



**Tracy Brabin**  
**Mayor**  
of West Yorkshire

**Mayor Tracy Brabin**  
West Yorkshire Combined Authority  
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Rt Hon Grant Shapps MP  
Secretary of State  
Department for Transport

By Email

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Dear Grant,

I was intrigued by your column in this morning's Yorkshire Post, where you make the extraordinary claim that criticism of your Integrated Rail Plan is "irrational".

As you will know, the plan put forward by Transport for the North was developed by Northern leaders and officials who all experience our creaking rail infrastructure day in, day out. We share the challenges and frustrations of fellow passengers. As a result, we know precisely what our communities need, for now and the long term.

It is true that a new high-speed line between Leeds and Manchester, with a stop in Bradford, would have created some disruption for those cities. But I know that people who live and work in Bradford in particular would have been quite happy to put up with this to be on the mainline for the first time, to bring jobs, businesses, and opportunities to the city in the long term. Your plan fails to deliver all of these benefits, which is why communities are so angry and frustrated with the decision your government has made.

You claim in your piece that your plan will "double or even treble capacity on many key routes." As I and my officials have made clear, we do not think this will be achieved under your government's plans. Putting fast inter-city connections alongside stopping services on upgraded Victorian infrastructure is unlikely to achieve what you claim. To achieve some of the stated journey times between Leeds and Manchester or Leeds and Bradford, my transport officials think that this could lead to a *reduction* in services in towns like Dewsbury, Batley and Pudsey.

Your department has yet to publish the evidence behind the promises of improved journey times and additional capacity that your plans claim. Will you now publish this for all of us to see and scrutinise?

The Prime Minister promised on numerous occasions that he would deliver a new line between Leeds and Manchester and your government repeatedly said HS2 would be delivered in full. These are commitments that were broken when the Integrated Rail Plan was published. In your letter to me yesterday, you expressed your disappointment that I described this as a betrayal. I'm not sure what other word could be used given government's repeated broken promises.



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**Mayor**  
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Yours Sincerely

Tracy Brabin  
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