

Press release: HS2 Ltd opens new office in Manchester

As work steps up to extend HS2 to both Leeds and Manchester, this reinforces HS2's commitment to work with partners, including Transport for the North, in order to enable Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR) services.

The company relocated its headquarters from London to the Midlands 3 years ago, and has now established a new base in Manchester city centre for its core team in the North.

Mark Thurston, HS2 Ltd CEO, said:

HS2 is crucial to delivering Transport for the North's ambitions for Northern Powerhouse Rail. By having a new base in Manchester we are able to work closer with our Northern partners. Together, HS2 and NPR will enable faster, more frequent and reliable services throughout the North.

The spare capacity released on the northern sections of the HS2 network will enable future NPR services, so the two projects work seamlessly to maximise the benefits of the UK's investment in future rail. With towns and cities set to benefit across the North, HS2 will transform rail journeys and give passengers thousands of extra seats every day.

Mayor of Greater Manchester, Andy Burnham, added:

HS2 will not only improve our railways from North to South but will also lay the foundations for the east to west rail links across the North that we desperately need. HS2, linked with east to west Northern Powerhouse Rail, will make it easier for people to move between our towns and cities, help businesses connect with each other and their customers, and act as a catalyst for local growth. With new high speed rail connections, the economic output of Greater Manchester could double to around £132 billion by 2050, contributing around 40,000 new jobs.

HS2 Ltd's decision to open an office in Manchester is a real statement of intent. I look forward to working with HS2 to ensure the North gets the maximum benefit from the better connections and released capacity that HS2 and NPR will deliver.

Henri Murison, Director of the Northern Powerhouse Partnership, said:

The Northern Powerhouse Partnership welcomes the move by HS2 to have a permanent office base in Manchester, with the work on the phases to Crewe, to Manchester and to Leeds advancing.

HS2, delivered together with Northern Powerhouse Rail, will be transformational and has the potential to support hundreds of thousands of jobs. Without a new railway for city to city travel alongside our Victorian railway, to keep servicing commuters with create more scope for freight, it will be hard to attract investment and the jobs we need to rebalance the UK's economy and close the North-South divide.

Work on the first phase of HS2 from London to the Midlands is already underway at over 250 locations. Over 7,000 jobs and 300 apprenticeships are already supported by the programme, and around 2,000 business have delivered work on HS2. When construction peaks, it is estimated that HS2 will need 30,000 people to design and build the full HS2 rail network.

Hundreds of businesses in the North have already won work, and opportunities for local firms to get involved will continue as the project progresses.

Across the North, HS2 station locations have been preparing for the arrival of the new railway by drawing up economic plans to take advantage of better rail connections. The redevelopment plans for Manchester have the potential to deliver 40,000 new jobs for the city with both HS2 and NPR working together.

HS2 trains will serve over 25 towns and cities from Scotland through to the South East, joining up nearly half of the UK population, giving people more options on where to live, work and travel. It is set to deliver £92 billion of benefits to the UK economy.

Key corridors are dependent on infrastructure delivered by HS2 in order for NPR to operate, including:

- Manchester – Liverpool (via Warrington): NPR services could use HS2 infrastructure – including the 13 kilometre Manchester tunnel to serve HS2 stations at Manchester Airport and Manchester Piccadilly. Therefore, it would be possible to deliver NPR's ambitions for a 30 minute journey between Manchester and Liverpool
- Sheffield – Leeds: NPR services could use HS2 infrastructure north of Clayton Junction to serve Leeds HS2 station
- Leeds – Newcastle via the HS2 junction: this would enable trains from Manchester, Sheffield and the Midlands to travel via Leeds and on to York and the North East. This could also release capacity for more local and commuter services east of Leeds
- Sheffield – Manchester: NPR services could benefit from investment by the HS2 electrification programme on the Midland Main Line

HS2 is scheduled to be completed by 2033, and proposals put forward by Transport for the North, including Northern Powerhouse Rail, are scheduled

for completion in the next 30 years.