



## PRESS RELEASE

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### GREENGAUGE 21

26 January 2006

## New Champions for a High Speed Line

*Greengauge21*, a not for profit organisation, today launches its manifesto for a High Speed rail network in Britain.

*Greengauge21* intends to stimulate a debate and help create a body of support for the creation of a High Speed rail network to address growing concerns around congestion and the need for new transport solutions to promote economic growth. *Greengauge21* has already enlisted the support of a group of well known figures to act as a Board of Trustees and help drive forward this debate over the coming months. They include Chris Green (Chair), Sir Digby Jones, Richard Bowker, Lord Faulkner of Worcester, Professor Sir Peter Hall and Nick Owen.

The manifesto launched today sets out the concept of a high speed rail network to form part of an integrated transport strategy. Parallels are drawn with the creation of a strategic network of motorways in the 1950s which led to a step change in the movement of goods, services and labour and propelled the country to a period of sustained economic growth.

Jim Steer, Director of *Greengauge21* said:

‘Our economy faces a significant geographical challenge; a very successful city region in the south centred on London, struggling to expand as it would like, and city regions in the midlands in the north whose future prospects and growth are being severely hampered by inadequate transportation links. High speed rail addresses this head on. Across the Midlands, the North and into Scotland, High Speed Rail will offer a massive advantage straight to the heart of the major cities with fast, direct access between them and London and Heathrow Airport.’

*Greengauge21* will soon release a preliminary investigation into the impact of High Speed Rail on Heathrow to be followed later by research into the continental experience with high speed rail and its effect on economic regeneration as well as a programme of consultation and stakeholder engagement.

To achieve a high speed rail network, *Greengauge21* believes it is sensible to proceed in stages to implement an overall strategy. This will require the close participation of many agencies across the country. *Greengauge21* is offering to start that process.

### Notes to Editors

1. A new high speed rail network would also free up the existing rail network to handle a major increase in freight traffic. The alternative to high speed rail is a new

programme of works to expand existing roads, new motorways and a continuing programme of airport expansion, or, if that doesn't appeal either, a gradual slowing of economic growth as movement over our national transport system becomes, across all of the transport modes, unreliable and sclerotic.

2. Website details: [www.greengauge21.net](http://www.greengauge21.net)

3. *Greengauge21* contact details: phone 07738 181232, email [coordinator@greengauge.net](mailto:coordinator@greengauge.net)

4. Should you require high speed rail images, please contact Sarah-Jane Savage on 020 7919 8500.