

£500m Integrated Station Proposal for Leeds

Back in 2015, Sir David Higgins' Yorkshire Hub report was published. It recommended a one station approach in Leeds for the existing rail services and the proposed new HS2 connection to London.

Now, Leeds City Council is planning to remodel Leeds Station to unlock the potential benefits of HS2, create a world class gateway and kickstart plans for one of the largest city centre regeneration initiatives in Europe.



© Atkins/Genster

Leeds Station is the busiest transport hub in the North of England and one of the crucial parts of transport infrastructure in the UK. Every year over 29 million passengers use the station and this number is expected to more than double with growth of over 114% expected in the next 30 years.

To allow for the increase of passengers and accommodate further growth, Leeds City Council set a range of principles to guide the remodelling of Leeds station, in partnership with HS2, Network Rail, West Yorkshire Combine Authority, Transport for the North and Department for Transport.

The principles set out the ambition for the station to become a key national landmark and transport interchange, as well as pivotal regeneration and economic driver for Leeds and Yorkshire.

- The investment levels to implement the proposals would be in excess of £500million. The design team for Leeds Station include Hiro Aso, who was the lead architect behind the acclaimed redevelopment of King's Cross station in London.
- The masterplan takes into account plans for the city's South Bank. South Bank refers to a number of investments and proposed activities aimed at regenerating 185 hectares of land that lies south of the River Aire in Leeds. Equivalent to 250 football pitches in size, the regeneration will help to double the size of Leeds city centre; it will provide over 35,000 jobs and over 4,000 homes, and be one of the largest city centre regeneration initiatives in Europe capturing the growth of Leeds city centre for the coming decades.
- The second stage of the new high speed rail connecting the North of England with Birmingham and London is set for completion in 2033.

This is great news for Leeds. A brand new £500m station combining HS2 and existing services has the potential to be transformative for the city centre. The sheer scale of the proposed works, with the arrival of HS2, will create a number of opportunities for retail, leisure and residential development.

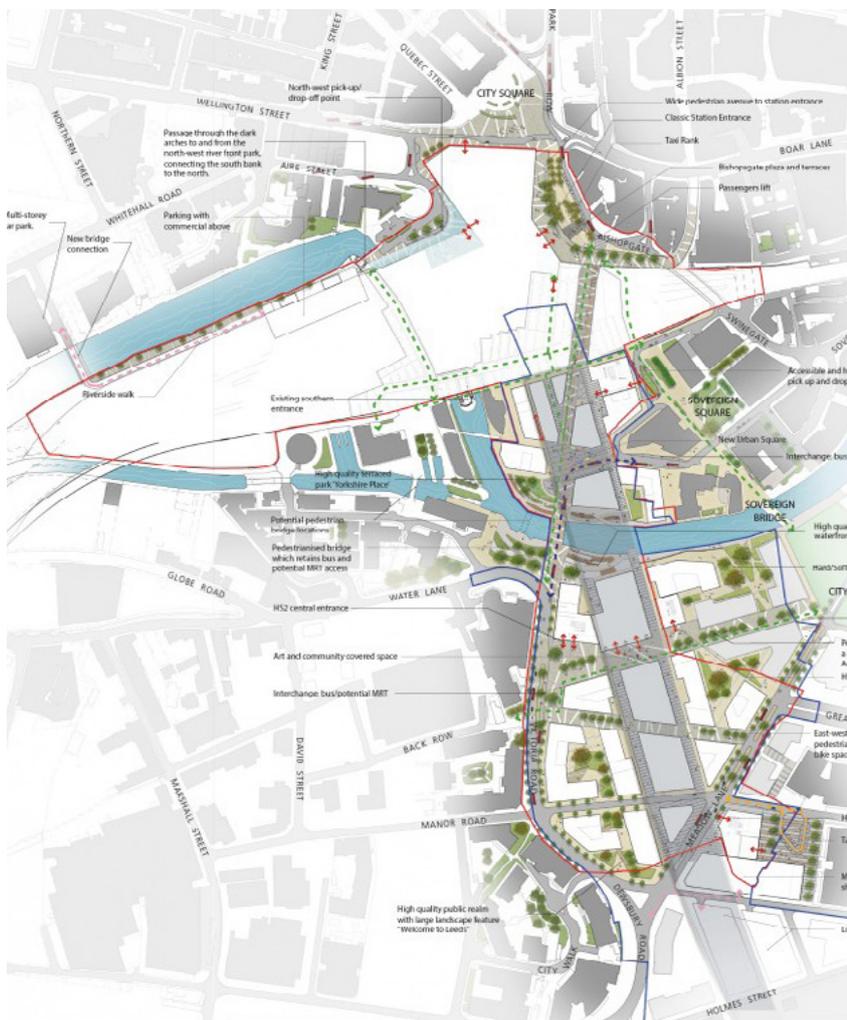
Design details for the new station are still unknown at this stage, but the works are due to commence in 2020. However, it will not be all plain sailing.

With the start date of the project in 2020 and the arrival of HS2 in 2032, the development in this area of Leeds will take 12 years, which shows the sheer scale of the project. The emerging masterplan will have to carefully mitigate the potential medium term blight on the alignment of the HS2 station and adjoining land.

Pedestrianisation of a number of streets will have to be carefully carried out as many businesses will be affected. Much more work is required

to assess the effects of changes to the wider highway network, including changes to the City Square.

There are no similar, significant improvements in rail services to other places in Yorkshire. Therefore, the benefits of the scheme might be limited. In addition, there are some worrying signals from the government about the future of the Northern Powerhouse rail, with recent plans for electrification between Leeds and Manchester downgraded.



© Atkins/Gensler

Summary of plans

- To create a station campus district for high quality commercial, residential and leisure developments offering seamless access to and from the station;
- Multiple entrance points, with City Square becoming predominantly public space, New Station Street to become pedestrianised with shared public space being extended onto Bishopgate Street;
- Neville Street and the Dark Arches to be transformed into retail and leisure space;
- Entrance points to and from South Bank, including creating a new pedestrian route similar in scale to Briggate connecting Temple Works and Leeds Dock;
- A new central common concourse in the station connecting HS2, Northern Powerhouse Rail and existing rail services;
- A new footbridge at Bridgewater Road and improvements to pedestrian and cycling links across the River Aire;
- Additional rail platforms to meet increases in demand;
- Access for all modes of transport, multiple pick-up and drop-off points, new car parking provision plus potential to incorporate rapid-transit service for Leeds.

Developers and owners need to be aware of the proposals and how it could affect them in the long term. Some buildings will be demolished to make way for HS2 station. The new masterplan gives clear indication that some office floorspace will be lost however this creates opportunity for new, improved commercial and residential space in the city.

If you would like to find out more about the proposals, please get in touch with our Leeds office.



John Brooks
Director
0113 380 0279
john.brooks@indigo.planning.com