

1. The emphasis of the Commission, and the Northern Powerhouse on City regions, ignoring County areas, is completely inadequate and should be addressed – given that Cumbria is one of the non-City Region areas to be granted a Devolution prospectus, which it will not be able to achieve unless the Government recognises the part the County has to play in terms of major infrastructure projects coming on stream in the near future.
2. Referring to the current Northern Transport Strategy, *creating the ‘Northern Powerhouse’ of economic growth, driven by a flourishing private sector and supported by innovative local government requires us to harness and unify the people power of our city regions and the wider North*. There is very little in the Strategy that is of concrete benefit applicable to Cumbria other than passing reference. The Strategy explicitly focusses on the Northern city Regions of Liverpool, Manchester, Leeds, Sheffield, Hull and Newcastle. There is reference to Energy being set out in Hull’s Strategic Economic Plan (SEP), but no reference to this also being in Cumbria’s SEP – [‘The Four Pronged Attack’](#): Nuclear and Energy excellence - and ongoing decommissioning of the Sellafield site or nuclear new build by NuGen at Moorside, which is a nationally significant infrastructure project valued at £16bn; associated national grid investment along the West Coast £1.3bn; United Utilities pipeline £250m; Walney wind farms £1.3bn; BAE systems £250m; GSK bio-farmer plant £350m and potential tidal power lagoon £5bn (total investment in the County of £25.1bn), dwarfing the combined Humber Private Sector investments planned and underway: wind turbine, logistics and marine energy, and bio fuel refineries of £1.11bn.
3. It is for this reason that Cumbria, and in particular West Cumbria, needs to respond to the Call for Evidence, to demand our road, rail and sea infrastructure be made fit for purpose in providing energy and advanced manufacturing resilience into the future. This is even more an issue given the announcement of Amber Rudd, the Energy Secretary, on 18th November that the UK’s remaining coal-fired power stations will be phased out within 10 years. In her speech, Ms Rudd believes that plans for new nuclear power stations, including at Moorside and Wylfa in Wales, could eventually provide almost a third of the low carbon electricity the UK needs, amid concerns that the UK could suffer from blackouts as a result of short supplies, brought about in large part from the closure of a number of power stations that have come to the end of their working lives. West Cumbria is home to nationally important energy projects and should have a requisite standard of infrastructure that is suitable to access these.
4. Two of the other themes in Cumbria’s SEP - Advanced Manufacturing and rural and the Visitor Economy, for which Cumbria is better known, are considered within the Northern Transport Strategy as growth sectors in the North and require different transport interventions. The Strategy states *‘The logistics industry itself relies on moving goods efficiently and reliably, with good road and rail connections as well as access to ports and airports, and increasingly inland*

waterways. Heavy manufacturing can be sited close to ports, requiring good local development plans and onward connections. The visitor economy relies on good quality easy to use and understandable connections within cities, across the North and the country and to the nation's airports. What is required is a comprehensive package of transport interventions which takes account of the different needs of businesses and users, all of which are focused on boosting economic growth'.

5. Despite this, the focus of the Strategy's shared rail vision, *'which is designed to radically improve journey times and frequencies between major cities to support a single economy through major investment in rail infrastructure.'* is on *improving east-west connectivity, building on the existing commitments to the Northern Hub and the electrification of the TransPennine line, together with improvements to the East Coast MainLine to Newcastle... to ensure people and businesses of the North have rapid access to the rest of the Country including London, the Midlands and Scotland.'* bypasses Cumbria completely without reference. The new rail franchisee in our area, to commence in April 2016, is Arriva – the Northern Region is the largest franchise in the Country. The Cumbrian Coastline is the only line that runs through West Cumbria, and has 24 stops between the two outlying stations at Barrow and Carlisle a distance of 86 miles and a journey time of between 2 and over 3 hours, costing £48.30 for a peak time single ticket. The West Coast mainline is only accessible at Carlisle to the North, Penrith North Lakes or Oxenholme Lake District near Kendal – very few trains are timetabled to make connections between the Cumbrian Coastline and West Coast mainline routes, making it extremely difficult for people to travel around the County by train for business or pleasure.
6. We believe there is a case for the new 'Northern Connect' regional express services connecting Barrow with Manchester Airport to be extended to Workington, if not Maryport. That would require significant infrastructure investment, especially north of Sellafield, which also be of great benefit to local passenger and freight movement too, including connectivity to Barrow – opening up the Britain's Energy Coast corridor from Barrow to Carlisle. This corridor is a distinct economic area encompassing Energy and advanced manufacturing.
7. The shared road vision within the Strategy's Highways Plan for *'A core free-flow network with 'mile a minute' journeys increasingly typical on expressways and motorways in the North of England, Improved east-west major road links to ensure better and more reliable journey times between the major cities within the North', Expanded capacity on north-south major road links through the North to improve journey times and reliability, Ensure effective road connections to the country's major ports in the North of England, Future-proof the Northern road network so that it can support the next generation of low emission vehicles, Future roads investment in enhancements, maintenance and renewals is better planned between the different organisations'*. The only reference to Cumbrian roads are *Exploring options to significantly upgrade the A66 from Scotch Corner*

to Penrith, connecting the M6 in the west to the A1 in the east and Exploring options to significantly upgrade the A69 from Newcastle to Carlisle, connecting the M6 in the west to the A1 in the east. This completely bypasses West Cumbria. There is evidence in terms of vehicular numbers to enhance the A66 west of Penrith – particularly given that much of the road from Scotch Corner to Penrith has already been upgraded through dualling. The A66 carries over 7,000 vehicles per day (30% freight) on the easterly section between the A1 and M6, and over 9,000 vehicles per day (14% freight) on the westerly section between the M6 and the west coast of Cumbria (known as Britain's Energy Coast) (*extract from Highways Agency North Pennines Route Strategy Evidence report 2014*). Both routes include a high proportion of long-distance journeys both commercial and tourist related. In addition, there is an increasing number of accidents on this stretch of the A66, that will be potentially exacerbated by new housing developments and nationally significant infrastructure projects such as the new nuclear development at Moorside (2017-26), new high voltage electricity pylon line (North West Coast Connections Project) to connect this to the national grid by 2026, and new water pipeline (West Cumbria Water Supply Project) from Thirlmere to replace loss of abstraction from Ennerdale by 2025.

8. The A595 currently carries over 10,000 vehicles per day (10% is freight) and includes a large number of work-based trips, particularly to and from Sellafield, which is one of the largest employment sites in the Cumbria region. One section on the A595 south of Whitehaven is ranked as tenth least reliable within the North Pennines route. The lowest peak hour speeds are shown on the A595 sections between Workington and Sellafield with speeds between 21-40mph. The A595 carries over 12,000 vehicles per day (11% is freight) at the eastern section and 8,000 vehicles per day (13% is freight) on the western section. See diagram below (*extract from Highways Agency North Pennines Route Strategy Evidence report 2014*).
9. The A595 and A66, are considered to be the most dangerous roads in Cumbria. There are several accident blackspots along the length of both roads. One of the most notable is a stretch known as Moota on the A595, which is regularly the scene of fatal accidents. The northern section was formerly a trunk road, but until the completion of the Distington Bypass it had only one small section of dual carriageway. The southern section of the road around New Mill does not have a secondary route. When this section is closed due to an accident or roadworks, the detour routes are via Wrynose and Hardknott mountain passes for cars (one of Britain's most challenging roads with steep - 30% - ascents/descents, hairpin bends and sheer drops of more than 1000ft in places on a single track road with passing places), and via the M6 J40 for HGVs, the latter being a detour of 120 miles (190 km).
10. Our preference is for the A595 to be upgraded/enhanced as this is the main route for travel to and from Sellafield and NuGen nuclear new build, and to include

links to the A590 for Barrow. The A66 would act as back-up access from east to west and should also be considered for enhancement.

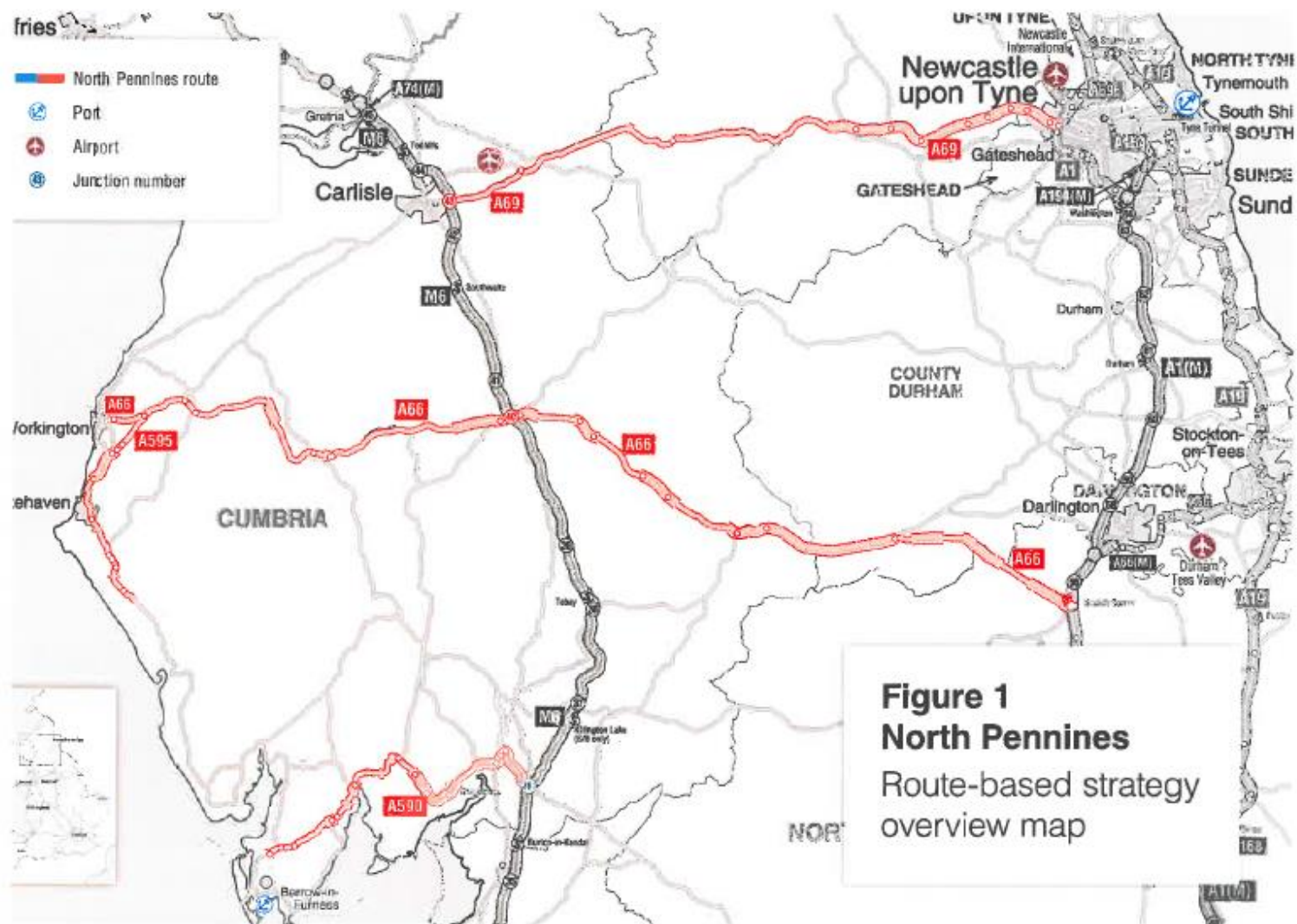
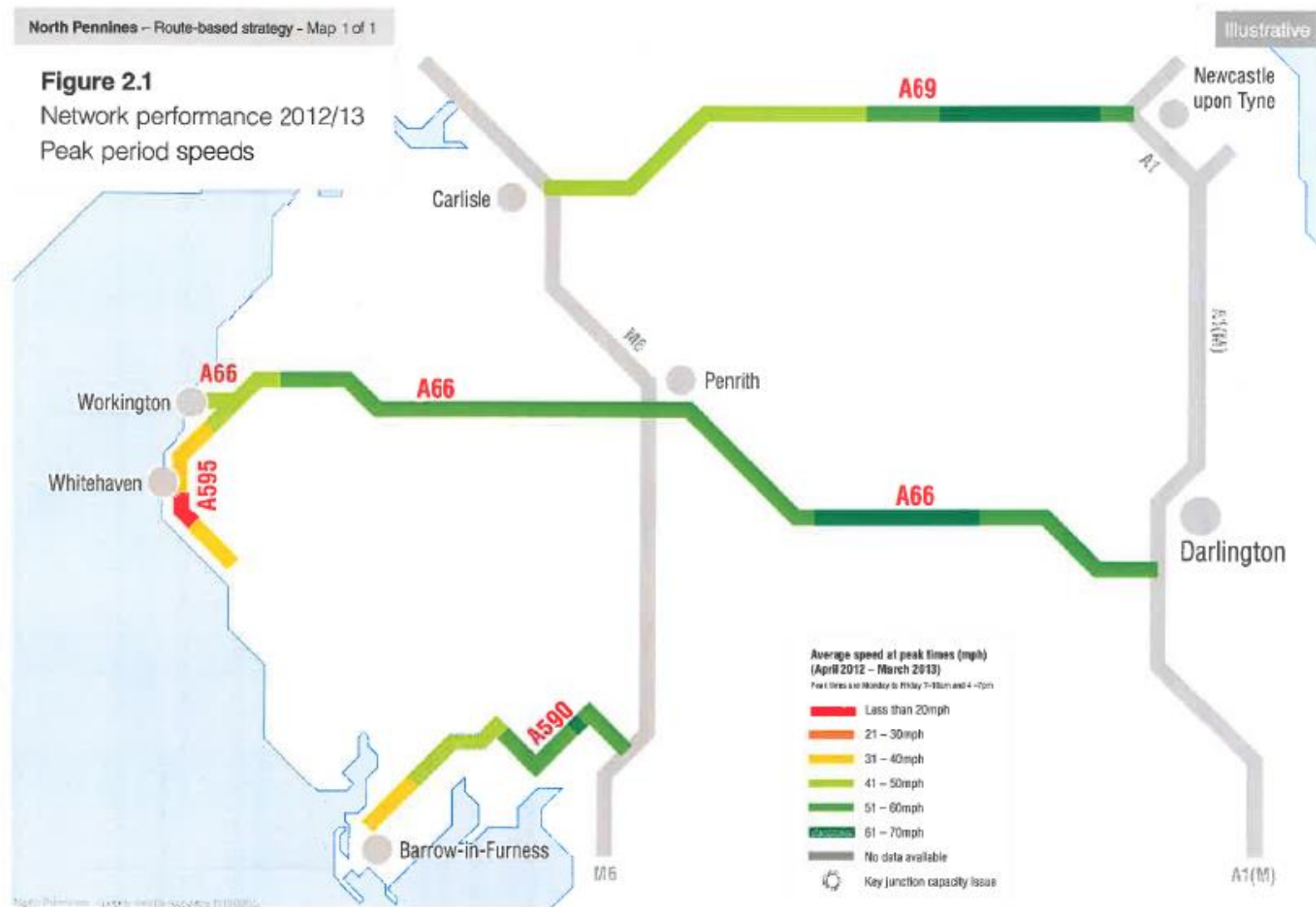


Figure 2.1

Network performance 2012/13
Peak period speeds



11. The Strategy's shared freight vision concerns '*A single plan for the needs of freight and logistics in the future, Deliver a transport network that supports the growth of the Northern economy, and Recognise Northern ports investment to ensure the delivery of port infrastructure that meets the future needs of the shipping industry in Liverpool, Humber, Teesport and the Tyne*', and does not take into account the importance of the nuclear sector in West Cumbria (newbuild and submarine) and their requirements. A key part of the strategy for delivering the Moorside project is the use of sea (for logistics) and rail transport (for logistics and workers) to minimise the use of roads. NuGen will also endeavour to maximise the use of existing facilities and businesses in Cumbria to support the project – including the ports of Workington and Barrow; Cumbrian Coastline and rail connectivity; logistics distribution centres (including Lillyhall, Workington); and strategic highways network (including A595/A66).
12. Area 13 severe weather plan lists the following adverse weather risk periods for Cumbria:

Weather type	Risk Periods (months inclusive)
Snow, ice and freezing rain	October through to April
Heavy rain	January through to December
High winds (including severe gales and storms)	September through to June
Fog	October through to January
High temperatures	June through to August

13. Storm Desmond devastated the north of England, Scotland and Ireland between 3rd and 7th December 2015, particularly Cumbria - the area was declared a major incident over the weekend with 3 road bridges destroyed and many more damaged requiring inspection, and all major A roads west of the M6 at one point had complete or partial road closures in various places. The West Coast mainline near Carlisle was completely submerged beneath 8ft (2.4m) water and hit by 3 landslides with no replacement service due to treacherous road conditions, and the Cumbrian Coast line between Workington and Carlisle was also closed. Flood defences built as a result of 2005 and 2009 floods in Keswick, Cockermouth and Carlisle were breached by unprecedented levels of rainfall (13.5 inches in 24 hours) falling on already saturated ground following storm Abigail the previous month. The Met office issued red alert warnings (immediate action required and severe warnings with danger to life), and more rainfall occurred throughout December. Braithwaite and other villages including Patterdale and Glenridding had been left isolated as flooded rivers swept away or damaged bridges. 22 bridges remained closed whilst engineers assessed all 1600 bridges in the County for potential damage, and 40 roads were still impassable due to damage to the carriageway or as a result of road closures. An elderly gentleman drowned in Kendal.



A591 between Keswick and Grasmere, closed for the foreseeable future



Carlisle City



Pooley Bridge near Penrith, closed for foreseeable future

14. Storm Abigail brought gales and heavy rain on 14/15 November 2015 resulting in flooding of A66 at Threlkeld and subsequent road closure.



A66 near Threlkeld

15. The floods of 18-20 November 2009 devastated Cockermouth and Workington, when prolonged heavy rainfall combined with associated high river flows; and flooding problems were made worse by already saturated ground. Cumbria had already received close to the whole-month November average rainfall before the

heavy rain and gales. There was severe travel disruption on both roads and railways. Several bridges collapsed and others were closed along the river Derwent – a lengthy road detour was put in place and a temporary station created at Workington as the town was effectively cut in half. Tragically, a police officer died after a bridge collapsed in Workington.

16. In addition, the proposal to amalgamate the Police and Fire Services is worrying, in terms of where it will be centrally located. Also the recent announcement that the Valuation Service will be moved from Cumbria to Lancaster shows little concern is given to the needs of Cumbria and West Cumbria

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