

HS2 reveals plans for road network around Manchester Airport

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HS2 Ltd has set out plans which could radically improve capacity at Junction 6 of the M56 to support future growth and development aspirations around the proposed new HS2/NPR station at Manchester Airport.

The proposals, developed in conjunction with National Highways, suggest relocating Junction 6 of the motorway to the southwest and sequencing the works within HS2's construction programme. The move would reduce the long-term impacts for local communities and road users should the works be carried out at a later date.

HS2 says the revised plans would improve access to the new combined HS2 and NPR station for millions of business and leisure travellers and could also help to reduce congestion on the local road network.

The proposed change reflects the ongoing design and engagement work that HS2 Ltd undertakes during the hybrid Bill process. The High Speed Rail (Crewe – Manchester) Bill was submitted to parliament in January last year and seeks the legislative powers to build and operate the northern extension of Britain's new zero carbon railway, which is forecast to open between 2035 and 2040.

Tim Smart, Managing Director of HS2's Phase Two programme said: "The new combined HS2 and NPR station at Manchester Airport will deliver a major boost to the North West's economy, and we believe there's further potential for growth if additional capacity is created on the surrounding road networks.

"HS2's arrival is already spearheading development plans for more new homes and premium commercial space in the area. This enhanced connectivity could bolster those plans, help to future proof the road network, and benefit local communities by reducing congestion."

Initial concepts for the new junction would see the M56 realigned to the south and Junction 6 converted to a roundabout junction, with the HS2 railway line running in a shallow tunnel underneath. Link roads would connect the new junction to the existing local road network.

The proposals would also see the existing roundabouts at Junction 6 converted to signal-controlled junctions, and a direct link provided to the combined HS2/NPR station with a flyover crossing Hale Road and running parallel to the M56. To improve the local road network, the Runger Lane/Avro Way junction would also be upgraded to a signal-controlled operation.

Liz Garlinge, Strategic Customer Projects Director at National Highways said: "National Highways welcomes these improved plans for M56 Junction 6. As well as providing access to the proposed HS2 NPR station, this integrated approach to planning will contribute to the future needs of the region and better journeys for all our customers."

HS2 Ltd has begun the process of engaging with individuals who would be directly affected by the change. The proposal will be formally submitted to Parliament later this year and is subject to its approval. Any concerns raised by those directly affected will be considered by Parliament ahead of the approval process.

Communities are invited to attend face to face and online webinar events where they can ask questions and find out more – full details below.

HS2 has a 24/7 Helpdesk and encourages people to get in touch if they have any questions about Britain's new high speed railway and its construction. Call freephone 08081 434 434 or email hs2enquiries@hs2.org.uk.

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