HS2 fails the Capacity Challenge

Claims that HS2 will add capacity to the national rail network tend to conceal a more fundamental truth. HS2's 2-track route from London to the West Midlands has neither sufficient capacity nor the correct routeing nor the necessary links to the existing rail system to serve all the major cities of the Midlands, the North and Scotland that are served by the present intercity network.

This will lead to a highly divisive situation whereby a few primary cities will benefit from direct links to HS2; but a greater number of second-tier cities, such as Milton Keynes, Coventry, Leicester, Derby and Stoke (total city population 1.4 million, or 3.3 million in their Larger Urban Zones) will be bypassed by HS2, and will have no effective links to HS2 services. Instead, these cities will remain reliant on existing main lines on which intercity services are projected to be reduced. This loss of connectivity seems certain to have major adverse economic impacts.

HS2's winners and losers are shown on the diagram opposite.

HS2's failure to provide sufficient new capacity can be likened to building a motorway with a single lane in each direction, and no interchanges. As a motorway, this would be an obvious nonsense, and exactly the same judgment should apply for new railways.

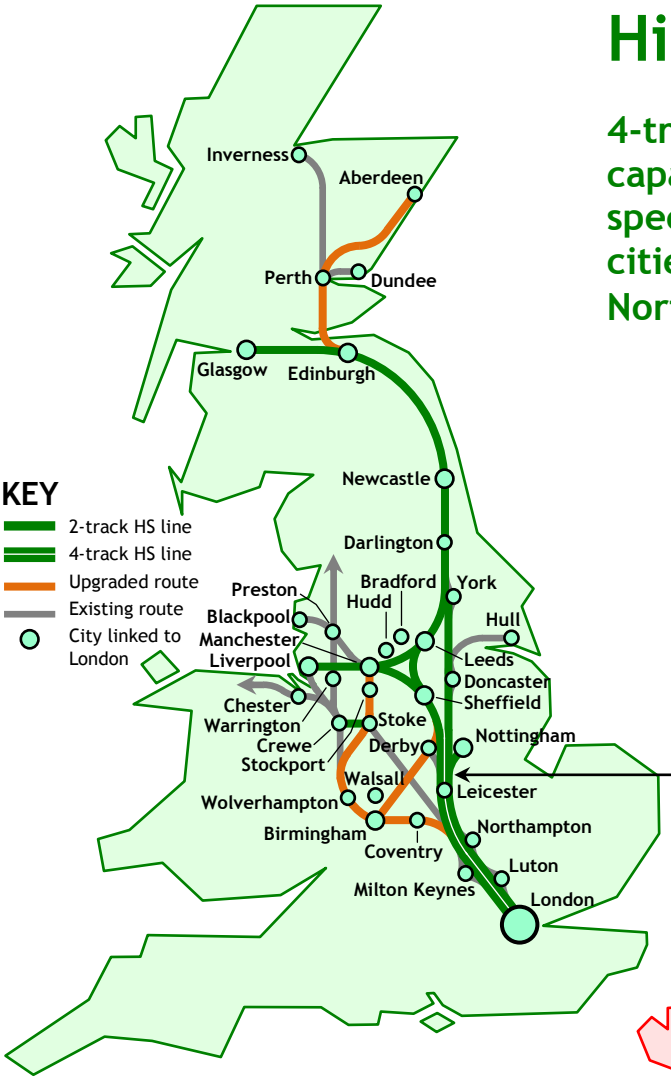
HSUK's superior design resolves all of HS2's capacity and inclusivity deficiencies, and at the same time it offers far greater operational resilience with its much greater interconnectivity to the existing network. The following features – all diametrically opposed to HS2's philosophy – are key to HSUK's superior performance:

- 4-track capacity in HSUK trunk route, double that of HS2;
- Adherence to existing road and rail transport corridors, thereby accessing far more major population centres than HS2 can;
- Provision of more than 50 links to existing main lines.

Under the HSUK proposals, all major cities of the Midlands, the North and Scotland will enjoy improved intercity services, and in these cities there will be much greater capacity for local services.

High Speed UK

4-track spine route has the capacity to bring high speed services to all major cities of the Midlands, the North and Scotland



HSUK's full integration hugely increases local capacity in Birmingham, Manchester and Leeds

HSUK 4-track spine from London to South Yorkshire

High Speed 2

2-track spine route lacks the capacity to serve all communities & bypasses more major cities of the Midlands, the North & Scotland than it serves

With no effective integration, HS2 offers no significant capacity increase in any regional city

HS2 2-track spine from London to West Midlands forming stem of 'Y-network'