

Phase 2a Act to bring HS2 to the north

- High Speed 2 (HS2) Phase 2a Bill given Royal Assent
- act means works can start to build new rail line between Crewe and Birmingham
- law signed exactly 1 year after government gives green light to deliver HS2
- Royal Assent comes alongside launch of West Midlands Combined Authority's HS2 Growth Strategy

The [HS2 Phase 2a: High Speed Rail \(West Midlands to Crewe\) Bill](#) has been given Royal Assent today (11 February 2021), cementing in law the government's commitment to bring the new high-speed railway to the north.

The act of Parliament was passed exactly 1 year after ministers gave the project the green light and will allow [HS2 Ltd](#) to begin work to construct the next phase of the new high-speed railway between Crewe and Birmingham, creating thousands of jobs.

Construction of the first stage of the project between the West Midlands and London is already underway and now supporting more than 15,000 jobs and 500 apprenticeships.

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps said:

Whatever your view of this project, HS2 is now a reality – heading north, creating jobs and building a brighter future for our country. This vital project is at the heart of the government's commitments to build back better from the pandemic, tackle the north-south divide and drive growth across the country.

The signing of the Phase 2a Bill into law is a historic milestone for this ambitious project, which is already creating and supporting thousands of jobs across the UK. I look forward to seeing spades in the ground to get this section built and deliver the benefits of high-speed rail to the north as swiftly as possible.

Now that the Phase 2a Bill has been signed into law, HS2 Ltd will be able to start environmental works along the route with construction expected to begin on this section by 2024.

Construction of Phase 2a is expected to support around 5,000 jobs, with many more in the supply chain. In addition, the railway will support 140 permanent jobs at its maintenance base near Stone in Staffordshire.

It comes after HS2 Ltd marked National Apprenticeship Week this week by announcing that it will be directly recruiting for 30 new apprentices to join

the company in September 2021.

The company has also launched a [new online jobs board](#), which illustrates the broad range of opportunities currently available on the project. HS2 Ltd's construction partners and station contractors are currently recruiting for over 100 live vacancies, with jobs based at various office and satellite locations along the Birmingham to London route.

Today's announcement comes alongside the launch of the [West Midlands Combined Authority's](#) HS2 Growth Strategy, which outlines how the new railway could generate 175,000 jobs and £20 billion investment in the region.

Andy Street, the Mayor of the West Midlands, said:

HS2 was always going to be a game changer for the West Midlands, but the jobs and economy aspect of the scheme has taken on even more significance in light of the pandemic.

HS2 will be a key anchor of the region's recovery plans, with our latest research suggesting the knock-on effect of HS2 could eventually generate 175,000 jobs and more than £20 billion of investment.

These are extraordinary numbers, which shows just how critical it was to win the argument for HS2. With thousands in the West Midlands already employed and working on the project, HS2 is making a critical difference to people's livelihoods right now.

Councillor Craig Browne, deputy leader of Cheshire East Council, said:

This is a hugely important milestone in bringing high-speed rail to Crewe. HS2 is a strategically important project and will drive increased business confidence to invest in Crewe – creating opportunities to not only enhance the town, but also the wider borough, through the jobs, services and improved opportunities it can provide.

We are committed to maximising the significant benefits the scheme will bring and it is more important than ever as we support our local economy to bounce back from the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

Working with our strategic partners, we are continuing to push forward with multiple projects to transform Crewe and the wider area, and ensure it is ready for HS2's arrival, including our proposals for Crewe Hub station.

Once built, HS2 will become the spine of the UK's rail network, better connecting the country's towns and cities and boosting capacity to provide

better journeys for passengers.

Early this year, the government will publish its [integrated rail plan](#), which will outline how HS2 can work with existing rail plans and Northern Powerhouse Rail to deliver the benefits of HS2 to the East Midlands, Yorkshire and beyond