

# Leeds is to get its own tram network as consolation for the scrapped HS2

[Glen Owen](#)

Leeds will get its own tram network as consolation for the HS2 link to the city being scrapped, under plans being considered by Ministers.

High Speed 2 was conceived as a 250mph rail line linking [London](#), [Birmingham](#), Manchester and Leeds.

But Ministers are expected to scrap the eastern leg, with the high-speed track no longer being laid in full between Birmingham and Leeds.

Ministers will soon publish the integrated rail plan which is expected to confirm scrapping the eastern leg as part of significantly downsizing the UK's biggest infrastructure project.

The plans have drawn criticism that the Prime Minister risks abandoning a key part of his 'levelling up' agenda.



Leeds is being offered a tram service instead of a high speed link to London according to sources close to the government

Plans are now under discussion for alternative options to HS2, The Mail on Sunday understands.

A source said last night: 'We are considering improvements to bring Leeds into line with other cities.'

On Thursday, Boris Johnson is due to hold an 'away day' for the Cabinet at Chequers to discuss his 'levelling up' agenda.

Ministers will gather for a 'lunch till dinner' event at the Prime Minister's country residence in Buckinghamshire. They will hear presentations from Levelling Up Secretary Michael Gove and Andy Haldane, the former Bank of England chief economist now advising the Government. Other Ministers will give shorter presentations.

They will be required to bring with them A3 maps showing their plans to level up the country by 2024, according to The Times, along with slides to illustrate their hopes for 2030.

As well as the eastern leg change, there has been speculation the Government may downgrade plans for a high-speed east-west line across the Pennines amid concerns over mounting cost.



Instead of a rapid trip to the capital, people in Leeds will have an overground rail service

Opponents of HS2 have warned it will cost £150 billion.

Mr Johnson said during the Tory leadership contest it was likely to exceed £100 billion.

This summer, Lord Berkeley, who was deputy chairman of Mr Johnson's review of the scheme, wrote to Cabinet Secretary Simon Case calling for an inquiry into whether the Government had misled Parliament over the costs.

Tory MPs have urged the Government to put HS2 'out of its misery'.

HS2 Ltd – the Government-backed body set up to develop the scheme – has responded to the criticism, saying it is 'a project for the next 100 years and beyond'.

It added: 'It will add new capacity into our crowded rail network, better connect the great towns and cities of the North and Midlands, and accelerate the shift from cars and lorries to low-carbon rail.'