



GREENGAUGE 21

1800hrs - 12 November 2007

The Next Steps for High Speed Rail in Britain

Greengauge 21 today released a new report “**The Next Steps for High Speed Rail in Britain**”. It identifies five corridors with the potential for high-speed rail, and the key actions for government.

“With the opening of High Speed One on time and budget, and the continuing twin pressures of strong growth and the need to reduce carbon emissions, the time has arrived to start making some decisions on the next steps” said Greengauge 21 Director Jim Steer.

“The recent report from the Department of Transport¹ is mildly encouraging”, he adds. As a response to the Eddington and Stern reports it goes beyond the minimum possible and proposes a programme of interurban corridor studies in which it wants to see shorter journey times and reduced levels of carbon. In the example corridor of London – Birmingham – Manchester, high-speed rail is explicitly mentioned as a candidate solution. This is where Greengauge 21 had earlier this year proposed ‘High Speed Two’.

“That’s welcome, of course”, says Jim Steer, “but we need to think not just about High Speed Two, but about the strategy for a well-defined network of high-speed lines that can start the process of transformation of our national travel behaviours”.

The new Greengauge 21 report calls on government to carry out five actions as the next steps. “This includes working out how high-speed rail would be applied as part of an integrated plan that meets the country’s economic development and environmental needs. Otherwise, the new ‘corridor’ studies will plod down well-trodden policy paths, putting a premium on schemes for highway improvement that can be dusted off from earlier studies. The risk is that they will learn little that’s new”, Jim Steer adds. “High-speed rail is the new game in town, in vogue on the back of the evident success of

¹ Towards a Sustainable Transport System, Department of Transport October 2007. Cm 7226

High Speed One, but we need to get down to some serious planning and do it much better than we have in the recent past.”

END

Notes to Editors

1. Greengauge 21 is a company limited by guarantee established to promote the case for high-speed rail and foster debate. It has an Advisory Panel comprising: Chris Green (Chair), Richard Bowker CBE, Lord Faulkner and Sir Peter Hall.
2. Greengauge 21 Directors are Jim Steer and Julie Mills.
3. In June 2007, Greengauge 21 published a report setting out a proposition for “High Speed Two”, a new high-speed railway linking London, Heathrow and the Channel Tunnel Rail Link to the Midlands and the North. This report is available on the Greengauge website: <http://www.greengauge21.net/index.htm>
4. The Next Steps is also available for download at <http://www.greengauge21.net/index.htm>
5. [Contacts: Jim Steer \(07785 242506\)](mailto:Jim.Steer@greengauge21.net).