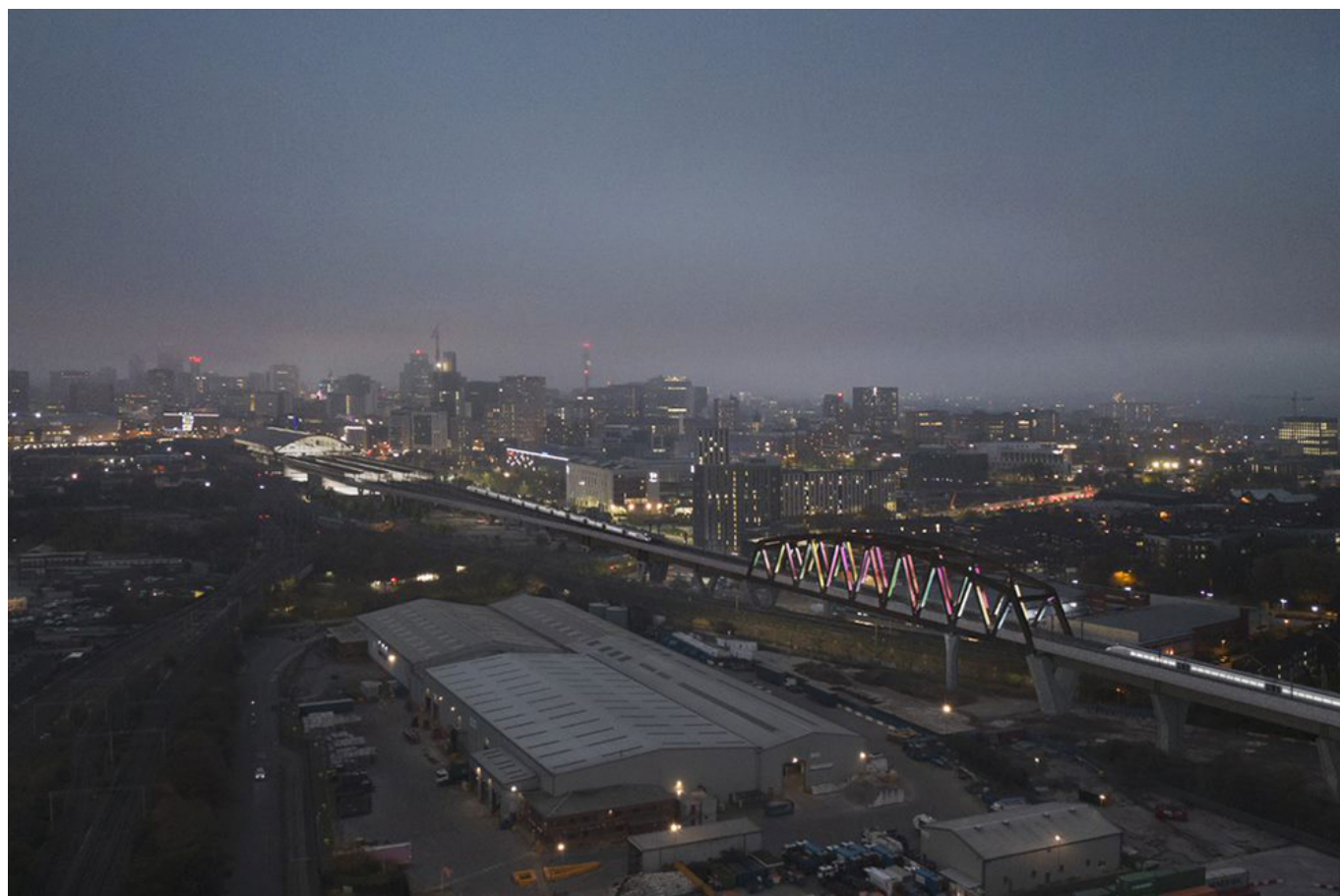


HS2: Planning approval for the bridge set to light up the Birmingham skyline

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HS2 Ltd has received Schedule 17 approval for a 150-metre section of viaduct carrying trains into Birmingham's new Curzon Street Station, including a 25-metre-high truss which will create a new icon on the city's skyline.

Birmingham City Council have approved the design of the Curzon No.2 viaduct, which is the tallest structure in the sequence of viaducts and structures that make up the Curzon Street Approaches taking HS2 trains into Birmingham.

The bridge consists of a gently curved truss in weathering steel which carries HS2 over the Victorian brick rail viaduct below, and which will reach 40 metres into the air, resting at least 17 metres above the ground. The bridge will carry three parallel high speed rail tracks over the existing east-west rail line. Closer to Curzon Street, the tracks will split further to serve the seven platforms being built at the station.

A major light artwork by British artist Liz West, will introduce a dynamic colour palette to the apertures of the steel truss, framing views of the city. Titled "Out of the Blue", the artwork will establish the bridge as a stunning feature of the city's landscape at night, when the artwork will come to life. The Council has asked

HS2 to develop the proposals detailed in the art strategy to enable a separate Schedule 17 submission.

HS2 Ltd's Design Director, Kay Hughes said: "We're thrilled that our design for the Curzon No.2 Viaduct has been approved by Birmingham City Council, which marks another significant milestone for the HS2 project in the West Midlands.

"We took an ambitious approach to create an iconic structure for the city, working with leading contemporary artist Liz West and our architects to create a distinctive light installation which will provide a fitting addition to the Birmingham skyline."

Nick McGough, Lead Architect for the Balfour Beatty VINCI Design Joint Venture said: "We wanted our design to reference the area's industrial heritage whilst embracing the continuing evolution of Digbeth as the city's Creative Quarter. We're delighted that the bridge design has been approved and look forward to continuing our collaboration with the artist Liz West and our ongoing dialogue with the Council to develop the detail of the light installation, which when complete, will form Birmingham's largest public artwork."

Senior Project Manager for HS2 Ltd, David King, who is working with HS2's contractor Balfour Beatty VINCI on the construction of this section of the railway, said: "This is great news for the team delivering this section of the railway in Birmingham. Our job now is to start construction of the bridge on the ground before launching it into its final position over the existing Victorian brick rail viaduct at around 17 metres above the ground. This is an exciting construction method, which we believe will be among the longest bridge launches of its type ever delivered in the UK."

The truss bridge is light but strong, composed of connected elements that form triangular units, and constructed using a relatively small amount of material. It has been designed to 'wrap' around the viaduct, extending the bottom of the steel to wrap underneath the viaduct deck and forming a visual connection to the steel girders of the adjacent structures. The nodes where the diagonal members meet will have curved corners to provide longevity to the steelwork whilst softening the silhouette of the bridge.

HS2 trains will cross the truss bridge to leave the city towards HS2's Washwood Heath Depot. This site, located northeast of Birmingham City Centre, will maintain, service, and store HS2 trains when not in use, generating over 500 long-term jobs for local people.

Photo credit: HS2 Ltd