

*Unlocking the Network*

# Birmingham Grand Central Station

ARUP

# A Vision

Birmingham is the UK's second city. It is at the heart of the Country and currently sits at the hub of the Country's road and rail transport network.

Our vision for Birmingham is that of a city that capitalises on that strategic advantage and on its unrivalled geographic position. It is a vision for transport in 2015 and beyond, one that maintains the City as a major European business and cultural centre.

Our legacy will affect the city far into the future. Investment now will be a key to the success of Birmingham into the 22nd Century.

Birmingham is not alone in this vision. Manchester and other major UK cities increasingly challenge its position and are investing in their own environment to secure their future. In Birmingham's case the investment is happening, but it may not be rapid and focussed enough to keep up with its rivals.

As a recent market analysis by Catherine Riley of the Times noted, *"For Birmingham truly to come alive and reclaim the title of Britain's second city it needs to look to its own people, its inner ability and ambition. Manchester is a recognised leader in areas such as style and trends and sporting excellence: Birmingham now needs to make progress in these areas truly to compete, or the greatest piece of construction in the region will be seen as the M6 Toll, whisking investment between London and Manchester."* (The Times, July 8, 2005)

We believe that in order for Birmingham to capitalise on its location it must have a major new railway station capable of serving the city's need for additional capacity into the next century. It goes beyond the currently planned project to rejuvenate Birmingham New Street Station; recognising the need for, but also the unavoidable limitations of, that project.



**Birmingham** A European City at the Hub of the UK Rail Network

# The Transport Challenge

The city of Birmingham is currently at a crossroads: either it stays at the hub of the national rail network, or it risks being marginalised. It is imperative that Birmingham address this challenge in the near future.

Between 1995/6 and 2004/5 rail passenger journeys in the West Midlands have increased by about 44%, and at Birmingham New Street Station passenger numbers have increased by about 53%. In the next ten years they are expected to rise a further 28%. Due to its proximity to London, Birmingham depends on good rail links. Air travel is not an alternative for such a short distance.

Regional travel has grown particularly strongly and is currently running at an annualised rate of about 6%. This is important for Birmingham as it seeks to maintain its position as the most accessible city outside the Capital. Fast and frequent services are essential so that it remains attractive for travellers from other UK provincial cities.

Birmingham recognises that a transport policy that relies on growth in private car usage is not sustainable—Birmingham and its surrounding counties need a solution that offers opportunities for new routes and which enhances cross-city and inter-city route provision. They need a solution that opens up the possibility of providing new capacity as demand rises and as new areas of the city and the region develop.

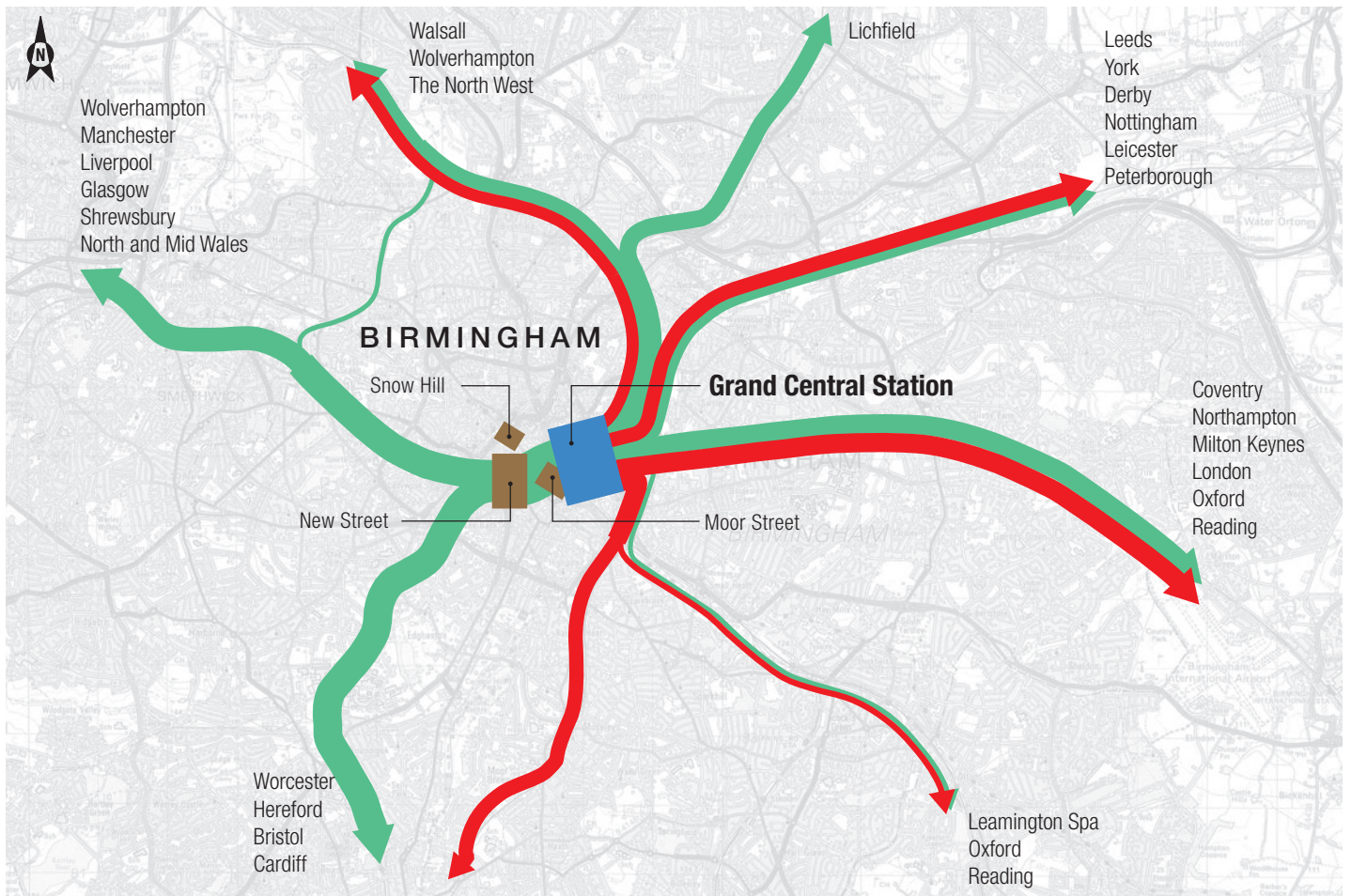
The challenge is to develop an integrated transport system—joined-up journeys (train/bus/tram/taxi/foot) to get people out of cars. It needs the system to be flexible to respond to the transport and development demands of the next century and beyond.



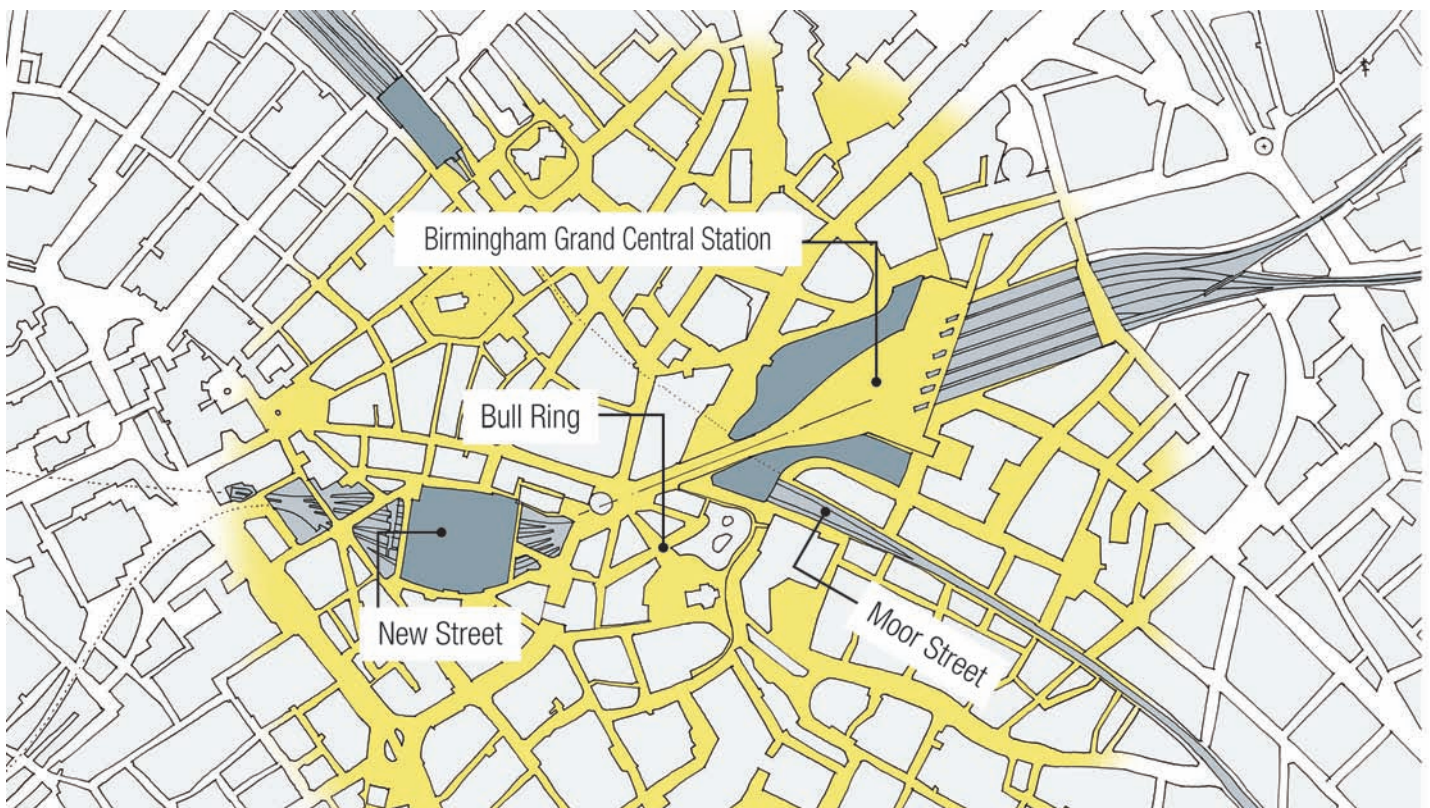
A legacy for future generations

# Birmingham Grand Central Station

## More Routes, More Capacity, At the Heart of the City



More Routes, More Capacity



At the Heart of the City

# Transport Solutions

## Now

The currently planned upgrade of New Street Station will provide much needed improvement to the City's Gateway. While delivering the project will be challenging and possibly disruptive, it should provide:

- Enhanced passenger facilities
- Increased passenger capacity
- Improved aesthetics

It is a good start, but this solution only works for the short term because:

- It offers **no increase** in the number of platforms – a constraint on the number of trains that it can accommodate (it is already near capacity at peak times)
- It offers **no change** to the congested rail approaches to the existing station, limiting capacity and lengthening journey times
- There can be **no change** to the current curved platforms—which slow down the operations of the station and hinder disabled access

A potential next step—the provision of longer trains—increases the capacity of each train, but doesn't increase the number of services or relieve congestion around the station. Little else can be done to improve New Street and, consequently, today's challenges will re-emerge and grow worse within a few years.

## Next

The current long-term plan appears to hinge on a deep tunnel to provide cross-city routes. This would provide additional capacity, but its cost and feasibility may make it unaffordable or impossible.

**Our plan** is for a new and visionary Gateway to Birmingham—**Birmingham Grand Central**—which looks beyond the current upgrading plans and provides flexible future capacity and connections, safeguarding the City's transport opportunities for decades to come.

It will:

- Provide the opportunity for **additional services** and routes both within the city and inter-city in the future—this means more trains to key destinations and more through trains.
- Provide for a **single station concourse** incorporating Moor Street Station
- Provide significant additional **station capacity**.
- Safeguard additional **long-term** rail capacity.
- Be an **integrated transport hub**, providing a modern, high-quality and efficient/**intermodal transfer facility** for trains, metro, buses, taxis, cars and pedestrians.
- Provide a magnificent **Gateway to Birmingham**—appropriate to its stature in a modern Europe; light, airy, efficient, safe and convenient.
- Act as a **catalyst** to the planned development of the City's East Side—it facilitates excellent connectivity across the railway corridor.
- Provide the opportunity for Birmingham to accommodate a potential **High-Speed Line**.
- Release **valuable land at New Street**.

Birmingham Grand Central Station can substantially be constructed to the side of the existing rail lines, limiting disruption to the existing rail network and all train services to a minimum.

Improvements to New Street would be limited to those required in the short-term, and those needed in its future role as a secondary station for Birmingham.

To plan for Grand Central Station now would unlock the future transport demands of the region and provide the flexibility to respond to the needs of the next century.

	Birmingham Gateway (New Street)	Longer Trains	Deep Tunnel Option	<b>Birmingham Grand Central</b>
Enhanced Passenger Facilities (Short-term)	✓			
Enhanced Passenger Facilities (Long-term)			?	✓
Capacity for additional routes			✓	✓
Keeps Birmingham at the UK rail hub			?	✓
Provides for long-term rail passenger growth			✓	✓
Catalyst for development			?	✓
Known to be feasible and costed	✓	✓	?	✓
Appropriate Gateway for a modern European City	?		?	✓
Indicative Cost Comparator	1		3	1

# Why act now?

It is critically important to act now. The opportunity to build such a transport hub at a place where two rail lines intersect is unique, but unless the land is safeguarded now it will be lost for generations to come.

The city has a window of opportunity that will close as the East Side development moves forward. It is now or never!

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