

# LEEDS CITY REGION



## INTRODUCTION

- 6.1 The Leeds City Region comprises the districts of Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees, Leeds and Wakefield in West Yorkshire, the whole of Barnsley in South Yorkshire, the unitary authority of York and in North Yorkshire, Selby and the southern parts of Craven and Harrogate Districts. To the west, in the North West Region the sub area adjoins both the Manchester and Central Lancashire City Regions. The Leeds City Region overlaps with the York sub area framework set out in section 9. Section 6 and section 9 should be read together to fully understand how the Plan is addressing the spatial implications of the Leeds City Region and that of the City Region's Development Programme.

6.2 Leeds City Region is one of three in this Region invited to present a Development Programme to the Steering Group of the Northern Way initiative. The version of this programme published in June 2005 states that the shared vision for the Leeds City Region is to:

**“Work together differently: to develop an internationally recognised City Region; to raise our economic performance; to spread prosperity across the whole of our City Region, and to promote a better quality of life for all of those who live and work here.”<sup>1</sup>**

6.3 Work undertaken on the City Region Development Programme (CRDP) has established that “there is strong potential to enhance the functionality of the City Region so that it operates as a unified economic entity.” The CRDP is developing “interventions [that] are aimed at removing those barriers which are currently restricting the City Region’s ability to function as a single economic space and supporting those assets and opportunities which we believe will contribute most significantly to GVA growth.”

6.4 The Plan responds to the spatial implications of the CRDP and the linkages with the adjoining city regions in the north west within the overall framework of the Plan to provide a supportive spatial planning framework that underpins sustainable economic growth.

#### SETTLEMENTS, THE ECONOMY AND HOUSING

6.5 The sub area is the largest in the Region and contains 48% of its population. It is a distinctive mix of urban and rural areas in close proximity: with strong links and traditional rivalries between places and attractive open land both within and between settlements. It is polycentric in its settlement form; Leeds is the largest settlement and a regional centre and there are sub regional centres of Barnsley, Bradford, Halifax, Harrogate, Huddersfield and Wakefield. In addition, York has a strong relationship with Leeds (as shown through the CRDP).

6.6 The cities and towns form a functional City Region: there are strong links between places (although there is scope for improvement). The area has concentrations of prosperity and poverty in close proximity and a diverse mix of communities with a significant proportion of ethnic minority groups present, particularly in the former textile areas of West Yorkshire. Pockets of deprivation are spread across the City Region, including the rural coalfields and Pennine West Yorkshire, which have some of the highest levels of rural deprivation in the Region. However, there are particular concentrations of deprivation in the southern parts of the main urban core areas and the industrial towns to the south east.



<sup>1</sup> Source: Leeds City Region Concordat, March 2005

- 6.7 Leeds City Region is likely to remain the most significant economic driver of the Region's economy. It has a national/international business profile and recent economic forecasts show job growth in Leeds of around 40,000 by 2016 and job growth for the whole sub area of around 87,000 over the same period<sup>2</sup>. It has a diverse economic base (represented in growth sectors including business services and financial services). It has the greatest potential for economic growth, and has the opportunity to be still more successful. Leeds City is at the heart of the City Region and it has the strongest prospects for growth of all the Region's cities. However, the City Region (like all UK city regions) is seriously under-performing against European competitors. The work of the Core Cities Group has shown that Leeds and other major northern cities are lagging behind their European counterparts in terms of levels of prosperity. This work has also shown that successful cities are important to the delivery of successful regions.
- 6.8 The policies of this Plan and other interventions will make a contribution to improving the City Region's performance. The City Region needs to take advantage of its location in the north, in particular to recognise the strategic significance of the Leeds-Manchester axis and the wider strategic context of being at a transport crossroads of the north of England. Whilst the growth potential of the economy (which will mainly occur in the centres of the cities and other urban areas) needs to be realised, the benefits need to be spread more equitably – both within the City Region and in the wider Region.
- 6.9 The potential to develop the comparative advantages of different areas is being explored to help achieve a more competitive City Region. However, a balanced approach is necessary, which reflects the general intent to achieve greater diversity in all areas (and thus longer term stability), but recognises that in certain areas there are clear opportunities that need to be exploited. Examples that policies in this and other sections support, include:
- Supporting differentiated City Region roles in the office market for the cities and sub regional centres
  - Using the potential for synergy between higher education and business; particularly the role of the Universities in Leeds, Bradford, Huddersfield and York
  - Protecting and improving conference and exhibition facilities and establishing complementary roles for Harrogate and Leeds
  - Promoting the development of science, electronics, digital and creative industries that are growing in the Bradford District and in Huddersfield, and taking advantage of the York Science City initiative
  - Identifying areas with good accessibility for logistics developments utilising road, rail and water borne modes as found in Wakefield
  - Supporting the development of the role of those towns such as Skipton that serve a rural hinterland

<sup>2</sup> Joint RSS RES econometric modelling Forecast B May2005



6.10 Recent economic performance has helped the urban parts of the City Region increase their population with all local authority areas experiencing net in-migration. This has contributed to increasing the number of households and the consequent need for additional homes. The scale of change (described in the Section 13) raises significant strategic issues that the sub area policy is responding to. The Plan also supports the objectives of the Regional Housing Strategy, taken together these aim to:

- Secure an appropriate level of house-building to deliver the scale of change in the overall amount of housing needed in the City Region (related to both forecasts of household growth and economic performance and shaped by the spatial strategy for the Region)
- Support the market renewal initiatives in areas of frail and failing markets, particularly, though not exclusively, those being promoted by the West and South Yorkshire Sub Regional Housing Partnerships and Transform South Yorkshire, one of the Region's two Pathfinders
- Ensuring adequate provision of affordable housing in areas of high demand

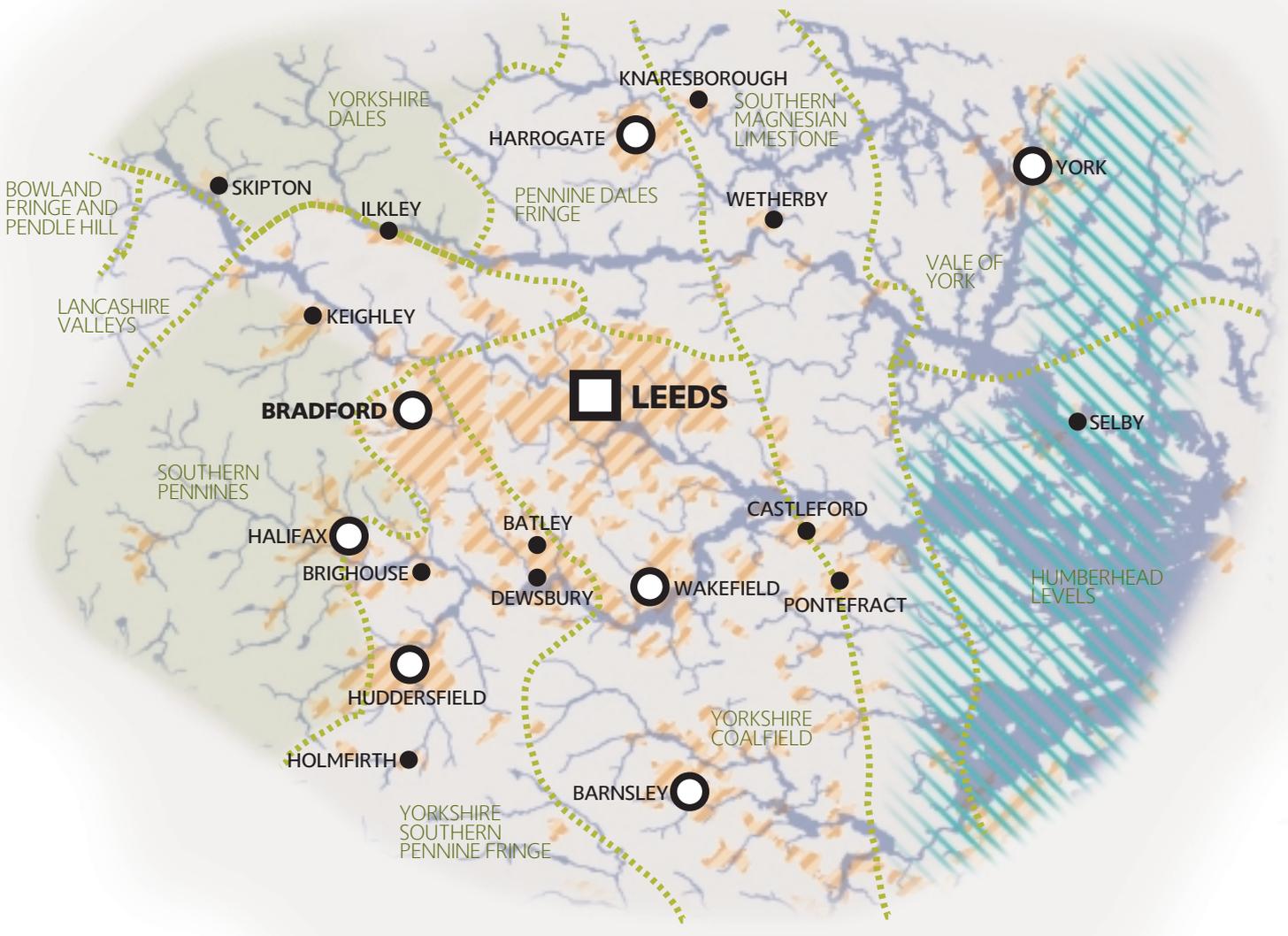
6.11 When supporting market renewal initiatives, local planning authorities will need to collaborate in preparing Housing Development Plan Documents to ensure that their policies and proposals present a consistent approach to addressing Housing Market Renewal initiatives that have implications that cross administrative boundaries.

#### ENVIRONMENT

6.12 The extent of the Leeds City Region (LCR) includes over half of the Region. In the east, it includes most of the Vale of York and some of the Humberhead levels landscape areas. Both areas are predominantly low lying with extensive river systems with areas of significant flood risk. This part of the LCR forms much of the York sub area and the landscape character is described in more detail in Section 9.

6.13 Broadly west of the A1, the landscape changes and is characterised by more undulating topography and landscape of valleys, woodlands and fields. This area is made up of the northern extent of the Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and Yorkshire Coalfield area and the Magnesium Limestone Ridge Landscape Character Areas. Generally ground levels rise from east to west – with the Dales and Pennines fringe area leading to the upland Pennines and Dales areas. The western and north western areas of the Leeds City Region and adjoining Remoter Rural Areas include a number of important environmental designations. The Pennine fringe area includes river and valley systems which are a powerful influence on the historical pattern of West and North Yorkshire settlements, economic activities and transport networks.

Fig.6.1 | ENVIRONMENT MAP



**SETTLEMENTS**

-  Regional Centre
-  Sub Regional Centre
-  Principal Service Centre
-  Built-up Areas

**ENVIRONMENT**

-  Countryside Character Areas
-  Main Areas of Environmental Designation
-  High Flood Risk Area
-  Aquifer Depletion

- 6.14 These landscapes types, river systems and availability of mineral resources are the key to understanding the economic and social history of the LCR and much of the rest of the Region. This history has left a rich variety of urban and rural habitats, ranging from industrial and post industrial landscapes, canals, a range of types of urban areas and habitats; ancient woodlands and hedgerows and prehistoric landscapes, especially in the Magnesium Limestone Ridge area. The legacy from the pre industrial age and perhaps above all, the civic buildings and urban structure from the nineteenth century is particularly important. These landscapes and the settlements are not only of national and international importance, but to a large extent determine how the people define themselves.
- 6.15 Saltaire on the fringe of Bradford is one of two World Heritage Sites in the Region and is recognised to have a cultural importance that is so exceptional as to transcend national boundaries. It is a key tourist destination in the Region and has potential to spur investment in surrounding areas. It is important to both protect and conserve the site and its setting.
- 6.16 The LCR includes most of the Region's energy capacity, with a cluster of coal-fired power stations south of Selby. Although these may be decommissioned towards the end of the Plan period – there may be potential for replacing coal firing with locally produced biomass. Large scale new development associated with growth and regeneration south and east of the core urban areas has great potential to include district heating.
- 6.17 Air quality levels are generally poorest where there are high concentrations of traffic, especially alongside the motorways and in the centre of the sub area's main urban areas.
- 6.18 Climate change with rising sea levels and more frequent and extreme weather events means increasing flood risk. This is most evident in the low lying eastern areas which make up the York sub area, particularly York itself and Selby. In addition, many of the urban centres in the Pennines Fringe areas are at risk from river flooding. There are particular issues from flooding in the Aire Valley to Leeds and Bradford and main urban areas in Calderdale. Projected climate change means that, as well as further protection measures, there is a need for much increased flood alleviation measures like safeguarding washlands and increasing tree planting along the whole course of river systems.
- 6.19 The City Region has some of the Region's lowest proportion of tree cover areas. As well as enhancing areas of Ancient Woodland, there may be scope for an extensive community forest and more woodland areas close to main urban areas and areas of social exclusion.

## TRANSPORT

- 6.20 The City Region has clear benefits arising from its location in the north in particular the strategic significance of the Leeds-Manchester axis. However, journeys to work within the City Region are increasingly complex and involve longer distances movements that cross district and sub regional boundaries. Trend based job growth forecasts suggest this feature will become increasingly significant. Achieving a better balance between the location of homes and jobs is therefore a major objective for the sub area, as is using the beneficial role of potential improvements to sustainable forms of transport.
- 6.21 The 'polycentric' character of the City Region gives it a clear advantage in addressing the rebalancing of jobs and homes and through this helping to build more sustainable communities, for example by using spare capacity on parts of the public transport network where services run against the peak flows. There are also other parts of the public transport network, for example in parts of Wakefield district, where there is capacity, but significant improvements are required to the infrastructure, including rolling stock on the rail network and bus service patterns and frequency.
- 6.22 However, it must be recognised that new development and investment in transport infrastructure can only be part of the solution as the bulk of the movements will be between existing homes and job locations using established transport infrastructure. Consequentially, change supported by policy interventions (for example to reduce dependence on the private car) and investment (for example in improved bus services) will take place incrementally over the whole period of the Plan.
- 6.23 Access to airports is an important dimension of the economic profile of the City Region. Leeds Bradford Airport is an important City Region asset that has poor surface access, Robin Hood Airport (just outside the City Region) is an emerging asset that is of importance, particularly to the southern half of the City Region. Surface access to the Region's airports is addressed in the Section 16.

## OUTCOMES BY 2021

- 6.24 The degree of economic success, compared to other parts of the Region, is a key driver of the scale of change in the sub area. The scale of growth and change in the City Region, particularly for the West Yorkshire Authorities requires a different approach from that being taken in the other parts of the Region. The policy approach here is in two parts, LCR1 provides the general policy framework for the sub area and policy LCR2 draws on the experiences of the growth areas of the south east in the way that we deliver the development and investment in infrastructure to support growth is delivered. The policy LCR2 identifies the framework for the package of initiatives needed in different locations within the City Region to accommodate growth particularly in housing provision over the life of the Plan. This package, co-ordinated by the Assembly, will bring together the RSS/LDF and the investment programmes of the Sub Regional Investment Programme, Sub Regional Housing Partnership, Local Transport Plan Partnership and the City Region Development Programme. Through the process of developing a delivery plan decisions can be made on the scale and timing of development required to support the step change in the City Region economy.





The outcome of the policy interventions set out for the sub area are described below. The outcomes will form the basis of the monitoring framework for the sub area.

For policy LRC1 these are:

- Leeds City Region is the most significant economic driver of the Region's economy with long term stability and the benefits of a strong economy are equitably spread through the City Region and wider Region. In particular, this has helped to address labour market disparities
- The roles of Sub Regional and Principal Service Centres have been strengthened by developing complementary functions and maximising their links and connectivity with each other and to Leeds
- There has been significant shift towards more sustainable modes of transport and connectivity has been radically improved
- The role and function of Leeds Sub area complements and supports the role and function of places in the overlapping South Yorkshire and York sub areas
- The environmental quality of the sub region has been protected and enhanced

Table 6.1 | POLICY AND INDICATOR LINKS LCR1

#### KEY POLICY LINKS

YH1, YH3, YH4, YH5, YH6, YH8, YH9, E1, E2, E3, E5,  
H1, H2, ENV5, ENV8, ENV9, ENV10, T1, T3, T4, T6, T9

Table 6.2 | POLICY AND INDICATOR LINKS LCR2

Policy LRC2 it is:

Investment programmes have delivered infrastructure and other requirements necessary to accommodate development

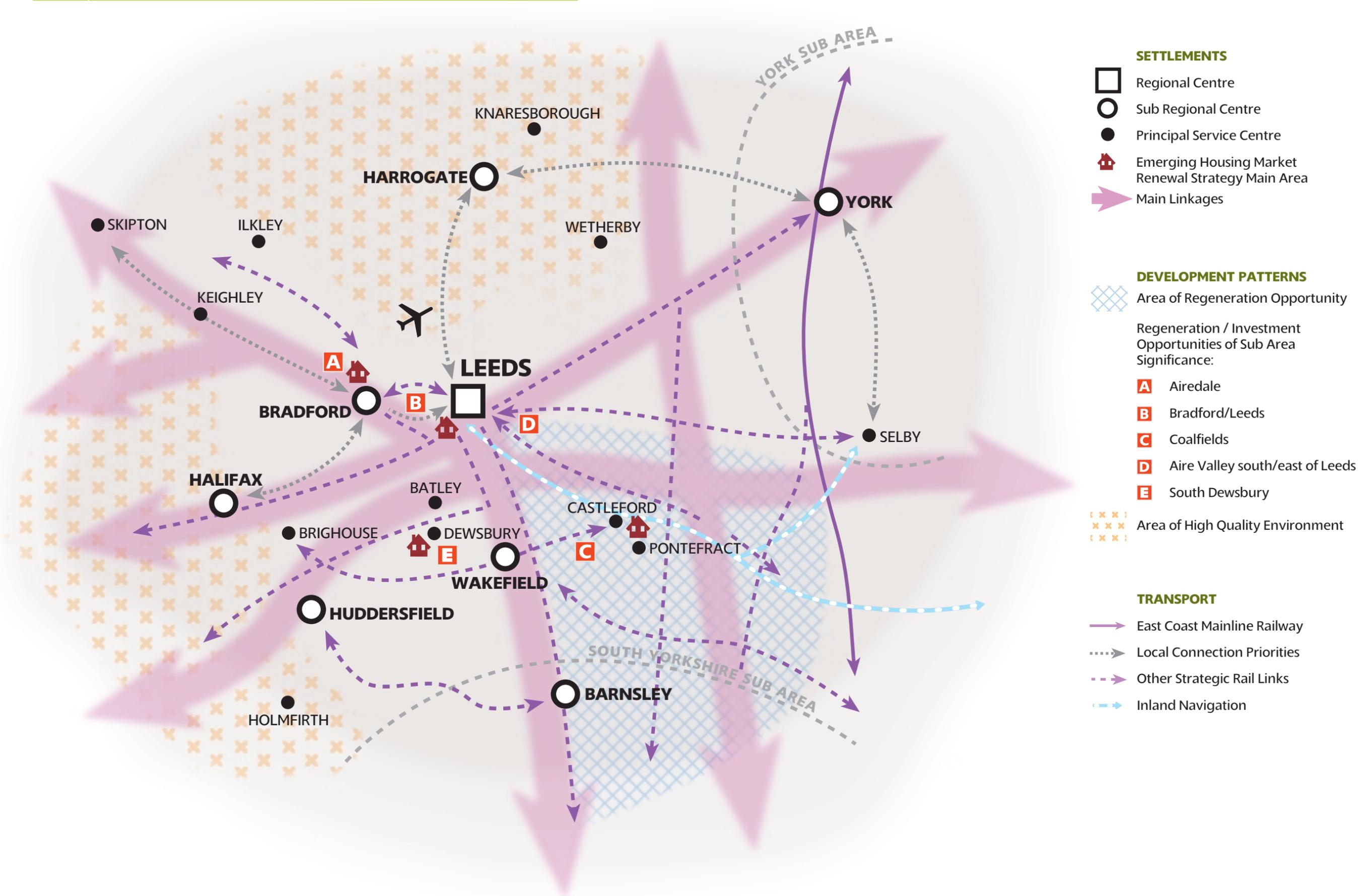
#### KEY POLICY LINKS

YH3, YH4, LRC1, H2, E1, E5, T10

#### INDICATOR

To be developed once Leeds growth strategy is complete.

Fig.6.2 | CONTEXT DIAGRAM



- SETTLEMENTS**
- Regional Centre
  - Sub Regional Centre
  - Principal Service Centre
  - 🏠 Emerging Housing Market Renewal Strategy Main Area
  - ➡ Main Linkages
- DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS**
- ▨ Area of Regeneration Opportunity
  - ⊗ Area of High Quality Environment
- Regeneration / Investment Opportunities of Sub Area Significance:
- A Airedale
  - B Bradford/Leeds
  - C Coalfields
  - D Aire Valley south/east of Leeds
  - E South Dewsbury
- TRANSPORT**
- ➡ East Coast Mainline Railway
  - ⋯ Local Connection Priorities
  - - - Other Strategic Rail Links
  - - - Inland Navigation

**POLICY**  
**LCR1** | LEEDS CITY REGION SUB AREA POLICY

All plans, strategies, major investment decisions and programmes for the Leeds City Region will where relevant seek to:

**A** ROLES AND FUNCTIONS OF PLACES

- Ensure roles and functions of places in the Leeds City Region complement and support those described for the places in the overlapping York and South Yorkshire sub areas and the adjoining sub areas
- Develop the role of Leeds as a Regional Centre
- Capitalise on the strength and Sub Regional Service Centre roles of Bradford with its significant scale and proximity to Leeds; Wakefield with its excellent communication links; and the potential of Huddersfield, Harrogate and Halifax
- Support developments which play to the strengths of the Principal Service Centres
- Support the major Urban Regeneration Company led renaissance initiatives in Bradford
- Support the Renaissance programme where its priorities and activities complement the sub area strategy
- Develop complementary conference roles for Harrogate and Leeds

**B** ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Support the role of Leeds as a major engine of the regional economy
- Ensure spatial policies help in spreading the benefits of the Leeds economy, particularly to the Sub Regional Principal Service Centre
- Support the indigenous growth in the economies of the Sub Regional Principal Service Centres
- Help to connect disadvantaged communities to the job opportunities being generated
- Promote the economic dimension of the complementary roles set out in A

**C** ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

- Preserve and enhance the South Pennines SPA
- Preserve and enhance the Nidderdale AONB
- Enhance the historic value of the City Region's historic towns, for example Halifax and Harrogate
- Safeguard the rural setting of the communities of the South Pennines and those to the north of Bradford and Leeds
- Preserve the World Heritage site at Saltaire and its setting to ensure its 'outstanding and universal value' is protected for the present and future generations
- Use the work that describes the character of the landscapes to help shape the choices about the locations for development and activities to enhance the setting of places
- Use the opportunities provided by increased development in urban areas to maximise renewable energy generation and energy efficiency

**POLICY** LEEDS CITY REGION SUB AREA POLICY (continued)  
**LCR1**
**D** TRANSPORT

- Ensure strategic patterns of development maximise the opportunities to use non car modes of transport and reduce the overall need to travel
- Improving links with Manchester and Manchester airport
- Improved surface access with Leeds Bradford airport
- Improving links between Leeds, Bradford and the Calder Valley to help promote movement of labour and businesses
- Improving Barnsley's links with Leeds, Sheffield and Manchester
- Reducing growth in congestion on the M62/M1/A1M
- Delivering the improvement plans for the Leeds Harrogate York corridor
- Take advantage of the capacity available and improve public transport infrastructure and services in the Coalfield Regeneration Area

**E** STRATEGIC PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT

- Restructure and regenerate, at an appropriate scale for the settlement, the Regional, Sub Regional and Principal Centres to facilitate the accommodation of most new housing and employment provision within these existing built up areas
- Support the development of complementary roles for the Regional, Sub Regional and Principal Centres building on their strengths (identified at A)
- Control growth broadly across the north of the City Region and encourage growth broadly across the south of the City Region
- Continue restraint policies north of Leeds to Skipton through to the eastern part of Harrogate District and provide a greater emphasis on delivering affordable housing in this area
- Contain development in the south Pennine edge, outside the Sub Regional Centres of Huddersfield, Halifax and the Principal Service Centre of Keighley, within the existing settlements and give a greater emphasis to addressing local needs at a scale appropriate to the settlement
- Airedale north of Bradford – an economic corridor north and west to Skipton predominantly building on existing Master Planning activity and the opportunities in the principal and local service centres
- Take advantage of the close proximity of the cities of Leeds and Bradford and the opportunities to restructure and regenerate parts of Bradford and Leeds so that they are better able to support the economic growth of both cities
- Support the regeneration opportunities in the A62 corridor at Huddersfield
- Coalfield regeneration area restructuring housing and creating jobs at an appropriate scale for the individual communities and taking advantage of the capacity available in the public transport network
- Aire Valley south of Leeds and east Leeds (EASEL) a sub regionally significant economic development and housing regeneration opportunity which will require major infrastructure investment
- Support the regeneration and remodelling opportunities in the South Dewsbury area



**POLICY** LEEDS CITY REGION SUB AREA POLICY (continued)  
**LCR1**
**F** REGIONALLY SIGNIFICANT INVESTMENT PRIORITIES

- Support the Growth Areas Priorities as set out in Policy LCR2
- Support the emerging strategy and programme to address fragile and failing housing markets in West Yorkshire
- Promote investment in public transport to enhance the ease of movement and improve access to jobs within the City Region particularly for disadvantaged communities
- Urban renaissance programmes that will facilitate the re-focussing of development to the south of Leeds and support the growth areas set out in policy LCR2
- Support the Urban Regeneration Company in Bradford

**G** JOINED UP WORKING

- Collaboration on LDF and other local strategy work where either strategic patterns of development or development locations cross administrative boundaries
- Collaboration on investment planning where this crosses the sub regional partnership boundaries
- Managing the release of land for housing in a manner which will support interventions to address both fragile and failing housing markets and affordability
- Working with the Sub Regional Economic Partnerships in the review of the City Region's employment land portfolio
- Collaboration on public transport including ticketing within and between modes and to adjoining sub areas such as the Yorcard Initiative
- Work with the Sub Regional Housing Partnerships and the initiatives they are supporting including; the Golden Triangle, the West Yorkshire HMR strategy and programme and the Green Corridor

**POLICY LCR2 INVESTMENT FOR GROWTH IN LEEDS CITY REGION**

To accommodate the significant additional development, particularly housing required in Leeds City Region, investment programmes will be prepared for the growth locations described below. In these locations plans, strategies and investment programmes will identify and ensure the delivery of the infrastructure and other requirements arising from the development proposals.

**LOCATION OF DEVELOPMENT**

- A** Airedale north of Bradford – an economic corridor north and west to Skipton predominantly building on existing Master Planning activity and the opportunities in the Principal and Local Service Centres in the Valley

**Investment requirements**

- Infrastructure to support urban extensions at settlements to be specified through Local Development Frameworks
- A650 Cottingley to Canal Road improvements
- Resources to support site assembly

- B** Bradford and Leeds – Take advantage of the close proximity of the cities of Leeds and Bradford and the opportunities to restructure and regenerate parts of Bradford and Leeds so that they are better able to support the economic growth of both cities

**Investment requirements**

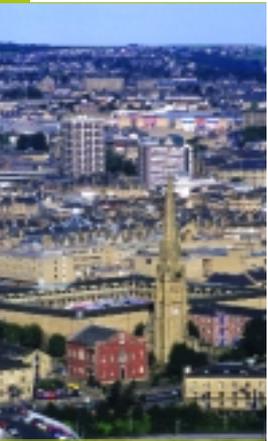
- Resources to support site assembly
- Improvements to quality and capacity of services on Calder Valley Line
- Investment in Housing Market Renewal
- Training programmes to access employment opportunities

- C** Coalfield regeneration area – Restructuring housing and creating jobs at an appropriate scale for the individual communities and taking advantage of the capacity available in the public transport network

**Investment requirements**

- Improvements to quality and capacity of services on Pontefract, Hallam and Wakefield Lines
- Resources to deliver 5 Towns Renaissance Programme
- Support for housing investment in sustainable locations on the Green Corridor
- Environmental enhancements e.g. including landscape frameworks for new development
- Training programmes to access employment opportunities
- Development of new employment premises




**POLICY LCR2** INVESTMENT FOR GROWTH IN LEEDS CITY REGION (continued)

**D** Aire Valley south of Leeds and east Leeds (EASEL) - sub regionally significant economic development and housing regeneration opportunities that will require major infrastructure investment

**Investment requirements**

- Support for physical infrastructure investment
- Support for the reclamation of derelict and degraded land
- Environmental enhancements e.g. landscape frameworks for new development
- Support for restructuring and replacement of existing housing stock
- Training programmes to access employment opportunities

**E** South Dewsbury – a substantial area of predominantly older, high density housing, with significant problems of unfitness and overcrowding, and redundant industrial sites requiring comprehensive re-modelling, utilising Greenfield opportunities, to improve and expand the housing stock to achieve the range and scale of housing appropriate to the growing needs of the local communities in North Kirklees.

**Investment requirements**

- Support for physical infrastructure investment
- Support for the reclamation of derelict and degraded land
- Resources to support site assembly
- Support for restructuring and replacement of existing housing stock
- Training programmes to access employment opportunities