

Report to Partnership Meeting – 8th October 2009

STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT AND DELIVERY

High Speed Rail

1. High Speed Rail has recently become the subject of much political and industry debate. The Transport Minister, Lord Adonis, has appointed Sir David Rowlands and Prof Andrew MacNaughton (Network Rail's Chief Engineer) to head up High Speed Two, to investigate the case for a new railway to the north of London. It will report at the end of the year.
2. Network Rail has just produced its own study 'The case for new lines' (actually carried out by SDG) to enable it to plan for future growth once current capacity has been reached. The study proposes a High Speed route to Scotland via Preston with termini in Edinburgh (reached in 2h09) and Glasgow (2h16), with new city centre stations located close to existing city centre stations. Spurs to Heathrow, and Liverpool are included. It has a £34bn price tag, and a BCR of 1.8.
3. In mid-September, Greengauge 21, the lobby group headed by Jim Steer and Julie Mills, reports on its proposals. This may well put forward a plan for other HS routes from London.
4. At the HSR Conference in London on 09.09.09, Theresa Villiers restated Conservative commitment for HS2 to Birmingham, Manchester and Leeds, commencing in 2015, driven by congestion on the classic rail network and concern over aviation emissions.
5. At the same conference HSR UK was launched, a campaign group comprising 11 cities including Edinburgh and Glasgow.
6. 2M, a consortium of local authorities opposed to Heathrow expansion, proposes a single spine route paralleling the M1/A1 to Edinburgh, accessed via an approach south of Arthur's Seat to Waverley, then to Glasgow.
7. For HITRANS, our interest is in seeking good interchange with half hourly interval HS services in central Scotland, via a perhaps electrified, hourly frequency 3hr Highland Main Line and enhanced West Highlands services to Glasgow. Once delivered, the current East Coast Inverness-London through service will no longer be the quickest way to London.
8. Cities connected to the HS network may no longer require slots at Heathrow, potentially freeing up capacity for regional air services.
9. The Board are invited to note the contents of this report.

Report by: Frank Roach
Designation: Partnership Manager
Date: 16th September 2009