

## **It is take off time for Yorkshire as new link to the motorway officially opens in Doncaster**

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A major link road, which will cut journey times to the UK's fastest growing airport and help to create thousands of new jobs and homes in Doncaster, has officially opened today (29 February 2016) as Great Yorkshire Way.

Planning for the link from the south of Doncaster to Junction 3 of the M18 started over a decade ago as part of the Finningley and Rossington Regeneration Route Scheme (FARRRS). The three mile long section has now opened and been named to acknowledge its prominence as a prime gateway into Yorkshire and to reflect its importance as a catalyst for transforming the regional economy.

Great Yorkshire Way is already facilitating significant new developments along its corridor including the first two high quality logistics units at the £400million iPort and the first of 1,200 new homes at Torne Park on the regenerated former Rossington Colliery site. It will also significantly reduce journey times to Yorkshire's Robin Hood Airport Doncaster Sheffield, bringing an extra one million potential passengers to within a 60 minute drive.

Great Yorkshire Way is predicted to trigger £1.7billion of private sector investment creating 20,000 new jobs and 5,000 new homes. It is also expected to provide a three per cent boost to the Sheffield City Region's economy.

Opening Great Yorkshire Way with the partners who help deliver the scheme, Mayor of Doncaster, Ros Jones, said: "This is a landmark occasion and the culmination of years of hard work to deliver one of the most important projects ever seen in Doncaster.

"Great Yorkshire Way is not only the gateway to the Sheffield City Region and Yorkshire it is the gateway to unprecedented levels of private sector investment which in turns sees thousands of new jobs and homes created. The local and regional economy is being transformed by this infrastructure scheme as many of the expected outcomes are already coming to fruition with the expansion of our fantastic Doncaster Sheffield Airport, the exciting iPort project really starting to take shape and brand new homes being built in Rossington. "It's an exemplary project and great advertisement for collaboration between the public and private sectors. Today is a great day for Doncaster and a day that benefits all of the Sheffield City Region and Yorkshire."

Steve Gill, managing director of Doncaster Sheffield Airport said: "This is truly a momentous day.

"The opening of The Great Yorkshire Way delivers greatly enhanced connectivity to the Sheffield City region's airport, placing Doncaster Sheffield Airport within minutes of the UK's major motorway network and bringing global business closer to Sheffield's £28 billion economy.

"We have already begun to see impressive planned growth as a result of the new road with increased capacity from our incumbent airlines Thomson and Wizz and new airline Aer Lingus and Flybe seeing the potential of flying from the Sheffield City Region.

Peter Nears, Strategic Planning Director, The Peel Group said: "We are proud to have invested more than 160 million in the airport and the opening of the new link road is a tribute to a strong partnership with both the public and private sectors. It is also a symbol of Peel's wider commitment to the Northern Powerhouse. This gateway to the Sheffield City Region project is truly transformational and the new road will be a huge draw to passengers, business and cargo bringing huge economic benefits to the region."

Michael Hughes, CEO of Verdion, comments: "The opening of the Great Yorkshire Way is a key milestone: the final road link that seal's iPort's strategic position in Doncaster, one of the UK's strongest logistic locations with excellent motorway links and close proximity to the Humber Ports. Seeing is believing, and now we can see the link road open, bringing the scheme that much closer to the Doncaster Sheffield Airport, and our first two speculative units being built, getting closer to completion. In addition, work has now started on the iPort Rail facility, the final piece of the intermodal picture."

Owen Michaelson, Chief Executive of Harworth Estates, said: "Great Yorkshire Way has been a long time coming and I applaud Doncaster Council in getting this delivered. The challenge now is for ourselves, Peel and Verdion to make the most of this fantastic new infrastructure and turn the area into a Northern Powerhouse demonstrator project - delivering thousands of new homes, jobs and supporting export-led growth."

Nigel Brewster, Vice Chair of Sheffield City Region Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), said: "This is excellent news for the Sheffield City Region economy and shows global investors that our City Region is an even better place to do business than ever before. The airport link road takes our City Region a step closer to delivering its vision of creating 70,000 new jobs and 6,000 new businesses over the next decade. Crucially, it makes getting into and out of the Sheffield City Region faster and easier for thousands of holiday makers and international business people who live and work here. It has already led to major new flights from Sheffield City Region to some of the biggest airport hubs in Europe including Paris, Berlin and Amsterdam."

Don Valley MP Caroline Flint said: "The idea for the link road came to life when Doncaster Sheffield Airport was given the green light. It seems strange that a few miles of road should be such a big deal. But the key to Doncaster's success is connectivity – easily getting from one place to the next. Doncaster is a gateway to the North and thanks to Great Yorkshire Way, where people go, jobs and opportunities follow. All of this, thanks to a few miles of road. Not bad."

This innovative scheme, project managed by Doncaster Council has been delivered by a unique team made from the very best of the public and private sectors. The partnership between Doncaster Council, Peel Group, Verdion and Harworth Estates plus Mott MacDonald's design and Carillion's construction expertise made this £56million road a reality.

The Peel Group, Verdion and Harworth Estates contributed £34million to the scheme to add to £18million of Regional Growth Funding with the balance met by the council. The scheme also received extensive backing from the Sheffield City Region Local Enterprise Partnership, Doncaster Chamber and the business and residential communities.

Work started in October 2013 and mountains were literally moved to complete the project. Six new bridges were built, including an impressive 12 metre high structure to carry the road over the East Coast Main Line with highway embankments built by re-using a million tonnes of material from the old colliery spoil heap.

To mark the opening of Great Yorkshire Way the Vulcan flower display has been relocated from the Tudworth roundabout at the A614/A18 junction and will provide a great signpost for people travelling to Doncaster Sheffield Airport.