

# Case Study #8

HS2 INDEPENDENT  
DESIGN PANEL

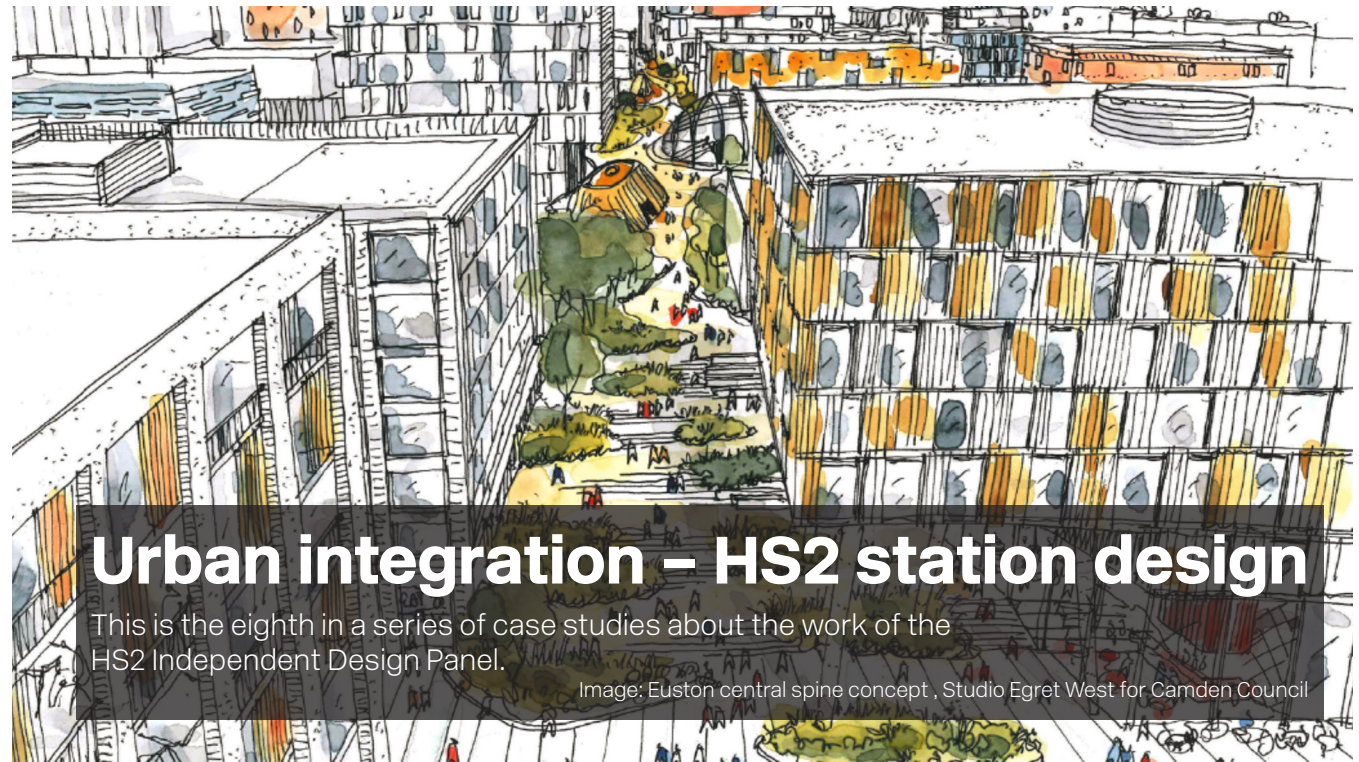
HS2 is widely vaunted as a 'catalyst for growth', bringing economic benefits to communities along its route – from the heart of London, through Birmingham and on to Leeds.

New HS2 stations will not only bring the new railway into city centres but also open up and support opportunities for developing the urban environment around them.

This requires a particular approach – one that creatively integrates HS2 stations into new pieces of the city.

**Process:** Station design teams were announced in February 2018 for Phase One stations: Euston, Old Oak Common Stations in London, Interchange Station in Solihull, and Curzon Street Station in Birmingham. The Independent Design Panel is supporting high quality design for the stations in a number of ways – from full reviews of emerging station designs to individual mentoring. Mentoring sessions were held with the Curzon Street Station and Interchange Station design teams in April – with two rounds of design panel meetings now held since station design teams were announced.

Schedule 17 applications are due to be submitted to local planning authorities in early 2019.



## Urban integration – HS2 station design

This is the eighth in a series of case studies about the work of the HS2 Independent Design Panel.

Image: Euston central spine concept, Studio Egret West for Camden Council

### Project headlines

- HS2 is much more than a railway – and the stations along its route much more than points of arrival and departure.
- HS2 Ltd has appointed a Head of Urban Design and Integration: Joanna Averley joined the team in March 2018.
- The HS2 Independent Design Panel has had encouraging initial meetings with the Phase One station design teams.
- A Master Development Partner for London Euston station – Lendlease – was appointed in February 2018

# Panel comments

The complexities of designing a new station that not only responds sympathetically to its context but also stimulates and supports new and exciting development are great. Signs so far are encouraging – with station design teams sensitive to the invaluable role that the new stations can play in breathing new life into the environment around them.

## 1. Phase One – bringing more to the city

At Curzon Street Station, thinking is going beyond the ‘red line’ boundary to ensure that the new station is connected into the area around it. Including collaborative work to support Birmingham City’s ‘One Station Concept’, which aims to maximise connectivity between HS2 and existing Birmingham stations. Close collaboration between the station design team and the main works civil contractor is needed to ensure that the viaduct, the station itself and the city around them come together to forge a successful new place.

The starting point at Interchange Station has, rightly, been the existing landscape setting. This is helping to identify opportunities to root the station firmly into its context in an authentic way and to contribute to the wider ambitions pursued by the Solihull Urban Growth Company.

Old Oak Common Station offers extraordinary opportunities to regenerate this area of west London – not least by providing much needed new homes and jobs. A spectacular new station will help put Old Oak on the map – but equally important will be continuing close collaboration between the design team, HS2 Ltd and the Old Oak and Park Royal Development Corporation, for example to pursue commercial initiatives that complement those of the wider area.

The station design team, HS2 Ltd and the Euston Master Development Partner are working well together to create a compelling vision of what Euston could become with the arrival of HS2. Initial work by the station design team has focused on the site’s perimeter by placing an emphasis on landscape and how this can draw the station and surrounding neighbourhoods together – this provides a solid foundation for creating an attractive place. Designing for a finer grain – for example, intimate green spaces and smaller commercial opportunities – will help mediate between the impressive scale of the station and the existing, predominantly residential, streetscape.

## 2. Phase Two – with Leeds and the East Midlands in sight

Phase Two of HS2 is at parliamentary design stage – the initial planning and design that prepare the way for parliamentary approval.

The panel welcomes the way that the City of Leeds and HS2 Ltd are working together – including its strategic approach to supporting development of the city’s South Bank. Locking the new station into the city’s regeneration will require new pedestrian routes through the station and the surrounding environment – this will be important in securing a station that successfully integrates with its surrounds.

The arrival of HS2 also promises huge opportunities to reinforce economic growth in the East Midlands. While the panel identifies significant challenges still to be overcome in the design of the East Midlands Hub Station, it is encouraged by the integrated approach adopted so far by the design team.

## 3. An advocate for urban integration

Since the earliest days of its work, the Independent Design Panel has stressed that the enormous opportunities for HS2 to spur regeneration and revitalisation of the cities along its route must not be lost – and that this needed strong urban design expertise within HS2 Ltd. It has therefore welcomed the appointment of Joanna Averley, an experienced planner and urban design adviser, as Head of Urban Design and Integration – and now looks forward to increasingly creative and constructive dialogues between HS2 Ltd and local planning authorities.