

# *HS2 – coming soon to a field near you?*

## *May 2012*



HS2 Ltd is to start environmental and engineering survey work along the planned route of the new rail line between London and the Midlands. HS2 Ltd has begun contacting landowners to arrange site visits. What is the plan for HS2 over the next few years and what should you do if HS2 Ltd approaches you?

*It is not mandatory for landowners to allow access to HS2 Ltd*

### *HS2 in figures:*

- *Estimated cost of £32.7bn*
- *40,000 new jobs*
- *Speeds of 250mph*
- *£90m of real estate to be torn down*

### **HS2 update**

The Government has decided to go ahead with HS2 following one of the Department for Transport's largest ever consultations. The Transport Secretary was forced to announce a series of changes to the scheme in order to avert Tory rebellion and ministerial resignations over the impact of the route on the countryside.

Protest groups HS2 Action Alliance and 51m (the latter's name based on the allegation that HS2 will cost each Parliamentary constituency £51m) have voiced various concerns:

- environmental assessment was inadequate;
- inadequate information was provided to the public regarding compensation;
- the consultation failed to address Euston Station's incapacity to cope with increased volumes; and
- general environmental issues.

The first two arguments formed the basis of a request for judicial review filed by HS2 Action Alliance last month.

Nevertheless, the Government argues that there is no better alternative to meet the growing demand for intercity travel and that updating existing lines will not provide a long-term solution to capacity constraints nor improve journey times.

### **HS2 implementation**

HS2 will be delivered in two phases –

1. Phase 1 will deliver the London to West Midlands line and establish the link to Europe via HS1. This should be completed by 2026.
2. Phase 2 will extend the line to Manchester, Leeds and Heathrow Airport and is expected to be completed in 2033.

Journey times will be cut dramatically. For example, it currently takes 2.5 hours to travel from Birmingham to Heathrow. With HS2 it is projected to take 43 minutes. The proposed routes are shown on the next page.

### **HS2 environmental impact survey**

The purpose of an environmental impact survey ("EIS") is to identify the environmental and ecological impact of the HS2 project and to identify plants, animals and habitats which may be endangered by the programme.

The EIS may involve data collection including drilling boreholes or trial pits.

The National Farmers Union ("NFU") and the Country Land and Business Association ("CLA") have signed up to a voluntary agreement that sets out the process for contacting land owners to discuss gaining entry to their land.

### **How might this affect you?**

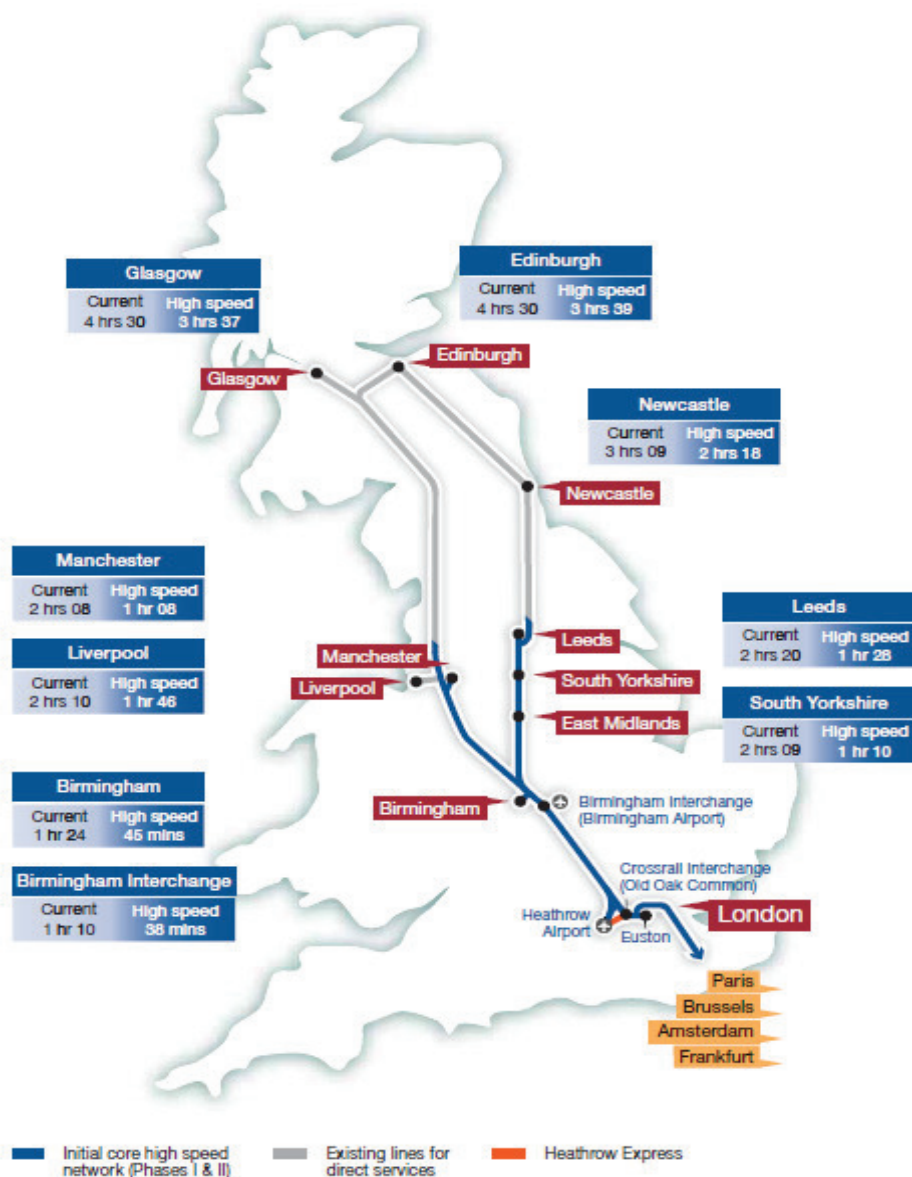
You may receive a letter entitled "HS2 Early Access Agreement for Survey Purposes". The tone of this letter may be official, but it is worth noting that HS2 Ltd does not yet have any legal right or statutory power to access your land in order to carry out an EIS without your permission.

HS2 Ltd might send you a form of licence agreement for you to sign. This is likely to follow the standard form agreement agreed between HS2 Ltd, the NFU and the CLA. This places HS2 Ltd under a duty of care to the landowner, and outlines a payment scheme. £1000 is attributable to an "access payment" with landowners' professional fees incurred in connection with the licence to be agreed with HS2 Ltd in advance. There is also a scale of other fees payable for additional surveys, boreholes, crop loss and other headings.

"Access", once granted, affords HS2 Ltd vehicular and pedestrian access with such machinery as it reasonably considers necessary.

Although the terms of the proposed licence have been endorsed by the NFU and the CLA, it is not mandatory for a landowner to enter into it, and the levels of payment and access are negotiable. HS2 Ltd will only acquire statutory powers once the HS2 Bill has been approved by Parliament. This is likely to be at the end of 2013 or early 2014.

## HS2 – timings and the proposed route



*Phase 1 will deliver the London to West Midlands line and establish the link to Europe. Phase 2 will extend the line to Manchester, Leeds and Heathrow Airport*

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