Connect being integral to the Industrial Strategy was confirmed with £17 million in funding at the end of 2016 to draw up detailed plans for the transport links needed to power the Midlands Engine.

With Brexit on the horizon, Midlands Connect is vital to meeting the challenge of helping our regional economy flourish by securing further investment in our transport networks, allowing our businesses to become more efficient and boosting our export potential. This strategy is designed to secure further infrastructure funding needed to lay the groundwork for improved connectivity across the Midlands, bringing the east and west closer together and opening the region's businesses to the world.

The level of collaboration between our business and civic leaders to create this strategy is unrivalled and will result in a boom for the region's industries. In the coming year we will be working with government to push this strategy forward and bring success to the businesses and people in the Midlands.

Building on our momentum, the Midlands, together with government has an opportunity to use HS2 as a catalyst for growth and create a transport network that can deliver a once in a generation opportunity for long term economic success - not just for us here, in the Midlands Engine, but across the UK.

**Thank you all for your continued support.**

# Executive Summary

## The Midlands Connect Partnership

Midlands Connect is a pan-Midlands partnership of local transport authorities, local enterprise partnerships and local business representatives working with the Department for Transport and its key delivery bodies. The Partnership now forms the transport component of the Midlands Engine for Growth.

The Midlands is the largest economic area outside of London. It attracts more inward investment and creates more start-up businesses than anywhere in the UK outside of the capital. It is already home to six million jobs, and our companies export to 178 countries. A strong Midlands economy brings growth to the rest of the UK because the supplier and customer networks of our businesses spread far and wide.

The Midlands is the first region to benefit from HS2. Through Midlands Connect, we are making sure the region is not only well connected to the three HS2 Stations (Curzon Street, Interchange and East Midlands Hub) but also the three stations served by classic compatible trains (Chesterfield, Crewe and Stafford). We also want to capitalise on the released capacity HS2 will bring. Road and rail networks that work in the Midlands also work for the UK because they bring regional economies closer together and improve access to markets, suppliers and consumers - both within the UK and overseas.

Whilst the Midlands economy is strong it is not reaching its full potential, with productivity below the national average. If we can improve transport connectivity between towns and cities within the Midlands and with key centres elsewhere, then we could boost economic growth to the benefit of both the Midlands and UK plc.

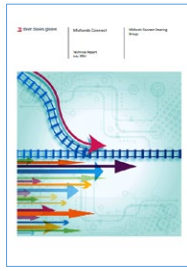
The Midlands Connect Strategy sets out our proposals for how we can start to turn some of this untapped economic potential into real growth: more and better jobs for local people, more trade and investment for local companies, and more opportunities for businesses to expand and for communities to thrive. Our work has been developed in close collaboration with the DfT, Network Rail, Highways England, HS2 Ltd and other key stakeholders.

Whilst our vision is ambitious, it is built on a strong technical evidence base and does not assume unlimited financial resources. In addition to implementing existing commitments, we set out a limited number of priorities which we will develop further over the next three years, making use of the additional £17 million of Government funding announced in autumn 2016, to enable delivery to start in the period 2020-25. We also provide a set of longer term interventions for development and delivery over the following years.

Our objective is to establish a rolling 25-year programme of strategic road and rail improvements, split into five year 'blocks' consistent with expected road and rail investment periods and the implementation of HS2. This comprehensive long term approach will give much-needed certainty to businesses, communities and investors whilst also improving quality of life, improving skills and enhancing access to new opportunities - both within the Midlands and beyond.



The Midlands trades with **178** countries worldwide



**January 2014**  
Partnership Formed

**Summer 2014**  
Baseline Report

**Summer 2015**  
Economic Impacts Study



**Winter 2016**  
Emerging Strategy

**Summer 2016**  
Picking up the Pace

**October 2015**  
Strategy Development  
Launched



**Spring 2017**  
Midlands Connect  
Strategy:  
Powering the  
Midlands Engine

**Autumn 2017**  
Midlands Connect to feed  
into Rail Investment Strategy,  
Road Investment Strategy  
and HS2 Hybrid Bill

Figure 1: The Midlands Connect Journey

## The Midlands Connect Strategy

Our strategy is built on a strong understanding of the changing economic geography of the Midlands, informed by the strategic economic plans developed by the Local Enterprise Partnerships, independent economic analysis, and engagement with the private sector through a comprehensive business survey. We have identified how transport connectivity supports economic growth in different sectors and locations across the Midlands - and importantly how and where it acts as a barrier to growth.

As a result we have been able to establish a spatial framework for investment based on four strategic economic hubs and six intensive growth corridors which are critical to both the Midlands and the UK as a whole.

### Strategic Economic Hubs:

- Birmingham, Solihull and the Black Country;
- Nottingham and Derby;
- Leicester and Coventry; and
- North Staffordshire.

### Intensive Growth Corridors:

1. Birmingham – Coventry/Leicester – Northamptonshire – Milton Keynes and the South, and includes connections to Kettering, Corby and the East of England;
2. Birmingham – Black Country – Staffordshire and the North, and includes connections to Telford, Shrewsbury and North Wales;
3. Nottingham and Derby – the North;
4. Humber Ports – Lincoln – Nottingham – Derby – Birmingham and Nottingham – Derby – North Staffordshire;
5. Nottingham – Leicester – Coventry – Warwick and Thames Valley, and includes connections from Leicester to Birmingham; and
6. Birmingham – Worcester – Hereford and the Marches with connections to Wales and the South West.

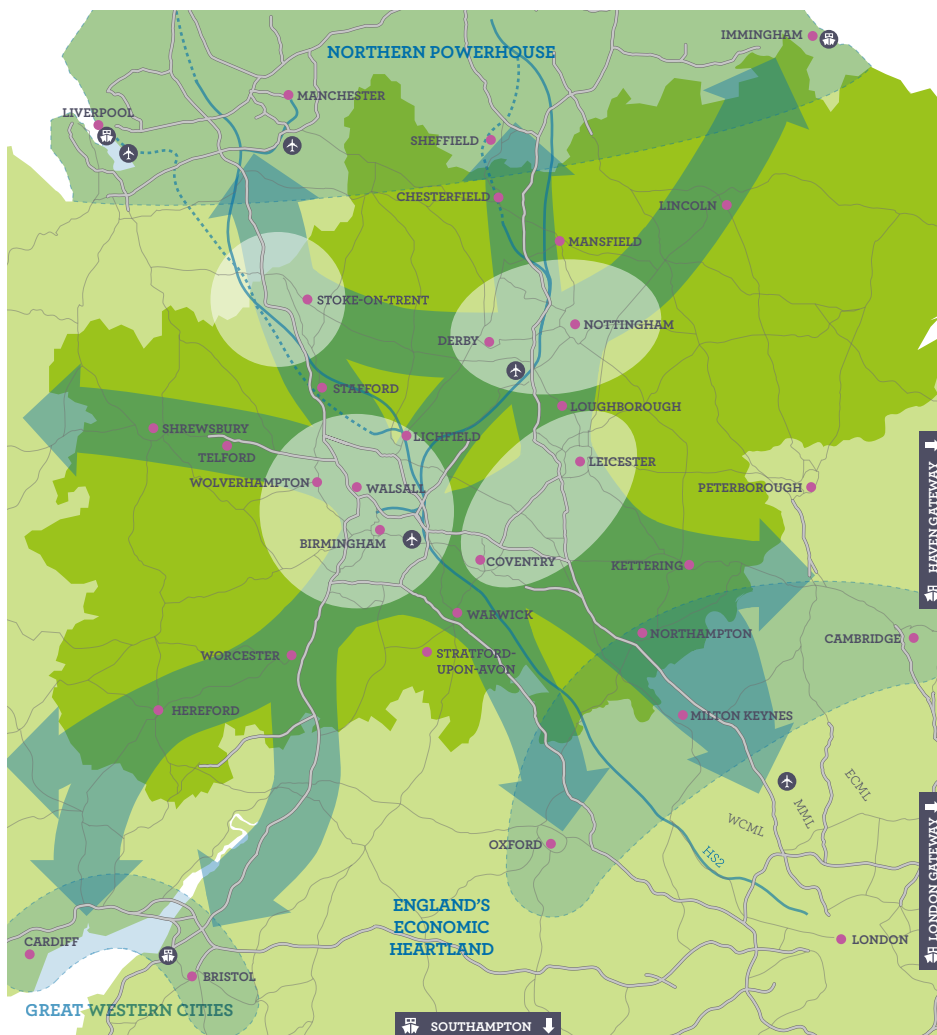


Figure 2: Midlands Connect Strategic Economic Hubs and Corridors

By targeting strategic transport investment in these hubs and corridors we aim to tackle congestion, support housing growth and improve the transport user experience. The Midlands Connect Strategy aims to transform the economy and improve quality of life by delivering the following outcomes:

### Regionally Connected: Powering the Midlands Engine

- Transforming East to West connectivity will widen access to markets, supply chains and labour markets releasing the full potential across our whole region – from the Welsh Borders to the Lincolnshire Coast.

### UK Connected: The Midlands transport networks power the UK economy

- Strategic road and rail networks that bring the country’s economic regions closer together boosting productivity, access to markets and international gateways.

### HS2 Connected: Getting the Midlands HS2 ready

- Investing in complementary connectivity will spread the growth unlocked by HS2 across the Midlands and the country as a whole.

### Resiliently Connected: We move the nation’s freight

- Boosting productivity and growth by providing reliable road and rail networks – reducing costs to businesses.

### Globally Connected: Leading the UK trading in the global market

- We will continue leading the UK in the global export market by increasing international transport links through our ports and airports – securing the UK’s long term economic prosperity.

### Intelligently Connected: Leading the technology revolution

- By applying innovation and technology such as integrated ticketing solutions, open data and driverless cars we can enhance journeys, provide transport planning solutions and reduce the need for expensive infrastructure.



Our initial analysis suggests that every £1 invested in the Midlands Connect Strategy will deliver at least £2 of economic benefits. As we work up specific proposals in more detail, we fully expect the economic benefits to increase substantially.

**Our strategy could boost the economy by:**



### Midlands Connect Investment Priorities

Almost all the strategic road and rail enhancements that will be delivered up to 2020 have already been decided. Our early priorities therefore focus on ensuring the delivery of key Midlands’ schemes already within the investment programmes of Highways England and Network Rail, and developing business cases for interventions that can start to be delivered in the period 2020-2025.

# Midlands Connect Strategy - Our Early Priorities

## Regionally Connected

- Delivery of the A45 Stanwick to Thrapston upgrade (Northamptonshire)
- Development of Birmingham to Nottingham (including HS2 Hub Station) and Birmingham to Leicester rail services
- Development of Coventry to Leicester and Coventry to Leamington rail enhancement business cases
- Development of a business case for enhanced capacity on Derby-Stoke-Crewe rail services
- Work with partners to develop schemes including Hereford bypass to improve connectivity to the South West and Wales

## UK Connected

- Delivery of Midland Mainline upgrade & electrification
- Development of a business case for the Midlands Rail Hub - creating capacity for an additional 10 train paths per hour into Birmingham from across the Midlands; improving east - west connectivity
- Development of a business case for the Midlands Motorway Hub - developing a long term plan for the nation's motorway crossroads
- Development of a business case for upgrading the A1(M)

## Resiliently Connected

- Delivery of M1(Junction 19 to 23a) and Birmingham Box (M5-M42) Smart Motorway Schemes

- Delivery of A46 Newark Northern Bypass
- Development of A46 (M40 to Syston) upgrade business case
- Strategic study for potential expressway route on A46 between M5 and M40
- Development of business cases for the M6 Junction 15 to 16 Smart Motorway scheme and Junction 15 upgrade
- Development of a business case for Phase 1 of upgrading the A5 between the A38 and the M1

## HS2 Connected

- Development of business cases for use of HS2 released capacity and classic compatible services
- A52 Corridor Multi-Modal Study (Derby, Nottingham, HS2 Hub Station and East Midlands Airport)
- Development of a business case to upgrade the A50 at Uttoxeter

## Globally Connected

- Delivery of the A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon improvement scheme to improve connectivity to the Haven Ports from the Midlands
- Development of business cases for improving connectivity to Birmingham International Airport and East Midlands Airport (through A52 Corridor Multi-Modal Study)

## Intelligently Connected

- Active participation in national rail smart ticketing initiative led by the Department for Transport and Rail Delivery Group in order to ensure regional needs and integration with multi-modal travel
- Further development of multi-modal smart ticketing and information options within the Midlands'

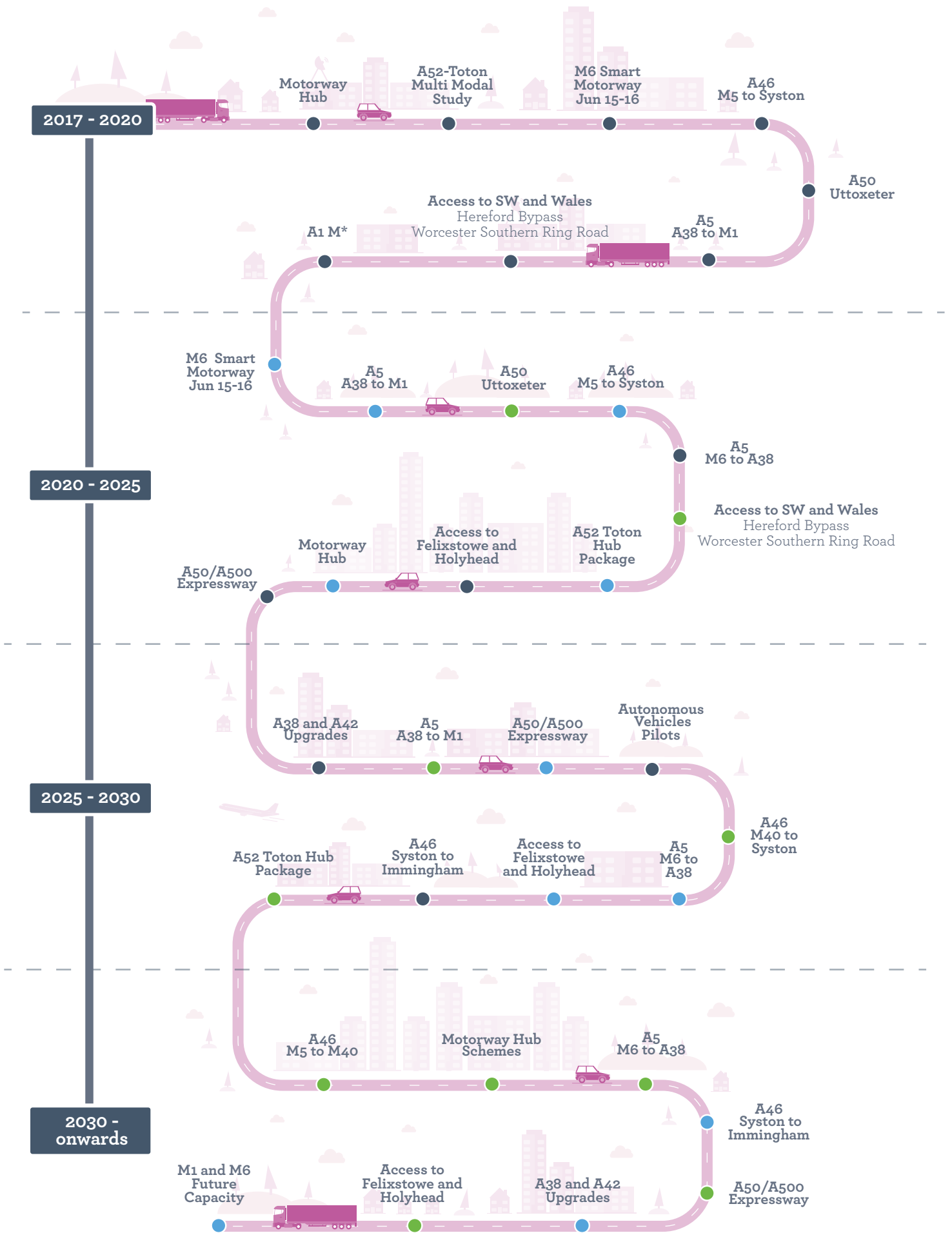
## Midlands Connect Strategic Programme

Working with our partners, our 'Picking up the Pace' report established our focus for development and delivery priorities over the next 25 years; the projects which are vital to ensure that there is a powerful Midlands at the heart of the UK's economy, and to enable our businesses and communities to thrive.

The Midlands Connect priorities for investment programme is set out below showing periods of development and delivery for each project. It is divided into five year 'blocks' consistent with expected road and rail investment periods and the implementation of HS2. This programme will be kept continually under review.



# Road Programme



● Commence Development Work

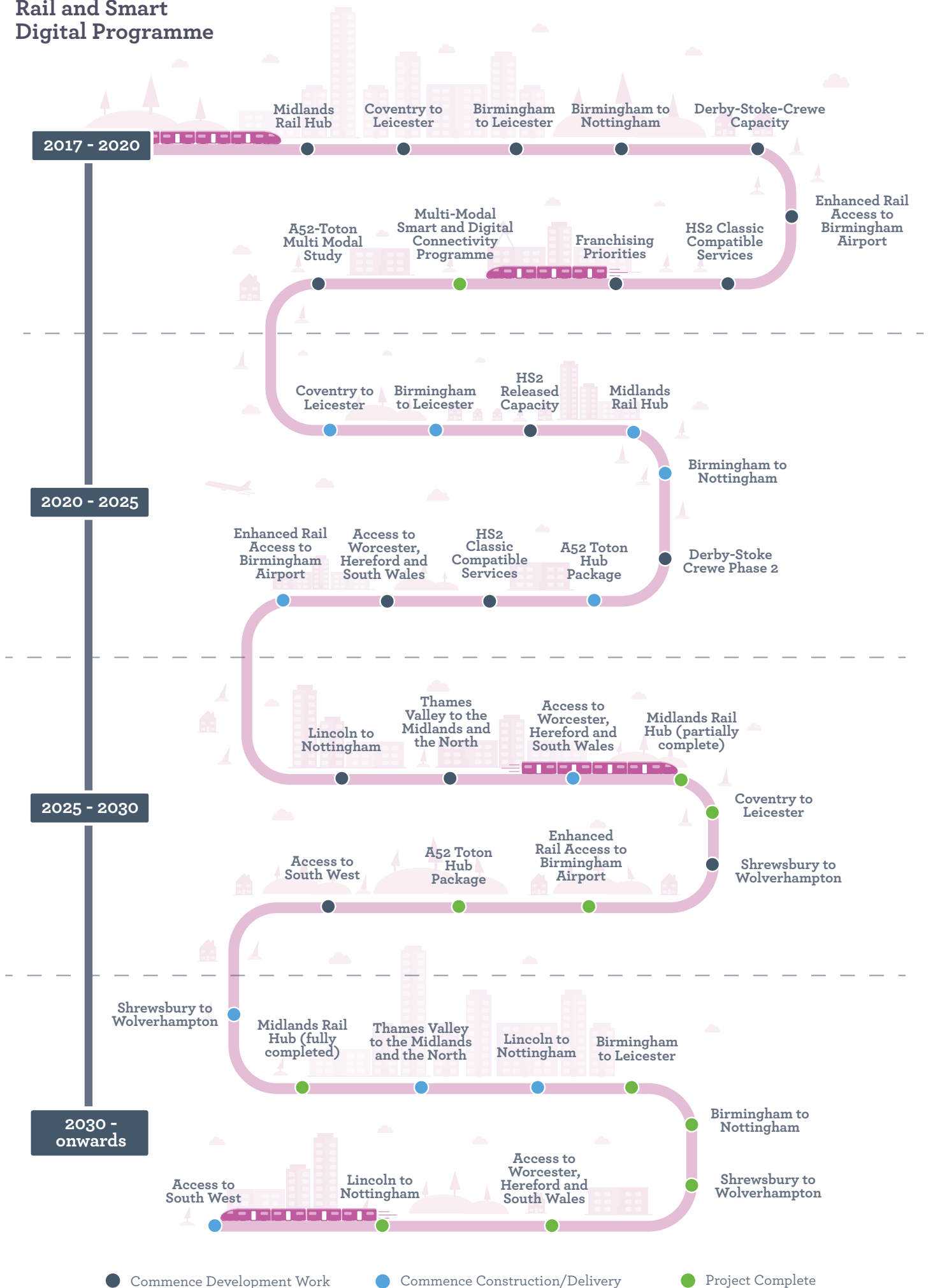
● Commence Construction/Delivery

● Project Complete

\*delivery programme to be determined



# Rail and Smart Digital Programme



● Commence Development Work    ● Commence Construction/Delivery    ● Project Complete



## Our offer to the Government

This strategy provides a sound evidence base for the transport needs of the Midlands and the UK economy, both now and in the future. Whilst our focus is the Midlands we recognise that the Government must take a national perspective and that there will also be financial constraints determining the pace and scale of what can be achieved. We will continue to add to and strengthen the evidence behind our strategy, to ensure that the Midlands has a strong voice when decisions on major infrastructure spending are made.

Our role is to help the Government and our partners build a future pipeline of projects that are affordable within the national context and deliver the strongest possible outcomes. Our commitment is to continue working in partnership with the DfT, Highways England, HS2 Ltd and Network Rail by providing coherent, evidence based propositions to be considered through existing decision making processes.

As our partnership strengthens and matures we will deepen the shared understanding of what is achievable. Through speaking with one voice we can provide the clear leadership to unlock the potential of our region.

## Midlands Connect Governance

Midlands Connect is currently a voluntary partnership. Leadership and accountability is provided by the Strategic Board comprising an independent chair, Sir John Peace, elected members from six local transport authorities, four LEP chairs and representatives of HS2 Ltd, Network Rail and Highways England. Our governance structure also includes a Partnership Advisory Board with representatives of all member organisations; a Programme Steering Group and a Technical Advisory Group.

Since the Cities & Local Government Devolution Act received Royal Assent in 2016, Midlands Connect has been exploring options for becoming a Sub-National Transport Body. This work is ongoing, and the partnership intends to agree an initial proposal by the end of 2017.

However, through our current voluntary arrangements, we have already established strong governance, trust, and collaborative working amongst all partners, culminating in this strategy.

## Midlands Connect Next Steps

The completion of this strategy sets a clear and robust focus for the Midlands. Our 'Picking Up the Pace' report set out a case for accelerating the planning and design stages of key transport projects in the Midlands so they can be built during the first half of the 2020s.

In autumn 2016 the Government announced a further £12 million of funding to continue development of our strategic programme for a further three years, and to further build our capability and influence. The Government also awarded the partnership a further £5 million specifically to develop the Midlands Rail Hub concept.

As we move forward we will engage closely with all our members, but particularly the delivery bodies, to seek opportunities to share resources and jointly fund our activities. The recent jointly-funded study into the Midlands Motorway Hub with Highways England and the Smart on National Rail joint programme between the DfT and the Rail Delivery Group are early examples.

Over the next three years we will focus on demonstrating the value of investing in Midlands transport infrastructure. This is essential to power the Midlands Engine, drive economic growth and support social mobility for generations to come.



**Midlands Connect**  
Powering the Midlands Engine

## Midlands Connect

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