

North West on track to benefit from faster and more reliable train journeys as bill for next phase of HS2 to be laid in Parliament

- government to lay bill to extend HS2 from Crewe up to Manchester and beyond, creating 17,500 direct jobs across the North
- this is a major phase of the £96 billion commitment in the Integrated Rail Plan to deliver faster and better journeys across the North quicker than under previous plans
- new High Speed stations will also be built at Manchester Piccadilly and Manchester Airport, making way for new lines to Leeds and Liverpool, as part of Northern Powerhouse Rail

Passengers across the North West are one step closer to faster, greener and more reliable train services as the government will today (24 January 2022) introduce the bill for the next phase of HS2.

Once approved, the High Speed Rail (Crewe to Manchester) Bill will allow HS2 to continue its journey from Crewe to Manchester, creating a new transport spine across the North West and boosting local economies through better connections, more capacity, improved reliability and slashed journey times.

This includes cutting travel from London to Manchester by around 55 minutes and Birmingham to Manchester by up to 45 minutes.

It is also set to bring 17,500 direct jobs to Northern communities supporting the construction of the Crewe to Manchester leg and thousands of further jobs in the supply chain expected to follow. This includes hundreds of highly skilled permanent jobs, including in rolling stock depots to be established north of Crewe, as well as in Dumfries and Galloway.

The introduction of this bill marks the next chapter in a project that is already well underway by connecting 3 of England's greatest cities – London, Birmingham and Manchester.

This next phase will give the North West the tools it needs to further generate economic growth and level up across the region, with new stations supporting one of the UK's fastest-growing cities at Manchester Piccadilly and Manchester Airport.

Part of the new high speed line will also be used for Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR) services between Leeds, Manchester and Liverpool, helping cut the Manchester Piccadilly to Liverpool journey to 35 minutes and Leeds to Liverpool to around an hour and a quarter.

The construction of HS2 to Manchester will allow capacity to double, or more,

on the routes between Manchester and London to Birmingham.

When NPR is completed, similar capacity increases to Leeds and Liverpool will follow, with trains using the High Speed line and stations at Manchester.

The plans are all part of the £96 billion [Integrated Rail Plan](#) – the biggest ever public investment in Britain’s rail network – and the first of 3 new high speed lines being planned, to add more seats, shorten journey times, support local services and deliver a modern, fully connected transport network fit for Manchester and the North West.

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps said:

We are determined to improve transport connections and level up communities across the country and this bill marks a landmark moment as we bring HS2 to Manchester and lay the foundations for Northern Powerhouse Rail.

Our £96 billion investment in rail in the North and Midlands and in connecting them to London will bring communities together, create thousands of jobs and make towns and cities in these key areas more attractive to business up to 10 years quicker than under any previous plans.

The Integrated Rail Plan is the blueprint for the government’s commitment to building better transport links, generating prosperity and opportunity across the North and Midlands, bringing benefits up to 10 years sooner than previously planned, all while delivering on levelling up the country.

Published last year, the Integrated Rail Plan set out a list of projects that will deliver better infrastructure for the North, quicker.

HS2 Minister Andrew Stephenson said:

We have time and time again proven our commitment to improving transport connections throughout the North and levelling up communities in the process.

Today marks the next chapter in achieving this; fulfilling the promises in our £96 billion Integrated Rail Plan to shorten journey times, provide reliable and sustainable services, while supporting local services and delivering a modern, fully connected transport network fit for the future even sooner.

The bill will also allow for a new high speed stations and junctions to be built at Manchester Piccadilly and Manchester Airport futureproofing services along the Western Leg and facilitating Northern Powerhouse Rail to be built at a later date – which could include lines from Manchester to Liverpool and

Leeds.

In addition to this, a new junction near Crewe will be developed not only improving future services on the route but giving Crewe the potential to be a Hub station in mid-Cheshire able to accommodate more trains.

At the same time, HS2 Ltd also announced that it will aim to deliver a 10% net gain in biodiversity for replaceable habitats on the Crewe to Manchester route. This means going beyond existing mitigation and compensation schemes, delivering more biodiversity than existed before construction, and ensuring a bigger and better environmental legacy.

This comes less than 2 weeks after the HS2 Minister announced that HS2 trains will run on zero carbon energy from day one aligning the country's biggest infrastructure project with the government's ambitions for a greener transport and construction future.

Clare Hayward MBE, DL, Chair of the Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership, said:

Ensuring all of Cheshire and Warrington is properly connected to the rest of the North West and the country as a whole, and delivering an integrated sustainable transport solution, is vital in ensuring our continued economic growth and delivering on our net zero ambitions.

High speed links to the airport, and Manchester and beyond are a key part of this, providing easy access to good employment opportunities as well as ensuring our vital industries, including net zero, are easily accessible and properly joined up to important infrastructure.

Crewe has a proud rail heritage and has long been seen as the gateway to the North and today's announcement is an important step in it continuing to be so. I look forward to seeing the project progress and come to fruition, providing economic benefits to all our area and the people who live here.

Chris Fletcher, Marketing and Campaigns Director, Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce, said:

Phase 2b of HS2 will be transformative for Greater Manchester and the wider North West. The benefits of delivering HS2 in full are many. It will promote economic growth, trigger business investment, unlock labour markets and enable regeneration of areas that desperately need 'levelling up'.

The additional rail capacity HS2 will deliver could allow more rail freight and contribute to the attainment of net zero goals by reducing congestion on the roads. HS2, therefore, is not merely

about reducing travel times. It is an essential part of 'levelling up' and Greater Manchester Chamber welcomes further progress on HS2.