



# WSP's director for transport discusses the future opportunities and priorities for the North of England

Ahead of [Transport-Led Development in the North of England](#) on the 5th March 2019 in Manchester, Kevin Riley, WSP's Director for Transport, shares his thoughts on transport development opportunities, future investment and the skills gap in the North.

## Kevin Riley *Director* WSP

### What are the in priorities for transport development in the North over the next 5-10 years?

Creating stronger network resilience, reliability and integration will be key, both within and around our cities, but also between them to tackle congestion. In the North we have lots of great assets, but we must increasingly link our labour force to and from them effectively. One example is the Knowledge Quarter in Liverpool, where connectivity over the last mile between city centre stations and world class jobs and education will become increasingly important.

We should never forget the importance of better local transport. Many people still live life relatively locally - making their journeys increasingly sustainable is key.

### What are the new areas due to benefit from investment in the North?

There are places like Crewe which should benefit from transport investment (HS2), but we need to make sure that benefit spreads beyond with great connectivity. Similarly, places like Airport City Manchester or Leeds Bradford Airport that can use their connectivity assets to become greater hubs for business. Being based in Liverpool I believe the investment made in the Port can be 'game changing' for freight as can the new rolling stock on Merseyrail for passengers.

### What further investment is required to unlock housing and growth in the North?

We must make sure that housing is well linked to transport nodes, which is why I am a great advocate of transport oriented development around interchanges. With this there is a need to ensure that other infrastructure such as schools and leisure is available to make living in our town and city centres more attractive to families. Cycling and walking should also play a more significant role in local movement – we are involved in 'Streets for All' in Greater Manchester, something that can make a significant difference.

### Does the lack of skilled young workers affect the delivery of planned projects in the North? What can we do to change that?

Yes. We need to keep investing in apprentices, retain graduates from the great universities we have in the North and attract the best talent from across the globe. We all have a responsibility to ensure that we promote the industry as one where people can flourish and make a positive difference to other people's lives. I love the work I'm involved in, however the most rewarding thing for me is helping younger staff develop their skills and confidence.



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Tickets start from just £319 + VAT, (group booking discounts available) for full details of the programme and how to secure your place visit <http://bit.ly/2FY0bcu>.

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