



**Craig Whittaker MP**

**CALDER VALLEY**

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## **HS2: Investing for the Future of Transport**

Thank you for contacting me about HS2.

I believe that HS2 is a vital project for the UK, which will not only promote economic growth but also tackle the looming capacity crisis that our rail network faces.

I would like to emphasise that HS2 is only one part of the Government's ambitious programme for improving the UK's infrastructure, and will not come at the cost of other transport investment including major investment in expanded and improved transport services in the North.

The 2015 Spending Review provided a total HS2 budget of around £15 billion over the next five years; this equates to less than 20 per cent of the Department for Transport's budget, including Network Rail expenditure.

HS2 has strong support in all the major conurbations that it will serve, as the major benefits that it will bring to large areas of the country are recognised. It will provide the capacity we need by trebling the number of seats into London Euston in the peak, with up to 18 trains an hour running in each direction. Estimates suggest that, for every £1 invested in the project, the UK economy will receive over £2.50 in benefits. The construction alone will create around 25,000 jobs and 2,000 apprenticeships.

The Department for Transport did assess the potential alternatives to HS2. The study concluded that the alternatives did not provide sufficient additional capacity to meet long term needs and failed to provide the same levels of rail connectivity.

HS2 Ltd has sought to design HS2 to avoid adverse environmental impacts, including those on ancient woodlands, wherever reasonably practicable. Where this is not possible, I have been assured, mitigation or compensation measures will be undertaken.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Kind regards,

Craig Whittaker MP