

Yorkshire awaits reassurance on HS2 – as RBD confirms when rail plan is out this week

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Rail Business Daily has confirmed that the Integrated Rail Plan will be made available this week.

The plan will be presented before the House of Commons by the Secretary of State for Transport Grant Shapps MP on Thursday at about 11am.

Following this, full details of the plan will be made available online via the DfT website.

Regarding the plan, media speculation has shifted for Yorkshire – from HS2 developing an eastern leg through to Leeds, to the city instead being given a tram service as consolation.

It is worth mentioning at this stage that there is no definitive answer – a spokesperson for the Department for Transport told Rail Business Daily they could not comment on speculation.

The only time we will truly know what is happening regarding the eastern leg is on Thursday.

Media speculation

On 7 November, Mail on Sunday said the potential fast link between Birmingham and Leeds will not happen, but the city will have funding for trams instead. Rather, HS2 trains going into Yorkshire will use existing track.

Reports such as this have led, on Friday, to Leeds and Sheffield city councillors jointly calling for Yorkshire to remain part of HS2 plans, writing in an editorial published in the Yorkshire Post.

Sky News, on Friday late afternoon, said it expects the plans to come out this week. The report says ministers will avoid cancelling the Yorkshire HS2 leg completely, out of fear of backlash from voters formerly in the 'Red Wall'.

After Sky News, this weekend, the Daily Mail followed up reports from 7 November to say the rail plan will go public this week. Yorkshire Post says that the Department for Transport has confirmed this.

The Daily Mail online article suggests the plan released this week will include:

- About £96billion of investment
- Changes that will see rail times between Manchester and London cut by 20 mins
- Bolton to Wigan electrified at a cost of £78 million
- Beeching-cut routes in the north, such as the Don Valley line, being reinstated

Sky moots new stations in Leeds, Bradford and Manchester could be part of the plans.