

Dear Sirs,

As a specialist property development and regeneration consultancy we are directly involved in some of the region's leading real estate schemes. In addition our business is also involved in projects in London and across the south east. We are therefore able to see at first hand the difference in transport and infrastructure investment and how it affects these areas and results in the very different propositions that exist around the north-west, Yorkshire and the south east of England.

In short, if the "Northern Powerhouse" is to be anything other than a convenient sound bite and marketing tool, the public transport (and especially rail) network need significant upgrading. The difference between London and the south east and the typical train service offered there to enable people to get into and out of the London conurbation is stratospherically better than the woeful, meagre, infrequent services that are available to perform the same function around Manchester.

Nowhere is this more starkly contrasted than the services that "serve" the commuter areas of Cheshire. These play the same role as the Home Counties do to London. The road and Motorway networks that run through these areas are at breaking point and are hugely congested. The M6 around Knutsford is almost constantly at a standstill at rush hour – due in no small part to the fact that commuters are driving into Manchester (a mere 17 miles away) because the alternative is a 1 hour train ride to do the same journey with a frequency of one ageing small diesel train per hour. Can you imagine London having grown and developed with a similar service from Beaconsfield, Maidenhead or similar ??

These areas are constantly ignored because Manchester City Council do not see the need to ensure the non labour voting middle management are able to get to work. They would rather ensure that all the money is spent within the solidly labour catchment of the Greater Manchester area. If the Northern Powerhouse is to grow – this line needs addressing in a more mature and even handed approach to spreading the investment.

Yours Sincerely

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