



HS2 will cost £70bn, says London Mayor Boris Johnson

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EVENING STANDARD REPORTER

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Tory demands for a rethink over the HS2 rail line intensified today after Boris Johnson predicted the cost would spiral to £70 billion or more.

In an intervention that put him at loggerheads with one of David Cameron's flagship policies, the Mayor said: "This thing isn't going to cost £42 billion, my friends. The real cost is going to be way north of that."

In a newspaper article that follows Lord Mandelson's revelation that the project had not been thoroughly researched before it was commissioned by the last Labour government, Mr Johnson wrote: "It turns out the whole thing was a gimmick. They didn't have a clue about the economic case for the gigantic new railway."

In last month's Spending Review, it was revealed that the estimated cost of constructing the link to Birmingham and the North had risen by £10 billion from £32 billion.

Cheryl Gillan, the former Cabinet minister whose Chesham and Amersham constituency will be cut in half by the new line, said: "Boris is articulating what everybody is feeling about this ill-conceived scheme. He is right that the costs will not stop at £50 billion."

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