

**THE HIGH SPEED RAIL COLLEGE**

Consultation on possible  
location of main site

MARCH 2014

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# The high speed rail college: consultation on possible location of main site

Plans for a new college to train the next generation of world class engineers to work on High Speed Rail were unveiled on 14 January 2014.

The new college will be an integral part of the Government's strategy for delivering a national high speed rail network for Britain. It will be an elite institution, focused on designing and delivering the high level skills needed for high speed rail and other major engineering projects of the future.

The college is expected to open its doors to students in 2017.

The intention is for the college to work on a 'hub and spoke' model, as part of a network across the UK. The purpose of this consultation is to seek information which will support a decision on where the main site or hub of the new college might be best located.

Issued: 7 March 2014

Respond by: 30 April 2014

Enquiries to: [highspeedrailcollegeconsultation@bis.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:highspeedrailcollegeconsultation@bis.gsi.gov.uk)

This consultation is relevant to: Local Economic Partnerships, local authorities and employers and providers operating in the rail industry.

## 1. Introduction

High Speed 2 (HS2) presents both a major opportunity for economic growth in the UK and a significant challenge in terms of creating unprecedented demand for skills in rail engineering. BIS and HS2 Ltd are excited by the opportunity of meeting this challenge by developing the facilities that will support the highly skilled workforce of the future, trained in state of the art technology and techniques.

Plans for a new college to train the next generation of world class engineers to work on the construction of HS2 were unveiled on 14 January 2014.

The new college will be an integral part of the Government's strategy for delivering a national high speed rail network for Britain. It is proposed that the HS2 project will be taken forward in 2 phases: London to Birmingham (Phase One), and Birmingham to Manchester and Leeds (Phase Two). Construction along the Phase One line is due to start in 2017 and be completed by 2025, with the first train services expected to run between London and Birmingham from 2026. The full HS2 network is expected to become operational in 2032. Further details and maps of the line are available on [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk).

The college will be an elite institution, focused on designing and delivering the high level skills needed for high speed rail, and other major engineering projects of the future. The college is expected to open its doors to students in 2017.

The intention is for the college to work on a 'hub and spoke' model, with links to a range of skills providers, forming a network for railway and engineering skills across the UK. We envisage it acting as a centre for excellence that other providers can also learn from. Selecting a site for the new college's main hub will be the first important step in its creation, and we are looking for information which will support a decision on where the main site of the college would be best located in order to meet its objectives.

## 2. Purpose of the consultation

1. The purpose of this consultation is to gather information about potential locations for the main site of the college. The information gathered through this consultation will then enable a decision to be taken on this.
2. Locations will be assessed against the following criteria: ability to establish links with employers delivering to the rail industry, and with a network of other education and training providers; ease of access for students; the extent to which it will help rebalance the economy; size and availability of a suitable site; affordability and value for money; and support of partner bodies.
3. The full selection criteria are set out in more detail in section 4.
4. Responses should include relevant information under each of these criteria. Where necessary, we may come back to you with a request for more detailed information or clarification.

## 3. The vision for High Speed 2 and the high speed rail college

### The vision for High Speed 2

5. High Speed 2 (HS2) is a planned new high-speed railway between London, Birmingham, Manchester and Leeds. High Speed 2 will bring the UK's Victorian railway infrastructure into the 21st century, speeding up journeys, releasing space on crowded lines and bringing Britain closer together.
6. HS2 will generate jobs, help rebalance the economy between north and south, and provide a platform for the country's future prosperity. It will connect people and businesses, enhancing productivity and commercial activity, and act as a catalyst for city centre regeneration and major development schemes.
7. It is proposed that HS2 will be built in two phases. The first phase will link London Euston with a new station at Birmingham Curzon Street and will include a station at Old Oak Common in west London and another near Birmingham Airport. The second phase will see the route divide into two lines, one continuing to Manchester Piccadilly via Crewe and Manchester Airport and the other to Leeds via the East Midlands and Sheffield Meadowhall.
8. HS2 will be integrated with the existing national railway network and HS2 trains will be compatible with existing railway lines, so that cities and towns beyond the new network – such as Liverpool, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Newcastle, York, Preston, Warrington, Lancaster, Carlisle, Durham and Darlington - will also benefit from direct HS2 services.
9. Construction of HS2 is due to begin in 2017 with an opening date of 2026 for Phase One and 2032 for Phase Two.

## The vision for the high speed rail college

10. The high speed rail college will be an elite institution. An elite institution is defined by its focus on progression to a higher level of study (Level 3 and above, with a focus on Level 4 and 5); by its employer leadership; by its role in setting industry standards in its area; and by the quality of its provision, delivered with the very best in teaching and specialist equipment.
11. Employers are expected to have a central leadership role in all elite institutions. The high speed rail college will have strong employer representation on its Governing Body, and employers will play a strong role in supporting delivery, for example by offering placements, and providing real life work challenges for courses. Strong links and proximity to employers in the rail industry supply chain will therefore be important to the college.
12. The initial focus of the high speed rail college will be on developing and delivering training for high speed rail. As well as rail engineering, the core offer will include skills in new technologies associated with engineering design, construction and management, including Building Information Modelling<sup>1</sup>. The college will also meet the wider economic need for an increased supply in engineers, delivering engineering courses which are not explicitly focussed on the rail industry. The college will therefore have a purpose beyond the timeframes of HS2.
13. The high speed rail college will operate a 'hub and spoke' model, forming partnerships with schools, University Technical Colleges, other FE Colleges, universities and employers, and working as part of a network across the UK, to provide a clear progression pathway for learners from school through to higher vocational training at the college, including Apprenticeships, and on to further study and career progression. The college will also offer training to the existing workforce so that they can up-skill to meet the requirements of HS2. Under this hub and spoke model the specialist, higher level vocational training (Level 4 and 5 and some Level 3) will take place at the college, but other providers will also be expected to deliver some higher level training, as well as the less specialist and lower level training required for HS2, on an affiliated basis.
14. The higher level of study, and the national status of elite institutions, will mean that in some cases learners will be willing to relocate to study there and we would expect the high speed rail college to include residential facilities. As the college will operate as part of a network, we would also expect study opportunities to be available across a range of locations.
15. The main site or hub for the new college, whether a new build or conversion of part of an existing facility, will be a modern, fit for purpose building. It will demonstrate a high standard of design that provides an effective learning environment, as well as meeting high efficiency and environmental standards. The college must be able to open its doors to students for the start of the 2017-18 Academic Year.

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<sup>1</sup> Summary information from the skills demand analysis for HS2 carried out by HS2 Ltd is available, on request, on a confidential basis.

## 4. Site Selection Criteria

16. We have identified 7 criteria on which a decision about the college location will be based. Responses will be assessed on how strongly they meet these criteria. A decision will then be taken on the basis of fit against these criteria and overall strategic fit with the vision for the high speed rail college.
17. You do not need to provide detailed procurement or building proposals, or information about the future staffing and management of the college.

	<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Description</b>
1	Ability to establish links with employers delivering to the rail industry in the locality	<p>The ability of the college to develop close linkages with employers delivering to the rail industry, and other engineering and construction firms, will be crucial.</p> <p>The response should detail the extent to which there are existing rail industry supply chain employers in the locality with which the college could develop formal linkages.</p>
2	Ability to establish links with other providers in the locality	<p>The college will operate a hub and spoke model, with close links to existing providers, including those supplying to the rail industry. Whilst it is expected that some of the 'spokes' with which the college makes linkages will be distributed nationally, there are likely to be advantages from having strong linkages with some providers in the immediate locality.</p> <p>The response should indicate the extent to which it is believed there are suitable existing providers within the locality, including existing colleges, private training providers, HE institutions and schools with which the college could make linkages to enable progression.</p>
3	Ease of access for students	The response must set out how accessible, within a reasonable travel time, the site is by public transport, including linkages with other prospective 'spoke' providers and employers (see criteria 1 and 2).
4	Supports the objective for HS2 to rebalance the economy	HS2 represents a key opportunity to re-balance the economic geography of the country. Responses should therefore set out the extent to which this location will help to achieve this objective.

	<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Description</b>
5	Size and availability of suitable site	<p>We require a site between 2-5 acres in size, with no restrictive covenants on it, which is currently in the ownership of the respondent; or on which the respondent has an unfettered option to purchase. This assumes a building of more than one storey for classroom facilities and office space, plus single storey workshop facilities, and space for some on-site parking; but it is recognised that the size of the site required will vary according to building design.</p> <p>The respondent must be able to guarantee that planning can be achieved, with use of Local Development Orders if necessary. By 2016 the site will have an infrastructure in place (utilities, access road, etc) to enable construction to commence and there must be no co-dependency on other projects progressing in order to deliver the site.</p> <p>If the respondent is offering a pre-existing facility then it must be a flexible structure which is suitable for use predominantly as workshop space (potential ratio of 70:30 workshop:classroom).</p>
6	Affordability and value for money	<p>The respondent should detail the forecast costs associated with any land assembly and infrastructure works required to enable construction to commence in 2016. The degree to which the respondent will meet these and contribute towards the capital build costs should also be detailed. Where appropriate the respondent should indicate where they believe there are strong opportunities in the local area to secure private investment into the project.</p> <p>Any other value for money considerations can also be provided, including how the college would contribute to wider development and regeneration objectives.</p>
7	Support of partner bodies	<p>The response should set out the extent to which the proposed site has the support of prospective partner bodies, including employers, other providers, local authorities, LEPs and rail industry bodies.</p>



## 5. How to respond

18. Those wishing to respond must provide information against the criteria set out in section 4. The respondent must be the organisation which is (or will be) in ownership of the site being proposed.
19. Requests for consideration of more than one site should not be merged into one submission. Each location should be submitted as a separate response.
20. Responses must be signed and dated by an appropriate signatory/authorised person.
21. Submissions should be no more than 7 sides of A4, with one accompanying site plan.
22. The deadline for submitting responses is 30 April 2014.
23. Please state whether you are responding as an individual or representing the views of an organisation. If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, please make it clear who the organisation represents and, where applicable, how the views of members were assembled. This information should be outside of your formal submission.
24. You may make printed copies of this document without seeking permission.
25. Hard copies of this consultation document are available on request. You should write or email your request to the address below. Copies of the document can also be made available in other formats, for example, in braille, or in other languages, on request.
26. Responses should be submitted by email or by letter to:

[highspeedrailcollegeconsultation@bis.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:highspeedrailcollegeconsultation@bis.gsi.gov.uk), or

High Speed Rail College Team  
Skills Strategy Division  
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills  
2nd Floor  
2 St Pauls Place  
125 Norfolk Street  
Sheffield  
S1 2FJ

## 6. Confidentiality & Data Protection

27. Information provided in response to this consultation, including personal information, may be subject to publication or release to other parties or to disclosure in accordance with the access to information regimes (these are primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA) and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004). If you want information, including personal data, that you provide to be treated as confidential, please be aware that, under the FOIA, there is a statutory Code of Practice with which public authorities must comply and which deals, amongst other things, with obligations of confidence.
28. In view of this it would be helpful if you could explain to us why you regard the information you provide as confidential. If we receive a request for disclosure of the information we will take full account of your explanation, but we cannot give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding on the Department.

## 7. Help with queries

29. Questions about the issues raised in the document can be addressed to:

[highspeedrailcollegeconsultation@bis.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:highspeedrailcollegeconsultation@bis.gsi.gov.uk), or

High Speed Rail College Team  
Skills Strategy Division  
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills  
2nd Floor  
2 St Pauls Place  
125 Norfolk Street  
Sheffield  
S1 2FJ

## 8. What happens next?

30. A short summary of responses will be published after the consultation has closed.
31. Responses will be assessed on how strongly they meet the criteria set out in this document. A decision will then be taken on the most appropriate site, on the basis of fit against these criteria and overall strategic fit with the vision for high speed rail college.
32. A final decision on the preferred location is expected to be made in June 2014. Feedback on individual responses will be provided on request.

## **Annex 1: Consultation principles**

The principles that Government departments and other public bodies should adopt for engaging stakeholders when developing policy and legislation are set out in the consultation principles.

<http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/sites/default/files/resources/Consultation-Principles.pdf>

### **Comments or complaints on the conduct of this consultation**

If you wish to comment on the conduct of this consultation or make a complaint about the way this consultation has been conducted, please write to:

John Conway,  
BIS Consultation Co-ordinator,  
1 Victoria Street,  
London  
SW1H 0ET

Telephone John on 020 7215 6402  
or e-mail to: [john.conway@bis.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:john.conway@bis.gsi.gov.uk)

## Annex 2: Respondent information

The closing date for this consultation is 30 April 2014

Please provide the following information when submitting your response:

Name:

Organisation (if applicable):

Address:

Please tick a box from a list of options below that best describes you as a respondent.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Business representative organisation/trade body
<input type="checkbox"/>	Central government
<input type="checkbox"/>	Charity or social enterprise
<input type="checkbox"/>	Individual
<input type="checkbox"/>	Large business (over 250 staff)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Legal representative
<input type="checkbox"/>	Local Government
<input type="checkbox"/>	Medium business (50 to 250 staff)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Micro business (up to 9 staff)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Small business (10 to 49 staff)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Trade union or staff association
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please describe)

Thank you for taking the time to let us have your views. We do not intend to acknowledge receipt of individual responses unless you tick the box below.

Please acknowledge this reply

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