



Department  
for Transport

# HS2

## HS2 Phase 2b: October 2020 Update

**Moving Britain Ahead**

October 2020

# Introduction

High Speed Two (HS2) is the Government's proposal for a new, high speed north-south railway. The proposal is being taken forward in phases: Phase One will connect London with Birmingham and the West Midlands. Phase 2a will extend the route to Crewe. Phase 2b is planned to extend the route to Manchester, Leeds and beyond.

In 2017, HS2 Phase One gained Royal Assent and construction is now underway. Phase 2a is currently in second reading and progressing towards Royal Assent. Our last major route wide update was in 2018, and in Summer 2019, we held a Design Refinement Consultation on proposed scope and efficiency saving changes to HS2 Phase 2b. In Autumn 2019 the Government commissioned an independent Review of HS2 by Douglas Oakervee. Following the review, the Government announced the Integrated Rail Plan, bringing together plans for Northern Powerhouse Rail, Midlands Connect and HS2 Phase 2b. We are now launching a second Design Refinement Consultation on the Western Leg only route into Manchester. This leaflet unpacks these developments and sets out the next steps now we have published our response.

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# Oakervee Review

In August 2019, the Prime Minister announced an independent review of HS2, known as the 'Oakervee Review'. The review was asked to gather and test all the existing evidence to allow the Government to make properly informed decisions on the future of HS2.

The Oakervee Review concluded that HS2 should proceed. In February 2020, the Prime Minister agreed and committed to providing better rail links between London, the Midlands and the North, making sure that everyone can benefit from opportunities for economic growth.

The Oakervee Review also concluded that Phase 2b needs to be considered as part of an Integrated Rail Plan for the North and Midlands, which includes Northern Powerhouse Rail and the Midlands Rail Hub. The plan will ensure these schemes are designed, delivered and operated as an integrated rail network.

# Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR)

The Government is working in partnership with Transport for the North (TfN) on the Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR) programme, which is designed to transform connectivity and capacity between the key economic centres of the north – including Manchester and its airport, Leeds, Sheffield, Newcastle, Liverpool and Hull.

Consisting of potentially new and significantly upgraded railway lines, the proposed network represents a long-term investment and will transform services across the region to provide seamless rail travel between cities across the North.

Working closely with Government TfN are developing the business case for NPR which is due to be submitted in 2021. Informed by the Integrated Rail Plan, this will document the preferred network designs, including the best way to phase the delivery of the NPR programme.

# Integrated Rail Plan (IRP)

Following the Oakervee Review, the Government has committed to delivering HS2 and to prepare an Integrated Rail Plan (IRP) for the North and Midlands setting out the form, scope and phasing of HS2 Phase 2b, Northern Powerhouse Rail, Midlands Rail Hub and other major rail schemes, maximising the benefits delivered by transport investment in the North and Midlands. The IRP is being informed by a 'Rail Needs Assessment' being undertaken by the National Infrastructure Commission.

The IRP will draw on lessons from Phase 1 and Phase 2a of HS2 and examine how HS2 fits with other investments in the North and Midlands to ensure people see the benefits of better services more quickly. We aim to publish the IRP by the end of the year and the Terms of Reference are available to view at: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/high-speed-north-an-integrated-rail-plan-for-the-north-and-midlands-terms-of-reference](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/high-speed-north-an-integrated-rail-plan-for-the-north-and-midlands-terms-of-reference).

# Western Leg Design Refinement Consultation

In June 2019, the Government launched a HS2 Phase 2b Design Refinement Consultation seeking views on a set of proposed changes to the design of the route on both the Western and Eastern legs of HS2.

Since then, the Oakervee Review has recommended that Phase 2b of HS2 should be split into smaller sections to make its construction more manageable. We are therefore splitting legislation into separate Eastern and Western Leg Bills. The Government has accepted the Oakervee recommendation that plans for HS2 and other major schemes need to be brought together in an Integrated Rail Plan (IRP) for the North and Midlands. The IRP will set out the form, scope and phasing of the Phase 2b route.

The Government response to the 2019 Design Refinement Consultation outlines the Secretary of State's decisions on the four proposed changes to the Western Leg of the Phase 2b design. The Government's full response to the Eastern Leg refinements will be published separately after the IRP has been finalised, and will work out the best approach to get the most benefit for Leeds, the North East, and the East Midlands.

We are now launching a new consultation on further changes to the Western Leg of the HS2 Phase 2b route. This includes changes that will allow the HS2 route to be used by future NPR trains to link cities across the north of England.

# Environmental Statement

The Environmental Statement (ES) will accompany the hybrid Bill for Phase 2b of HS2 and they will be deposited in Parliament together. The Statement will set out the likely significant effects of both building and operating the railway and the proposed ways to mitigate these effects. This includes construction traffic routes and the area of land needed to construct the railway.

The working draft Environmental Statement for Phase 2b was subject to consultation in autumn 2018 and a report published in summer 2019 provides a summary of the responses received. Feedback provided in that consultation has been considered by HS2 Ltd as they further develop the design of the railway and finalise the ES that will be deposited in Parliament. The final ES will be subject to consultation following deposit of the hybrid Bill in Parliament.

# Next Steps and Further Information

The Western Leg Route Refinement Consultation will close in December 2020.

The IRP will conclude in December 2020 and the Government will announce its decisions.

Subject to the outcome of IRP, the Western Leg section of Phase 2b will be progressed to hybrid Bill deposit in early 2022 or sooner if possible.

Further sections of the project will be progressed towards a second, later, hybrid Bill.

There are a number of ways you can find out more information:

Online	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A series of online tools have also been made available on <a href="http://www.hs2.org.uk/phase2b">www.hs2.org.uk/phase2b</a> to help you find information that's relevant to you.</li></ul>
Request a copy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A copy of any published document will be sent free of charge on request by contacting the HS2 Helpdesk.</li></ul>
Webinars	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To see the schedule of events and how to join, please visit <a href="http://www.hs2.org.uk/events">www.hs2.org.uk/events</a>.</li></ul>

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