

SPOIL-ER ALERT! HS2's enormous spoil conveyor begins operation in West London

November 22, 2022



A 1.7 mile-long network of conveyors has begun operating in West London, and will move over five million tonnes of spoil excavated for the construction of HS2.

The use of the conveyor will remove the need for one million lorry movements from roads in West London, reducing traffic congestion and emissions in the local area.

HS2's contractors, Balfour Beatty VINCI SYSTRA joint venture (BBVS JV) and Skanska Costain STRABAG joint venture (SCS JV), have collaborated to construct the network of conveyors which meet at the HS2 Logistics Hub at Willesden Euro Terminal.

The conveyor network has three spurs, serving the Old Oak Common station site, the Victoria Road Crossover box site, and the Atlas Road site. At Old Oak Common, HS2 Ltd's station contractor, BBVS JV will use the conveyor to remove the 1.5 million tonnes of spoil that is being excavated for the station box, the subsurface structure in which the HS2 platforms will be constructed.



After officially turning on the conveyor, Rail Minister Huw Merriman said: “It was a pleasure to launch this truly remarkable conveyor system at Old Oak Common today and see how impressive it is in action, as it brings us one step closer to our goal of delivering a cleaner transport network.”

“These conveyors are just one way in which HS2 is transforming the future of construction, by keeping the impact on the environment and local community to a minimum while driving growth across the country.”



HS2 Minister Huw Merriman officially launches the West London spoil conveyor at HS2's Old Oak Common site

Speaking about the commencement on the conveyor system, HS2 Ltd's stations client director, Lee Holmes, said: "The launch of our conveyor system in West London is yet another important progress milestone for HS2 Ltd.

"This impressive network of conveyors means we are able to significantly reduce the impact of construction on the local area. Momentum on HS2 continues to build as the project nears peak construction, and systems like these conveyors are just one of the ways we are working to reduce carbon emissions in construction."

The spur which serves Victoria Road Crossover Box site will be used by SCS JV and will transport spoil excavated for the crossover box. In addition, the spoil excavated in the construction of the Northolt Tunnel East when two TBMs are launched from the site in late 2023 will also be transported to the Logistics Hub via the conveyor.

The final spur runs from a site on Atlas Road and will be used to remove spoil from the excavation of a logistics tunnel running from Atlas Road to Old Oak Common. The conveyor will then be extended through the logistics tunnel and will remove material from excavation of the Euston tunnel, further reducing the impact on the local road network.

From Old Oak Common, the conveyor runs at 2.1 metres per second, and the journey to the logistics hub

takes 17.5 minutes. The conveyor system includes sound barriers and a cover to prevent noise and limit dust dispersal.

Nigel Russell, project director, Balfour Beatty VINCI SYSTRA, said: “As we work to deliver Britain’s new, high-speed railway, we are continually seeking new ways to reduce the carbon emissions associated with our operations.

“The conveyor belt is a key example of how we are doing just that; collaborating with our partners to put in place new, innovative solutions which not only reduce our emissions, but also reduce disruption for the travelling public and local community.”

James Richardson, managing director of Skanska Costain STRABAG Joint Venture said: “SCS JV are proud to be part of the collaboration that constructed the carbon-friendly HS2 conveyor network, responsible for removing over 5 million tonnes of spoil.

“Moving spoil on the vast 1.7 mile conveyor network means a million fewer lorry journeys, less disruption to local residents and businesses, and puts us on track to deliver our commitment to achieving net zero carbon.”

From the Logistics hub, the spoil will be taken by rail to three destinations across the UK – Barrington in Cambridgeshire, Cliffe in Kent, and Rugby in Warwickshire – where it will put to beneficial reuse, filling voids which will then be used as a basis for redevelopment, such as house building projects.

To date, the Logistics Hub has processed over 430,000 tonnes of spoil, with over 300 trains distributing the spoil to its end destination.