

# 'HS2 – Challenges and Opportunities'

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## Key Points:

- HS2 – High Speed Rail 2 – the new backbone of Britain's rail network (people not freight).
- Designed to complement and enhance the UK's current overstretched transport system, lead to expansion and improvements of local/existing services (£40m has been set aside for this) and boost the economy.
- Project will create 25,000 jobs and 70% of the building will be outside London.
- 345 mile of new track – a lot of it concealed from view due to an extensive tree planting scheme.
- Will negate the need to build the equivalent of four M40 sized motorways .
- Project has a budget of £55.7bn – raised from UK taxpayers. It will be tightly managed to ensure the public receives value for money.
- The biggest infrastructure project ever undertaken in the UK.
- Three phases to construction:
  - Phase 1 – London to Birmingham (216km) – happening now and due for completion in 2026. (Act of Parliament passed in July 2017.) Brand new station being built at Curzon Street in Birmingham.
  - Phase 2 – Birmingham to Manchester. Bill is currently being read in Parliament. If successful, the build will go ahead and be completed by 2027.
  - Phase 3 – Manchester to Leeds. Due for completion 2033.
- Will connect to the airports: Heathrow, Birmingham International and East Midlands and also integrate with West and East Coast main lines.
- When fully operational, up to 48 HS2 trains with up to 1,100 seats each will be running every hour on the UK's rail network.
- Current journey times will be greatly improved – but the principal benefit is in connecting the South to the North in order to create a Northern Powerhouse and achieve greater employment opportunities and prosperity to the North of England.