

# The north must benefit from HS2 say Greens

Delegates at Green Party conference in Manchester have voted for HS2 to be funded and completed in full, including the entire Eastern leg and an underground through station at Manchester Piccadilly. The policy development comes as phase one of HS2 between London and Birmingham is well under construction.

Commenting on the revised Green Party policy, co-leader Carla Denyer MP, said:

“The Green Party has long supported the principle of a new north-south high-speed rail line but had serious concerns about the specific route of HS2 and the environmental impacts of this route.

“However, this first phase of HS2 between London and Birmingham is well under way and most of the environmental impacts of construction are already baked in. So this is a pragmatic decision by the Green Party. It moves us on.

“Crucially, we have also acknowledged that the northern leg of HS2 was always the most important in terms of tackling capacity issues on our railways as well as addressing regional inequalities. So the line must be completed in full.

“We also say loud and clear that our railways have to be built right – for habitats and wildlife, for local transport users, for affected neighbours and for government coffers. Greens will not support blank cheques or offer uncritical endorsement.

“We need to move at great speed to shift travel away from cars and flights to public transport. HS2, in full, can play an important role in achieving this shift.”

Green Party spokesperson on transport Councillor Matt Edwards, who is leader of the Green Group on Bradford Council, added:

“I am delighted that the Green Party conference has also backed Northern Powerhouse Rail, a high-speed rail line from Liverpool to Manchester and onwards to Bradford and Leeds and then the east coast. Successive governments have failed to invest in the rail network in the North of England and the Green Party have long advocated for the investment communities in the North deserve.

“Pollution and carbon emissions from transport remains stubbornly high. If we want to do something to address this, we need to invest in high-speed rail – but it has to be done right. Putting passengers and our planet at the heart of the project.”

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