

HS2 acquires second major development site for Manchester's new high speed station

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HS2 Ltd has reached an agreement with Bruntwood, one of the UK's leading property providers, to purchase Square One on Travis Street in readiness for construction of Manchester's brand new high speed railway station.

The sale marks HS2's second major property acquisition in the city centre in just over 12 months, following its purchase of the Store Street site in April 2021. Both sites have been purchased by HS2, on behalf of the Department for Transport, and are pivotal to the creation of the new high speed station that will be built adjacent to the existing Piccadilly Station.

Manchester's new station is forecast to open between 2035 and 2040 and includes six platforms at surface level, allowing passengers to access both HS2 and future NPR services. The plans also include provision for a new four platform Metrolink station beneath the HS2 station.

Ruth Todd, Chief Commercial Officer at HS2 said: "Following submission of the Bill earlier this year, seeking powers to construct and operate the railway between Crewe and Manchester, this acquisition represents another major milestone in our programme to bring high speed rail to the North.

“HS2’s purchase of Square One is a vote of confidence for investors locally and internationally to leverage the wider regeneration potential of the surrounding area, knowing that Manchester is set to become so brilliantly connected.”

A large proportion of the area surrounding Piccadilly station is underdeveloped, making it a prime location for investment in new commercial space, housing and public realm.

Investment would see businesses, residents and visitors benefit from a 41 minute connection to Birmingham on HS2 (a 46-minute saving), with direct services from London Euston set to more than halve, cutting one hour and 12 minutes off the current fastest journey time.

Bruntwood, who sold the Square One site to HS2, has already set out its ambition to use the proceeds to continue investing in the UK’s regional centres.

Pete Bearpark, Asset Management Director at Bruntwood, said: “We are committed to creating thriving places and communities, and after 15 years under Bruntwood stewardship, we have agreed to the sale of Square One and the land surrounding it to HS2 in advance of a formal compulsory purchase process.

“We will use the proceeds to continue to reinvest into regional cities to drive economic growth and have a positive impact on businesses and communities.”

Early works supporting construction of the new Piccadilly high speed station are not forecast to commence until at least 2025. HS2 has agreed leasehold terms with Square One’s existing tenants to enable them to remain in situ until the site is required.