



GREENGAUGE 21

Greengauge 21's Inaugural Public Interest Group Meeting

“Today, Greengauge 21 announces the formation of a Public Interest Group to take forward a £0.75m programme to carry out the strategic planning of the nation's high-speed rail (HSR) network. We announce the membership of the Group, and the appointment of consultants and advisers to carry out the work that the Public Interest Group is funding.”

“The formation of this Public Interest Group today sends out a powerful message: the nation is keen to see progress on HSR, and is prepared to find innovative ways of achieving that aim. Having seen the success of HS1 and the Eurostar services from London, the country is alive to the advantages that HSR could bring, and wants to see them spread more widely”, added Greengauge 21 Director, Jim Steer.

He continued: “The planned programme of work will be managed carefully alongside the studies that Network Rail have recently announced (which will examine the capacity constraints of the existing network and the case that may exist for building new lines). Our approach recognises that HSR in the first instance is a means of efficiently creating more transport network capacity. However, we also wish to see to what extent HSR can serve broader economic regeneration ambitions and, by setting HSR into an improved integrated network, attract demand away from short haul aviation and lessen the level of car dependence – and so reduce the overall level of carbon emissions from the transport sector.”

At a meeting of the Public Interest Group today in York, Jim Steer will outline the programme ahead.

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 Brown CBE, Richard Bowker CBE, Lord Faulkner and Sir Peter Hall. Greengauge 21 Directors are Jim Steer and Julie Mills.

2. The 2008/09 High Speed Rail Development Programme will develop a high speed rail network strategy for Great Britain. It will consider the potential role of high speed rail in the five corridors set out in Figure 1 below and address the key questions:
 - What kind of HSR network should be developed, which destinations should it serve, how should it be developed?
 - What would such a network cost and what benefits will it bring, including at city and regional levels?
 - What would be the carbon/energy impacts?
 - What are the financial implications for the public sector and how can private sector skills, resources and finance be best used?

3. The organisations that are signing up as members of the Public Interest Group comprise:

Advantage West Midlands (leading for EEDA, EMDA, SEEDA and SWRDA)
Association of Train Operating Companies (ATOC)
BAA
Birmingham City Council
Channel Tunnel Initiative <i>associate members</i>
City of London Corporation
The City of Edinburgh Council
Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Executive
Network Rail
Newcastle City Council
North East Assembly
The Northern Way (the partnership led by the three northern RDAs)
Passenger Transport Executive Group (covers all six PTEs)
Railway Industry Association
South East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SEStran)
Strathclyde Partnership for Transport
Sheffield City Region
Transport for London

4. The budget for Greengauge 21's 2008/09 high-speed rail development programme is £0.75 million. To date, two-thirds of this budget has been committed by funders and it is estimated that the budget will be fully met by the organisations listed above. However, further organisations are considering membership and there is provision for 'late joiners'.

5. The consultants appointed to deliver the work programme following a competitive tendering process are:

Principal Consultant	SYSTRA with MVA Consultancy
Consultation Adviser	Bircham Dyson Bell
Funding Adviser (selected but not yet appointed)	PricewaterhouseCoopers

In addition, Denton Wilde Sapte is acting as legal adviser to Greengauge 21.

6. In parallel with Greengauge 21's 2008/09 development programme, the British Chambers of Commerce are carrying out a consultation of their members on high speed rail issues, supported by Greengauge 21 and their advisers.

Contact

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Figure 1 – Potential High Speed Rail corridors



- Corridor 1 London-Birmingham-Manchester
- Corridor 2 London-Cambridge-Northeast
- Corridor 3 London-Bristol/Cardiff
- Corridor 4 Trans-Pennine
- Corridor 5 Anglo-Scottish