

# HS2 reveals Warwickshire's giant outdoor factory and training academy

June 23, 2022



HS2's civils partner, **Balfour Beatty VINCI (BBV)**, has opened the doors to its giant construction compound in Kingsbury, Warwickshire and revealed the scale of works underway ready to build one of the most complex sections of the **HS2** route – the Delta Junction.

The 550,000 square metre site (equivalent to 74 football pitches) is already a hive of activity and will soon become the workplace for around 1,000 people tasked with building the high speed line on a network of viaducts crossing motorways, roads and footpaths.

- **HS2 designs aim to cut carbon and blend better with environment near Lichfield**
- **Event led by HS2 and MP attracts scores of businesses**
- **Planning permission granted for HS2 viaducts**

David Speight, Client Project Director at **HS2** said: “This site at Kingsbury is a fantastic demonstration of the importance **HS2** Ltd puts on training and developing local talent to build the new railway. With the reveal of the site today we are turbo-charging the arrival of **HS2** services into the West Midlands, bringing enormous capacity and connectivity benefits to the transport network around Birmingham.”

This summer, work will begin on the production of almost 3,000 precision designed concrete segments, ready to create the network of nine viaducts that will form part of the Delta Junction, a triangular section of line where the new railway curves west towards Birmingham and runs north towards Crewe.

In total, 2,742 segments will be produced from materials mixed at the on-site batching plant and at peak production, the pre-cast yard is expected to turn out up to eight segments per day, weighing between 60 and 80 tonnes. The segments are built in two different sizes, with the larger design (2.6m length x 10.5m width x 3.5m height) used for the double track sections of the railway.

**BBV** expects production to begin this August, with on-site assembly of the segments for the Delta Junction viaducts due to start next summer.

Jo Chell, Head of Delivery Programme Management at **BBV**, said: "It's incredible to see the progress we're making at Kingsbury to produce thousands of segments that will form the building blocks for nearly 7km of viaducts, known as the Delta Junction.

"These are world-class engineering structures and it's a fantastic opportunity for our highly skilled workforce to play a part in their construction. We have embedded the principles of 'Modern Methods of Construction', by creating factory conditions for manufacture and modularisation, providing us with a rich legacy of skills and learning for the future.

"I'm immensely proud of the team who designed and built the site. Ensuring sustainability was a fundamental part of the design and we have established several hectares of wildflower meadows and wetland, together with valuable bat habitat, all within the site boundaries."

Work is currently underway to assemble a 54 metre-long gantry crane that will lift each segment during the manufacturing cycle, ahead of their onward transport to nearby Water Orton and Coleshill ready for on-site assembly. The short distance from the Kingsbury site and onsite construction method will help to reduce the number of vehicle movements in line with **HS2's** environmental commitments.

Each component part of the build requires a highly skilled workforce and **BBV** opted to locate its latest Skills Academy at the site to ensure its workforce is expertly trained for the programme of work ahead.

Leading the job of ensuring that **BBV's** workforce, which is forecast to reach 7,000, is trained, accredited and job-ready is **BBV's** head of learning and development Vicki Lovatt.

Vicki said: "Amongst the hive of construction activity, this site is also home to our new Kingsbury Skills Academy, which is already playing a key role in developing our people and making sure they have the right skills to help build **HS2**.

"Being on the doorstep of where **HS2** is actually being built makes it the perfect environment for our learners and ensures the training and development programmes we deliver feel real. It's a great asset not only for the project, but for the region too, helping to upskill local communities and launch careers in construction and engineering."

The Kingsbury Skills Academy opened its doors in February 2022 and over 9,000 hours of training and over 1,000 courses have already been delivered from its bespoke indoor and outdoor facilities, which include an off-road 4x4 driver safety range.

This is in addition to **BBV's** first Academy, based in Bordesley Green, Birmingham, which focuses on upskilling people who are out of work or looking for a new career and getting them 'job-ready' in just 4-6 weeks. From there, they transition to the Kingsbury Academy which focuses on delivering job-specific training, covering everything from working at height and in confined spaces to first aid and mental health awareness.

Graduates and apprentices have a key role to play in supporting construction of the Delta Junction and the Kingsbury site is already home to 11 people, under the age of 25, who are beginning their career journey with **BBV** on **HS2**.

Bethany Williamson, Apprentice Civil Engineer from Birmingham said: "This project is opening doors for me that I could never had imagined before joining **BBV**. The wrap-around support I've received and the training I've gone through here at our Kingsbury Skills Academy has given me the perfect platform to launch my career from. Thanks to **HS2**, I can look forward to a career with endless possibilities."

**BBV** is continuing to recruit for hundreds of jobs to support the construction of its 90km section of **HS2** between Long Itchington in Warwickshire to the centre of Birmingham and on to Handsacre in Staffordshire. For details of all the latest opportunities, visit [hs2.org.uk/careers](https://hs2.org.uk/careers)