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Brown raises rail scheme concerns

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Scottish transport minister Keith Brown has raised concerns that his country will not be considered in plans for a high-speed rail link with London for about 20 years.

Mr Brown reacted to a decision by the UK Government for a "truly British" network that will connect London to Birmingham in its first phase.

The second phase aims to take the line north to Leeds and Manchester by 2033.

Announcing the decision at Westminster, UK Transport Secretary Justine Greening said: "HS2 will link some of our greatest cities - and high-speed trains will connect with our existing railway lines to provide seamless journeys to destinations far beyond it.

"This is a truly British network that will serve far more than the cities directly on the line."



But Mr Brown said: "It is disappointing that there is still no commitment from the UK Government to bring high speed rail to Scotland.

"Last month I launched the Fast Track Scotland document, which stated Scotland's business case for high speed rail and was drawn up by many of the country's civic, business and transport leaders.

"The report concluded that the case for high speed rail in the UK is strong, but is stronger when Scotland is included. That is a message which must be taken on board by the UK Secretary of State for Transport.

"I am pleased to see a commitment from the UK Government that it will engage meaningfully with Scottish ministers on the development of high speed rail and undertake to work with the UK Government to make high speed rail from London to Edinburgh and Glasgow a reality.

"But Scotland must be represented from the very earliest stages of the legislative process for high speed rail."

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