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The Case for High Speed Rail

The Eastern Network Partnership Perspective

The Case for the High Speed Rail Eastern Network

Collectively, local authorities, ITAs and Chambers of Commerce from the East Midlands, Yorkshire and the North East have formed the Eastern Network Partnership to present a joint submission to the High Speed Rail public consultation.

High Speed Rail is so important to our economies that we have jointly commissioned further research to strengthen the case for high speed rail to serve our regions.

This factsheet summarises the research and is aimed at all stakeholders with an interest in the Government's high speed rail proposals.

High Speed Rail

Creating a UK High Speed Rail network offers a unique opportunity to provide more sustainable travel across the UK for future generations. High Speed Rail represents the necessary catalyst for creating a long term transport strategy that will both transform travel across this country and improve the prospects for **economic growth**.

Our shared view is that High Speed Rail provides a unique opportunity to help **rebalance the national economy** by strengthening links with the South East. Furthermore, it will achieve this whilst **releasing capacity** on the classic rail network that will provide opportunities for communities that are not directly on the High Speed network.

A long term rail strategy making best use of any released capacity and complementing High Speed Rail will generate benefits to all UK regions.

Beyond Birmingham?

Our research has shown that a High Speed Rail network to the northern city regions will help to "rebalance" the economy by accelerating the growth of their towns and cities.

High Speed Rail will improve links between businesses in the North East, Yorkshire and the East Midlands and connect them to London. Additionally a link to the Channel Tunnel and Heathrow Airport will provide connectivity to mainland Europe and beyond. Improved connectivity will enhance the competitiveness and productivity of the regions served.

The Eastern arm of the High Speed Rail Network is essential for the future prosperity of the city regions. It will help attract inward investment and improve the prospects of businesses already based there.

Our projections indicate a substantial difference in the proportionality of benefits achieved by building the different routes; for every pound spent, the Eastern network will realise benefits worth £5.60 compared to £2.60 for the Western network. Government projections indicate that the complete HSR network will deliver benefits worth £44bn.

Ideally, the Eastern and Western arms should be built simultaneously, with a view to unlocking the HS2 benefits as early as possible. If this is not achieveable, the Eastern arm should be built first given the higher proportion of the overall benefits it will deliver - as evidenced in this fact sheet.

The Classic Network

Without High Speed Rail, Network Rail predicts that much of the classic network will be operating at capacity in the next 20 to 30 years. Without additional capacity there will be no room for growth and the competitiveness of our city regions is likely to decline as travel becomes more difficult.

Delivering increased capacity on the classic network alone will only be achieved at considerable cost and with widespread disruption. High Speed Rail will deliver far greater benefits for a similar investment and will demonstrate a long term commitment to the transport network.

Our research illustrates that the greatest benefits will be achieved by investing in the classic network in advance of High Speed Rail to achieve greater connectivity and maximum access across the regions.

Extra and faster rail services to the north is essential. So it's not a question of if we need High Speed Rail, just a question of when.

High Speed Rail Key Facts Eastern Network Partnership Perspective

The table illustrates that High Speed Rail can achieve substantially reduced journey times, both from London and between the regional centres. A range of journey times are presented as the Government have yet to publish detailed route and station location information beyond Birmingham. We have made broad assumptions based on approximate distances between the regions and the published design speed of HS2.

London	East Midlands	South Yorkshire	West Yorkshire	Tees Valley	North East
60					
75*	20-30				
80*	40-60	20-30			
127-132	85-90	55-65	45-50		
157*	110-120	80-95	70-80	25-30	

Table shows proposed journey times in minutes between locations on the Eastern arm.

**Journey Times published by HS2 Ltd. Remaining values derived from assumptions made from the Eastern Network Partnership report*

Journey time improvements have the prospect of transforming our economy by facilitating rapid access to the core cities on the network. Economic markets grow stronger as distance becomes less of a barrier to business.

The Advantage of Speed

Most (70%) of the productivity benefits of the eastern route are created by the faster journeys to London.

Classic Network Enhancement

The economic benefits of High Speed Rail will be maximised if it is planned and delivered in the right way and integrated with a strategy for improving rail services on existing lines.

Improvements are needed to existing rail routes in the short to medium term to deliver benefits in advance of completion of the full national High Speed Rail network (which could take over 20 years). Capacity released on existing rail routes by High Speed Rail should be used to retain existing long distance inter-urban rail services to the Eastern Network Partnership area, not for additional London commuter services. There should be more regular services to London from places in the Eastern Network Partnership area that do not have them currently.

The Wider Network

The total wider economic impacts of the eastern route of the proposed national High Speed Rail network are estimated to be £4.2bn. These benefits are additional to the benefits from reduced journey times of rail passengers (conventional transport benefits) which have been estimated by HS2 to be £23.1bn for the entire Y-shaped network north of the West Midlands.

East & West

The economic benefits compared to the costs of the eastern route are significantly higher than the western route. In terms of benefits to rail users, the Benefit to Cost ratio of the eastern section of the high speed network beyond Birmingham is 5.6, compared with 2.6 of the western section. The productivity benefits of bringing businesses closer together of the eastern part of the network (£2.6bn) are around 20% higher than those for the western part (£2.1bn).

Regional Connectivity

A significant proportion (30%) of productivity benefits from the eastern route will also result from High Speed Rail bringing city regions outside London closer together. The national high speed rail network has the potential, if it is planned in the right way, to greatly improve the connectivity between main centres outside London, in particular between Birmingham, Derby, Nottingham, Sheffield, Leeds, the Tees Valley and Newcastle.

Local Opportunities

There must also be improvements to local and regional transport networks including rail and light rail services that connect with the High Speed Rail stations. This will spread the benefits of High Speed Rail as well as delivering substantial economic benefits in its own right.

Eastern Network Partners

the chamber
Leeds, York and North Yorkshire

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