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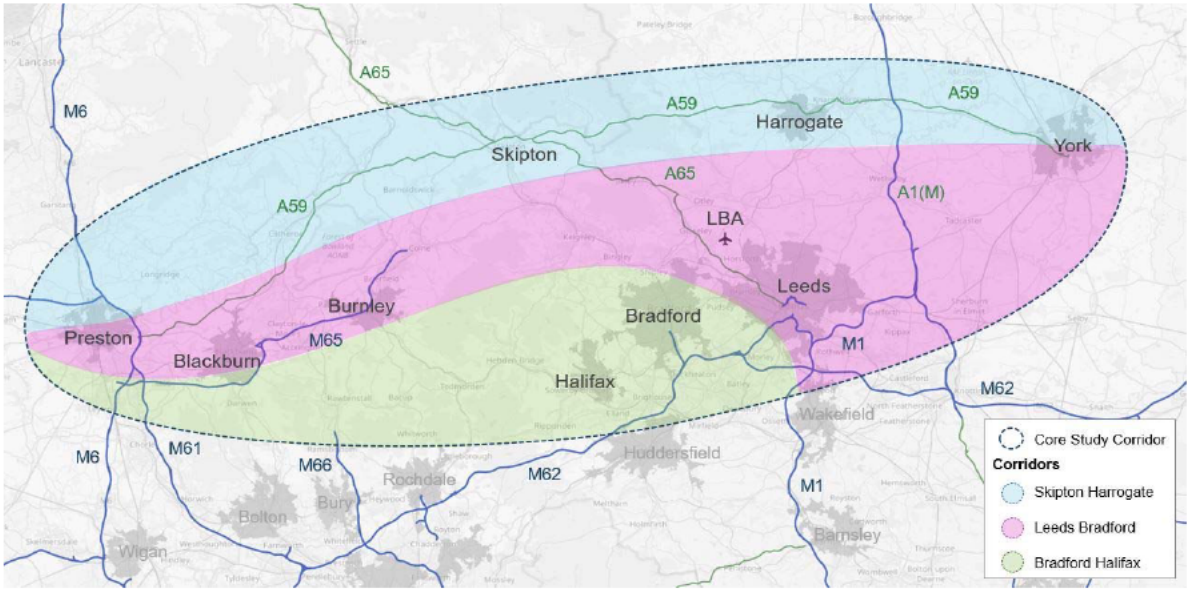
M6 to A1(m) Central Pennines Strategic Highway Improvement Study

Study Update – September 2020

Study Background & Objectives

- **Background**
- The M6 – A1(M) Central Pennines Study was announced in March 2019 by the former Secretary of State for Transport Chris Grayling.
- The study was launched to consider what enhancements could be made to road connections between the end of the M65 at Colne and communities in Skipton in North Yorkshire and Keighley and Bradford in West Yorkshire.
- Currently **no complete dual carriageway** Trans- Pennine routes between East & West of England (except the M62).
- Northern Economy **heavily dependent** on the **M62** for strategic East- West connectivity.
- Delays & Congestion will continue to increase if nothing is done.
- Creates a gap in UK transport network- between the major North-South routes of the M6 and A1(M).
- Barrier to economic growth along this corridor.
- Currently: low capacity routes, such as **A59** or **A6068** are slow due to indirect routing with steep gradients and force longer slower journeys.
- M65 forms one of the **few high-quality strategic road links** into the Pennine region, However, it currently **ends at Colne** and onward movements into West Yorkshire are indirect and low in capacity, making it an uncompetitive route for east-west journeys.

- **Objectives**
- Improve journey time reliability, road safety and resilience of SRN along with improved access for NMUs and reduce severance for local communities.
- Minimise adverse environmental impacts and optimise opportunities to enhance the built and natural environment.



Lead Organisation

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Project Sponsors

Department for Transport

TRANSPORT FOR THE NORTH

Delivery Partners

Lancashire County Council

West Yorkshire Combined Authority

City of BRADFORD METROPOLITAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Leeds CITY COUNCIL

North Yorkshire County Council

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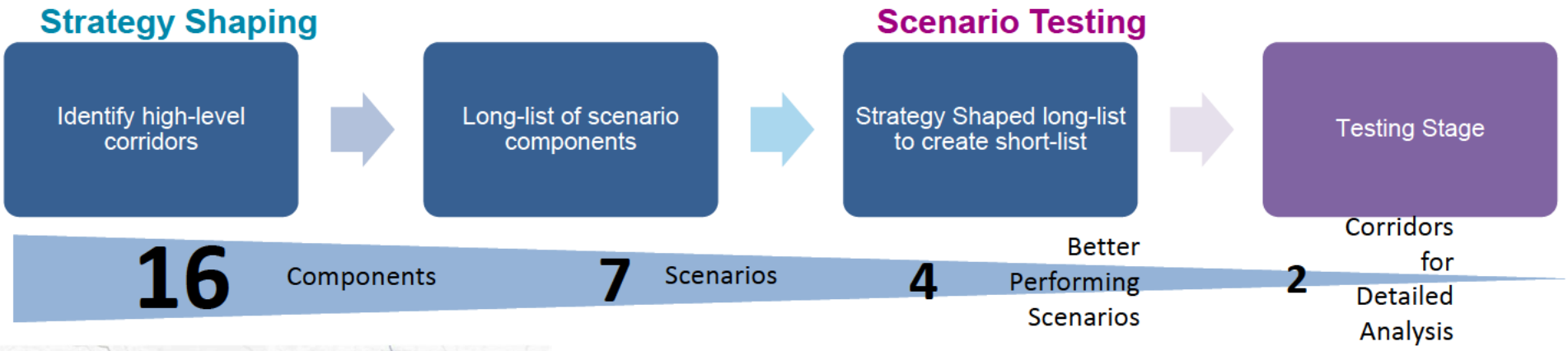
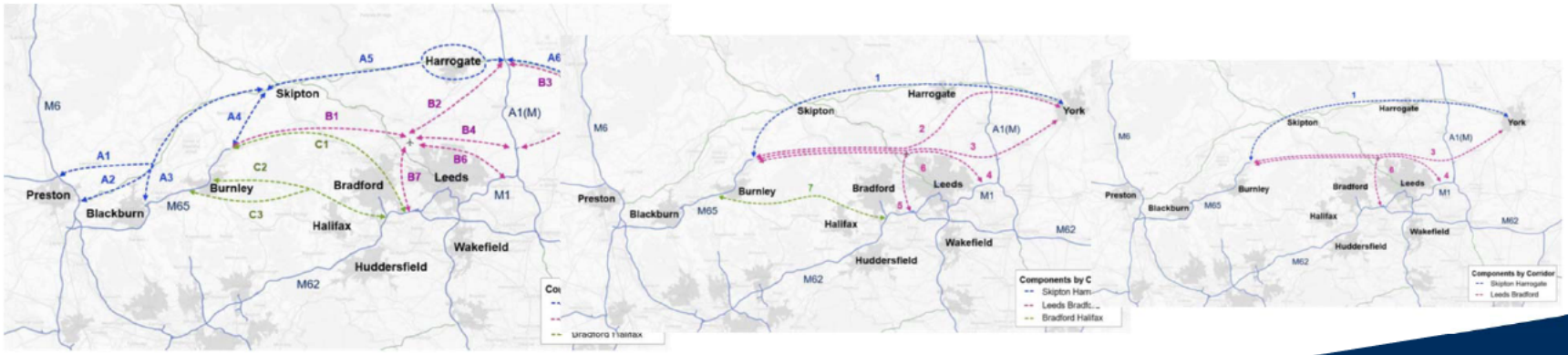
Study Progression

Current detailed anlaysis phase builds upon the strategy shaping process as follows:

- This strategy shaping exercise was undertaken to bring the components down to a manageable level prior to detailed analysis.
- The Study at PCF 0 looked at all potential links across the M6 to A1 corridor and then assessed these against the Studies objectives (16 components).
- This presented 7 scenarios that broadly met the Study objectives, following detailed transport and economic modelling 4 better performing scenarios were identified with 2 taken to the Testing Stage.





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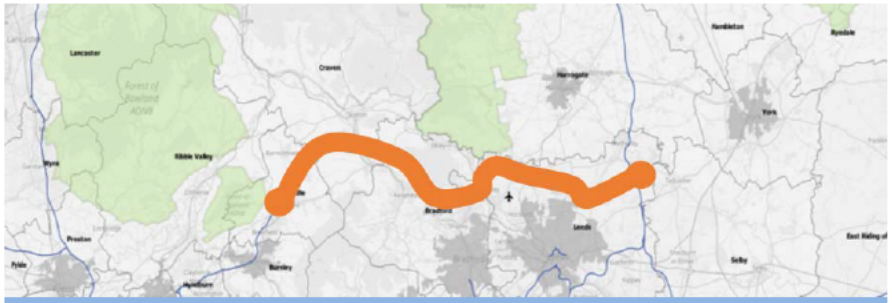
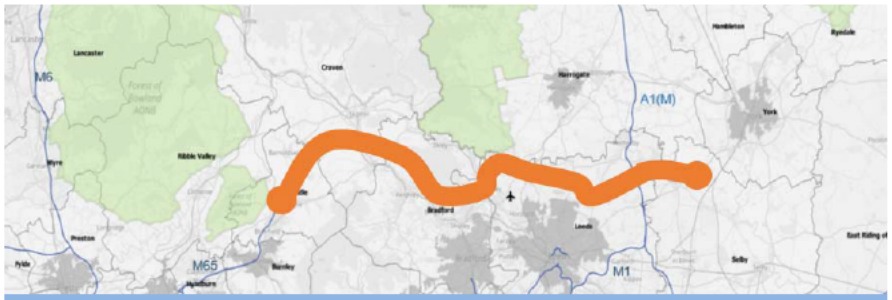
High Level Potential Routes and Indicative Costs



Orange Corridor Concept 1

- Corridor Distance – 49.7 miles (79.6km)
- Indicative Cost - £12.5bn (D2AP) £13.7bn (D2M)
- Estimated BCR – 1.01 (D2AP) 0.92 (D2M)

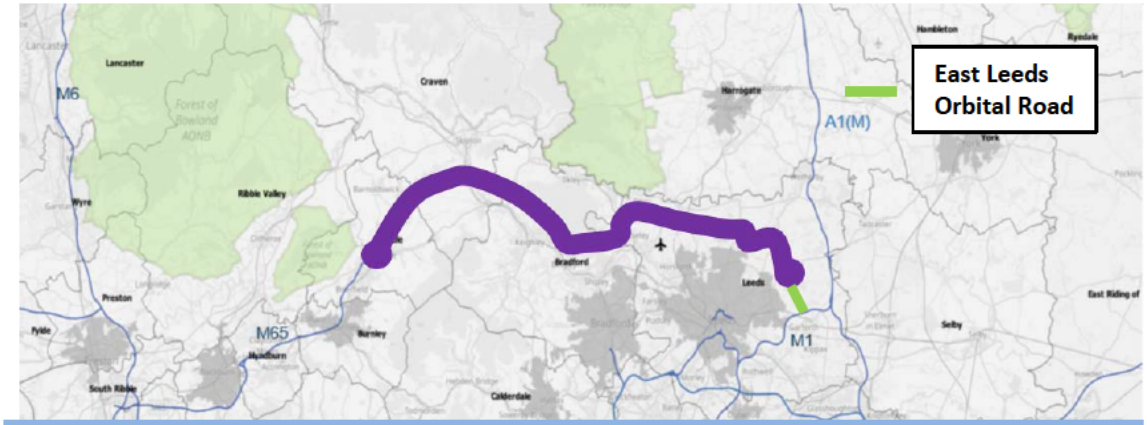
Opening Year 2041



Orange Corridor Concept 2

- Corridor Distance – 53 miles (85km)
- Indicative Cost - £13.7bn (D2AP) £15bn (D2M)
- Estimated BCR – 0.95 (D2AP) 0.87 (D2M)

Opening Year 2041



Purple Corridor Concept

- Corridor Distance – 44 miles (70km)
- Indicative Cost – £12.7bn(D2AP) £14bn (D2M)
- Estimated BCR – 1.0 (D2AP) 0.91 (D2M)

Opening Year 2041

Cost Summary

Large scale capital investment would be required (Indicative cost range):

- D2AP from £12.5bn to £13.7bn
- D2M £13.7bn to £15bn
- (2016 price based outturn costs).

HE Analytical Assurance – Amber/Red

DfT Conclusions and Next Steps to IPDC (14th September 2020)

Conclusions

- Both options have the potential to deliver some benefits to the corridor, including offering journey time savings for E-W journeys – e.g. Colne to Leeds (20 minute saving in the peak) and relief to several standard routes in the study corridor (Colne Traffic drops by 70%).
- Despite some benefits however, both options fails to meet all the strategic objectives with limited transfer from the M62 which is a primary freight passage for Trans Pennine East-West journeys.
- Roughly 50 miles of new corridor would need to be constructed through topographically challenging terrain. This will necessitate the construction of multiple complicated engineering structures including tunnels, cuttings and bridges.
- Both options would constitute a significant capital investment with a high-level of uncertainty around cost. Both options appraised have similar BCRs and would represent 'poor' VfM.
- A preliminary environmental risk assessment has revealed that either option will have large environmental disbenefits. Delivering a strategic link in such an environmentally sensitive area is likely to be met with fierce local opposition and mitigations will be costly and challenging to deliver.
- From early conversations with stakeholders, there does appear to be appetite for pursuing localised interventions along the corridor.
- Our strategic assessment of the study area shows that there are congestion spots in the Central Pennines Corridor that could be pursued for considerably less cost and with less disruption.

Next Steps

1. DfT will be presenting Ministers with advice on the M6 – A1(M) Central Pennines Study once the Northern Transport Acceleration Council has been successfully installed later this year.
2. Although the detail of the Northern Transport Acceleration Council is still being devised, the team have advised us that it will primarily look at local interventions rather than major projects. Therefore if Ministers agree with our recommendation to pursue localised elements and agreed with stakeholders, we will submit to the Northern Transport Acceleration Council.
3. Local Interventions – talk about how they will be taken forward – Strategic elements through route strategy and local elements through local roads team