



***Go to Page 4 to read  
the HS2 Project Remit***

20 July 2009

Dear Colleague,

## **HIGH SPEED 2 – NEWSLETTER, July 2009**

Welcome to the latest edition of the High Speed 2 newsletter. This is the fourth one we have issued since HS2 was formed and all previous copies are available on the HS2 website. The next newsletter, following this one, will be issued in September.

### **What is included in this newsletter**

This edition provides information on the following areas:

- Most recent developments
- Update on the option sifting process, including progress on the longer term strategy work
- An update on the environmental appraisal work
- Preparation of a short HS2 stakeholder survey

### **-----RECENT DEVELOPMENTS-----**

- **Completion of the second round of sifting for London and West Midlands station options**
- **First round of Longer Term Strategy options nearing completion**
- **Line of route options identified and undergoing detailed appraisal**
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- **First Appraisal of Sustainability reference group meeting took place on 24 June**
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- **Legal advisers appointed to provide advice on approvals and consultation processes**

### **-----OPTION IDENTIFICATION PROGRESS**



Throughout May and June we have continued to develop, review and refine our shortlist of options for stations in the West Midlands and London and options for a Heathrow/Crossrail interchange. We have also drawn up and narrowed down options for the different possible routes between our station options. This will continue throughout July. Our working groups are continuing to provide input into this process and our external challenge groups are testing our approach and emerging conclusions.

We now have a functioning demand model. So we can also start to answer some of the questions about whether an intermediate station or parkway station would add to the overall business case.

The next phase of work, to be completed by the end of September, will involve greater analysis of the shortlisted options to help us determine our preferred packages of options.

Our work on the broad corridor options beyond the West Midlands is also advancing. HS2 has been charged with preparing advice for Government on how high speed rail might serve other British conurbations in the future and we have now identified the broad corridors that, in various combinations, could one day make up a national network of high speed lines. An early priority of the demand model during July is to complete a full run of such a network. This will give us an important initial picture of the potential passenger flows from major cities on which to base further development and assessment.

## **APPRAISAL OF SUSTAINABILITY PROGRESS**

Our Appraisal of Sustainability (AoS) work is following a similar process to that undertaken for National Policy Statements and associated Appraisal of Sustainability studies as set out in the Planning Act 2008, whilst ensuring that the process also follows Department for Transport WebTAG guidance.

Key features of the AoS are:

- high level environmental and planning assessments to inform the appraisal and sifting of options
- Identification and mapping of constraints
- consulting with certain organisations on the scope of the appraisal
- commentary on appropriate means of taking the proposals forward (including required environmental approvals) should Ministers decide to take the HS2 recommendations forward in 2010
- screening and scoping for Health Impact Assessment, Equalities Impact Assessment and Habitats Regulations Assessments
- an Appraisal of Sustainability Report outlining the above and the assessment of various HS2 alternatives



A reference group has been set up to provide a forum for information sharing and to provide input and advice on the AoS. This comprises the Environment Agency, Natural England, English Heritage and a number of other Government Department's. In keeping with best practice for work of this nature, we have also consulted the Scottish Government and Welsh Assembly Government. The AoS Reference Group met for the first time on 24<sup>th</sup> June and other meetings are planned for September and October.

### **APPOINTMENT OF LEGAL ADVISORS**

Following a competitive tendering exercise, HS2 has now appointed Eversheds as its legal advisers. Their role is to provide legal advice on a range of areas, including interaction with the planning system, environmental appraisal, public consultation and property issues.

### **STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND STAKEHOLDER SURVEY**

Since the May newsletter my team has held another round of meetings with the London and West Midlands stakeholder groups and has also met Scottish and North of England stakeholders to discuss our longer term strategy work. We are also due to meet at the end of July a number of stakeholders who have a national rather than regional or local interests in high speed rail. In keeping with this, Alison Munro and I have given presentations recently to a number of wider stakeholder groups including the Tourism Advisory Council, the Channel Tunnel Initiative group, the Regional Development Agencies Chairs group and the DfT's Aviation External Advisory Group.

Looking ahead, we propose to hold another round of meetings with our main stakeholder groups in September. We are also about to start discussions with stakeholders about possible line of route options. How we engage with all the various interests groups beyond September is less clear and it will be somewhat determined by the station and route options which are taken forward.

Finally, now that HS2 has been functional for 6 months and has a detailed stakeholder engagement strategy in place, I wanted to take stock and ask for your views on how we have engaged and communicated with you. I also want to provide you with an opportunity to identify pressing concerns or issues which we have not yet picked up and which you consider merit attention. I am therefore attaching a short survey which I hope you will take the time to complete.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'David Rowlands'.

**SIR DAVID ROWLANDS CHAIRMAN**

**SUMMARY OF THE REMIT AND OBJECTIVES OF HIGH SPEED TWO**

On 15 January 2009 the Secretary of State for Transport announced in 'Britain's Transport Infrastructure: High Speed Two', the setting up of a new company to look at a possible new railway line between London and the West Midlands.

HS2 was set up shortly after as a private company limited by guarantee. It is chaired by Sir David Rowlands and Alison Munro was seconded from the Department of Transport as Chief Executive. The rest of the HS2 team comprises further secondees from the DfT and from Network Rail

HS2's remit is to develop proposals for a new railway line from London to the West Midlands taking account of environmental, social and economic assessments. It will also provide advice to Ministers on the potential development of a high speed line beyond the West Midlands at the level of 'broad corridors, considering in particular the potent to extend to Greater Manchester, West Yorkshire, the North East, and Scotland.

HS2 will make recommendations on options for a terminus station or stations serving London and possible options for an intermediate parkway station between London and the West Midlands. It will also provide a proposal for an interchange station between HS2, the Great Western Main Line and Crossrail with convenient access to Heathrow airport. HS2 will also provide suggested means of linking to HS1 and the existing rail network. .

HS2 will produce a confidential report to Ministers by the end of 2009 that should be sufficiently developed to form the basis for public consultation in 2010 should Ministers decide to take this project forward. The advice will also include financing and construction proposals as well as a proposition for how best to move through the planning process within an indicative outline timetable