

## Liberal Democrats North West

### Autumn Conference 2021: Policy Motion 1: **HS2**.

#### 1) Conference Notes

- a. On the 19<sup>th</sup> July HS2, HS/2 Phase 2b has been given a red 'unachievable' rating by the Infrastructure Projects Authority.
- b. The 'Y-shaped' branches of the line between Crewe and Leeds and Manchester were given the above rating in the IPA's latest annual major projects report. The body delivered its assessment of 184 projects, evaluating the likelihood of them achieving their "aims and objectives" and doing so "on time and on budget".
- c. This red rating means: "Successful delivery of the project appears to be unachievable. There are major issues with project definition, schedule, budget, quality and/or benefits delivery, which at this stage do not appear to be manageable or resolvable. The project may need re-scoping and/or its overall viability reassessed."
- d. Phase 2b is at a much earlier stage of development than phase one and 2a and has not yet received royal assent. Last week it emerged that the project's leaders expect MPs to start examining plans for the Manchester to Crewe western leg of phase 2b in December.
- e. The Department for Transport said the whole HS2 scheme was reset last year alongside the decision to go ahead, which has led to increased ministerial oversight, revised budget and schedule ranges and regular reporting to Parliament.
- f. Earlier this month, the DfT launched a £300m framework to carry out ground investigations on the phase 2b route.
- g. Phase one received an amber/red rating in the IPA's report, meaning: "Successful delivery of the project is in doubt, with major risks or issues apparent in a number of key areas. Urgent action is needed to address these problems and/or assess whether resolution is feasible."
- h. Source: <https://www.constructionnews.co.uk/hs2/major-projects-body-brands-hs2-phase-2b-unachievable-19-07-2021/>
- i. The National Audit Office recently stated (10<sup>th</sup> June) that the Department of Transport's integrated rail plan intends still does not include integration plans for Phase 2b with transport plans in the Midlands and the north of England.  
Source: <https://www.nao.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Progress-in-implementing-National-Audit-Office-recommendations-High-Speed-Two-Summary.pdf>
- j. HS2 offers little to Lancashire and Cumbria, but will cost the local taxpayers much and cause environmental damage.

- k. The proposed 'HS2 Classic' rolling stock for the far north will be similar to carriages that have just been commissioned on the Eastern mainline to Newcastle. The HS2 'classic' carriages will not be the quiet, pressurised tilting Pendolinos that we are used to which currently run at 125mph. Instead, they will run at 110mpg North of Lancashire.
- l. The big promises of carbon saving have been dashed by the report released by HS2 on 11<sup>th</sup> February which show that the initial CO2 emissions during construction will be 1,451,000 tonnes, mainly due to the incredible amount of concrete and steel that must be created for the infrastructure. There seems little chance of these initial carbon emissions being 'paid back', even over 60 or 120 years. This is because by HS2's own figures the operations over 60 years will emit 141,000 tonnes of carbon but only save 159,000 through 'modal shift'. And a significant modal shift from domestic flights to rail has already begun.
- m. Even the Government has admitted that Phase 1 to Birmingham will not save any carbon emissions over its entire lifetime, and will soon have to also reluctantly agree that HS2 will be carbon positive for its complete life span. Source: HS2 Ltd.  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/960807/E27\\_Carbon\\_v1.3.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/960807/E27_Carbon_v1.3.pdf)
- n. The recent National Audit Office report states that HS2 Phase 1 would not break even financially. HS2 Phase 2 might have paid back financially, but post-pandemic this calculation is now fragile. Post-pandemic, business travel is expected to drop substantially, making the HS2 business case and carbon forecasts even worse.  
Sources:  
<https://modgov.hillingdon.gov.uk/documents/s9531/Appendices%20to%20Hillingdons%20response%20to%20the%20Government%20consultation.pdf>  
[https://uic.org/IMG/pdf/carbon\\_footprint\\_of\\_railway\\_infrastructure.pdf](https://uic.org/IMG/pdf/carbon_footprint_of_railway_infrastructure.pdf)
- o. The recent Oakervee review said that it is hard to say what regional economic benefits will result from building HS2.

2) Conference Believes that:

- a. HS2 is a highly expensive transport intervention that will only have a bad impact on UK transport emissions.
- b. Although HS2 promised to solve capacity problems, the focus has been too much on glamorous 'speed' rather than focussing on 'capacity'.

- c. Carbon savings from passenger links from HS2 to Birmingham Midlands airport relied on Debenhams funding the airport interchange in a massive retail development and without Debenhams the prospect of retail development funded stations and interchanges at Carlisle, for example are now remote.
- d. That ending S2 Phase 1 at Birmingham Curzon Street station, a 20 minute walk from New Street station is a severe obstacle to making regional connections.

### 3) **Conference Calls for**

- a. FPC to initiate a review of existing Federal Party policy with a view to removing endorsement for HS/2 Phase 2b and to call for work on HS/2 Phase 2b to stop with the money to be used to strengthen local rail infrastructure instead.
- b. The Government to initiate an urgent independent review, or cross-party commission major review to consider grave doubts about the viability of HS2 and to identify opportunities in to redirect funding to projects more beneficial to the North in the light of likely post-pandemic travel pattern changes.
- c. To create a protected rewilded wildlife corridor with any routes where land has been bought or physical work has already started.
- d. Commitment of the funds freed up to increase the budget available in the North of England for substantial and accelerated improvements to electrification schemes, to other track and signalling improvements and to the provision of longer and more comfortable regional trains running east-west as well as north-south.