

Public Interest Group Statement on High Speed Rail

24th March 2010

Greengauge 21 held a workshop on March 19th 2010 for its HSR Public Interest Group to discuss the announcements made by Lord Adonis the previous week on the Government's proposals for high-speed rail.

Following debate, the Public Interest Group:

- a. Expressed its full support for the proposed high-speed line between London and the West Midlands
- b. Expressed its full support for the proposal to create a wider 'core' network, which it notes includes new high-speed lines to Manchester and Leeds (with connections to the classic network to extend services northwards), and which adds Nottingham and Sheffield to the list of cities that would be served by high-speed rail
- c. Reiterated its view that there is a need for a national HSR network that includes the country's largest cities, and that serves regions beyond those identified in the core network as well as Scotland and Wales
- d. Confirmed the core purpose of HSR as being to enhance the UK's economic competitiveness and to help stimulate balanced economic development.

The Public Interest Group welcomed the planned review of the provision of high-speed rail connections to Heathrow to be led by Lord Mawhinney, since this will allow proper examination of the potential to create a valuable addition to the national HSR network, not only serving the airport, but spreading the benefits of HSR across the South East, South West and South Wales.

Greengauge 21 calls on all political parties to commit to the adoption of a national network for high-speed rail and for uninterrupted progress to be made with the first line as developed by HS2 Ltd, initially through the planned consultation process in Autumn 2010.

Notes

1. *The Greengauge 21 HSR Public Interest Group represents public authorities, cities and regions across England, Scotland and Wales, together with the principal rail organisations. The Public Interest Group funds a programme of research, appraisal, project development and policy studies.*
2. *The HSR Public Interest Group comprises:*
 - *Advantage West Midlands*
 - *Association of North East Councils*
 - *Association of Train Operating Companies*
 - *Birmingham City Council*
 - *City of London Corporation*
 - *East of England Development Agency*
 - *East Midlands Development Agency*
 - *Glasgow-Edinburgh Collaboration Initiative (a partnership between Glasgow City Council, the City of Edinburgh Council and Scottish Enterprise)*
 - *Great Western Partnership (an HSR action group comprising Bristol City Council, Cardiff Council, Swindon Borough Council, South East Wales Economic Forum, South West Regional Development Agency, the West of England Partnership, South West Wales Economic Forum and South East Wales Transport Alliance)*
 - *Network Rail*
 - *Newcastle City Council*
 - *Northern Way (the partnership led by the three northern RDAs)*
 - *Nottingham City/Nottinghamshire County Councils*
 - *PTE Group*
 - *Railway Industry Association*
 - *SEStran*
 - *Sheffield City Region*
 - *Transport for London*