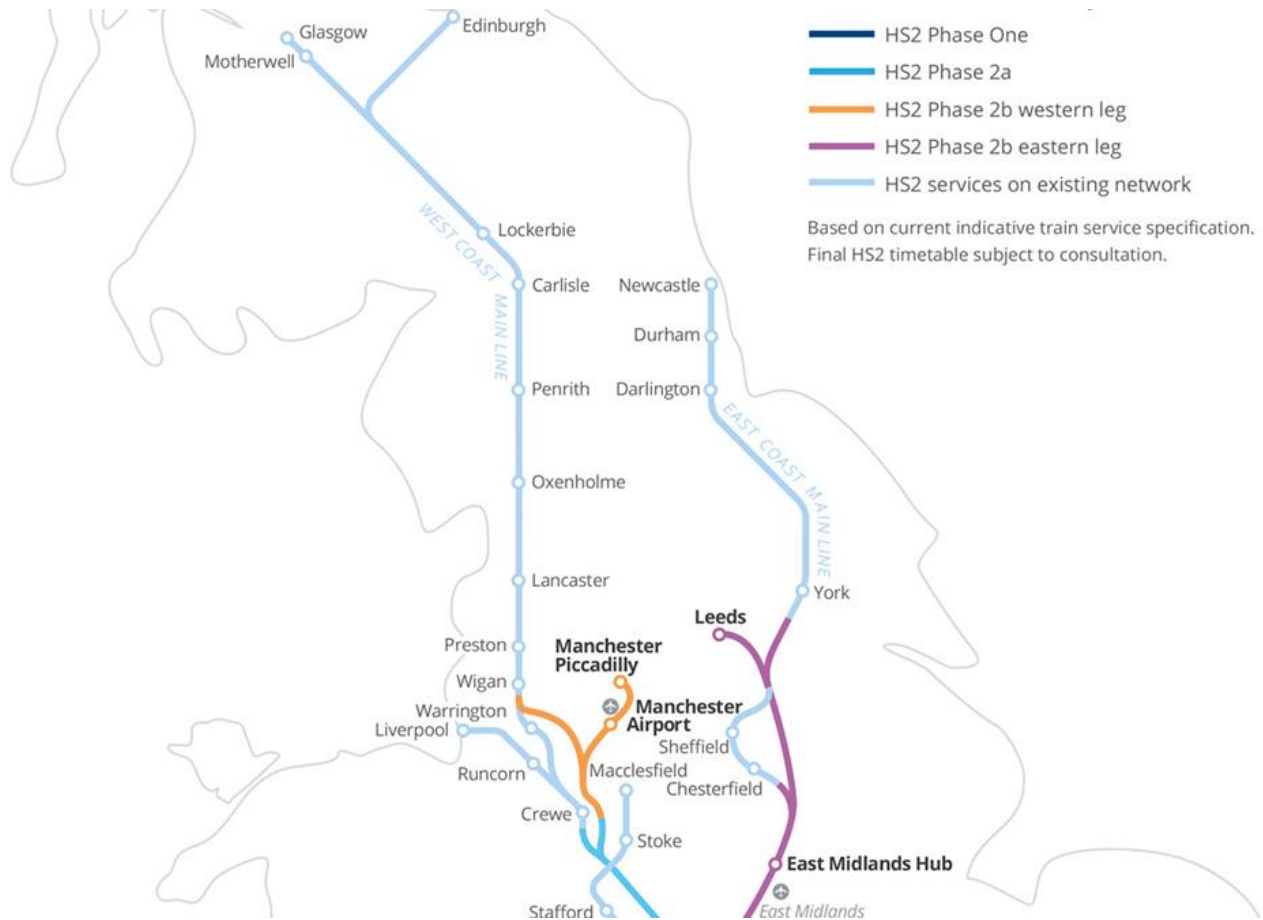


HS2's journey north accelerates as public consultation opens on latest proposals

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Plans to extend Britain's new railway, High Speed Two, moved a step closer with the opening of a new public consultation which invites people's views on the latest proposals for the railway.

Communities are encouraged to have their say on a series of proposed design refinements and changes including:

- the addition of Crewe Northern Connection and changes to the design of Crewe North Rolling Stock Depot;
- changes to the design of Manchester Airport High Speed station;
- changes to the design around Manchester Piccadilly High Speed station; and
- the introduction of a new train stabling facility at Annandale, in Dumfries and Galloway.

Manchester Airport and Manchester Piccadilly High Speed station

The consultation focuses on four proposed modifications to the current design of the Phase 2b Western leg and outlines technical changes and expansion plans to both Manchester Airport and Manchester Piccadilly

High Speed Stations.

Communities in Cheshire and Greater Manchester are asked to give their views on a series of design refinements for Manchester Airport High Speed Station, including:

- Increasing the number of platforms (from two to four) to accommodate service growth and plans for Northern Powerhouse Rail;
- An update to the station's design to accommodate a future Metrolink stop;
- Increasing the number of car parking spaces and adding further car parking on the western side of the station; and
- Changes to the surrounding road network to provide a second access to the station.

Further design changes proposed for Manchester Piccadilly Station include:

- Providing two additional platforms (from four to six) to allow future use of HS2 infrastructure as part of NPR;
- Relocating the Piccadilly Metrolink station beneath the HS2/NPR station and making provision for a second Metrolink stop in the event of future expansion of Metrolink to the east of the city;
- Making passive provision for the junction required for a future connection to Leeds as part of Northern Powerhouse Rail;
- Changing the horizontal alignment of the approach to the station to reduce impacts on the existing Ardwick train care facility; and
- Improving the road network around the station to avoid disruption to road users and re-provide highways around HS2 works.

The proposals demonstrate cost efficiencies by integrating the infrastructure required to deliver NPR into the design of HS2's Western Leg hybrid Bill.

HS2 Minister, Andrew Stephenson MP said: "Engaging with communities is at the heart of our plans for HS2 and Northern Powerhouse Rail and we're eager to hear from residents and businesses across Greater Manchester about these proposed design changes to two local stations."

"Not only will these responses greatly inform the Integrated Rail Plan as it assesses the transport needs across the north, but will also provide vital feedback on the design changes for the Western Leg of HS2 Phase 2b."

"Our ambition is to deliver lasting rail improvements across the North and Midlands as quickly as possible – meaning even those who don't travel on these lines, still stand to benefit for generations to come."

Crewe North Rolling Stock Depot

The consultation focuses on four proposed modifications to the current design of the Phase 2b Western leg. It outlines exciting changes to the already proposed Rolling Stock Depot at Crewe, a new Crewe

Northern Connection (which would also support the vision for a Crewe Hub), alongside expansion plans to both Manchester Airport and Manchester Piccadilly High Speed Stations. These changes also include a newly proposed facility for stabling rolling stock at Annandale in Scotland.

Communities in Cheshire are invited to give their views on the design refinements, which could enable additional HS2 services to call at Crewe Station and support the creation of local jobs at the expanded Rolling Stock Depot.

The two changes to the design of the railway north of Crewe propose to:

- Include the Crewe Northern Connection in the design for HS2 to enable the benefits of NPR and the Crewe Hub to be realised in future with more and quicker services to the north; and
- Modify the design of the Crewe North Rolling Stock Depot to provide the required stabling and maintenance facilities for HS2 rolling stock and support the efficient operation of the HS2 network.

For Manchester Airport High Speed Station, the proposals include:

- Increasing the number of platforms (from two to four) to accommodate service growth and plans for Northern Powerhouse Rail;
- An update to the station's design to accommodate a future Metrolink stop;
- Increasing the number of car parking spaces and adding further car parking on the western side of the station; and
- Changes to the surrounding road network to provide a second access to the station.

The proposals demonstrate cost efficiencies by integrating the infrastructure required to deliver NPR into the design of HS2's Western Leg hybrid Bill.

HS2 Minister, Andrew Stephenson MP said: "Engaging with communities is central to delivering HS2 and Northern Powerhouse and we're keen to hear from residents and business across Cheshire about the proposed design changes to the rolling stock depot at Crewe and the new Crewe Northern Connection.

"Responses to this consultation will be invaluable as we accelerate preparations for the Western Leg of HS2 Phase 2b, linking Crewe and Manchester, as part of our overall commitment to improving connectivity to the North as quickly as we can."

Train stabling facility at Annandale

HS2 will serve four destinations in Scotland; Lockerbie, Motherwell, Glasgow and Edinburgh, as trains leave the dedicated HS2 track to the south of Wigan and join the existing West Coast Mainline. When Phase 2b is fully operational, passengers in Scotland will benefit from an increased number of HS2 train services compared to when the first two Phases of HS2 are complete (known as Phase One - London to the West Midlands, and Phase 2a - West Midlands - Crewe).

Faster journey times, improved connectivity and cleaner, greener travel means that HS2's arrival is

forecast to benefit the Scottish economy by over £5bn. It will join up the economic powerhouses of Glasgow and Edinburgh with fast, reliable train travel to other major cities in the UK. The UK and Scottish governments share the ultimate ambition of three-hour rail journeys between London and Scotland's Central Belt.

The public consultation, which opens today, outlines four proposed modifications to the current design of the Phase 2b Western leg to fully integrate with plans for Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR) and the wider transport network.

Communities in Dumfries and Galloway are invited to view the proposals for the design of the Annandale site, which will include:

- 14 stabling slides, designed to accommodate up to 28 trains that are 200 metres in length;
- Two connections to the West Coast Mainline to accommodate trains entering and leaving service at Carlisle (where HS2 trains will split from 400m trains to 200m trains for onward service to Scotland); and
- A training room, meeting room and storage facilities.

The depot is also expected to provide a jobs boost for the local community through the creation of around 100 permanent jobs.

The site in Annandale, near Gretna, was selected as the preferred location for the stabling facility as it improves the operational efficiency of the railway. Its location allows trains to be stabled overnight near to where they will start and finish service, instead of travelling to the next closest HS2 depot north of Crewe, approximately 150 miles away.

HS2 Minister, Andrew Stephenson MP said: "Engaging with communities is at the heart of our work at HS2 and Northern Powerhouse and we're eager to hear from residents and businesses in Dumfries and Galloway on this newly proposed depot facility.

"Our ambition to design and deliver this vital connection across Scotland and North-East England as quickly and efficiently as possible, will not only create more jobs – but improve its connections and journey times for future generations."

Have your say

The public consultation, which closes on the 11th December 2020, is supported by a series of live webinar events, which allow communities to find out more about the proposals and ask questions. The webinars are supported by HS2's freephone Helpdesk, which is available 24/7.

Public facing events are not being held in accordance with COVID-19 restrictions to ensure the safety and wellbeing of local communities.

Leonie Dubois, HS2's Head of Consultation and Engagement said: "Our latest consultation demonstrates that we're a step closer to extending Britain's new railway and improving connectivity to the North, while

delivering on the vision for a cleaner, greener transport network.

“Local communities have an important role to play in informing the final design of the railway and I encourage them to take the time to respond to these proposals.”

Consultation documents, which provide a detailed account of the proposed changes, are available online at <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/hs2-phase-2b-western-leg-design-refinement-consultation>

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