

# **Subject: Proposal for Examining the Potential Effect of High Speed 2 on London's Transport Network**

**Report to: Transport Committee**

**Report of: Executive Director of Secretariat**

**Date: 17 May 2011**

**This report will be considered in public**

## **1. Summary**

- 1.1 This report sets out a proposal for the Committee to examine the effect of High Speed Rail 2 on London's transport network.

## **2. Recommendation**

- 2.1 **That the Committee agrees to gather information and hold a meeting to discuss the potential effect of High Speed Rail 2 on London's transport network, with terms of reference as outlined at paragraph 4.8 of the report.**

## **3. Background**

### **Overview of the proposed investigation**

- 3.1 The aim of this meeting would be to examine how the Government's current proposals for establishing a High Speed Rail network between London and the North (otherwise known as High Speed 2), would affect London's transport network. The examination would look in particular at two areas. The first would explore the general case for and against High Speed 2. This could include: looking at the cost and benefits of HS2 to Londoners; how it might augment rail services in the capital; and the effects on the environment and local communities.
- 3.2 The second part of the examination would focus on the effect on London's transport network should construction of the line in its proposed form be agreed. This would look at key interchanges where people would access HS2, during both construction and operation of the line. The Committee could examine: the route into, and the effect on, Euston as the proposed terminating station; the proposed links to Heathrow, which could see major infrastructure work at Old Oak Common, and to High Speed 1; and finally the broader effect on London transport, including congestion, the orbital rail network and Crossrail. Based on submissions received, the Committee could also look at how the scheme could be improved for Londoners, should it go ahead.
- 3.3 The Government is currently holding a consultation on HS2, which is due to close on

29 July 2011. Evidence gathered during the investigation would be used to inform the Committee's response. The consultation lists seven questions which the Government would like people and organisations to respond to. The scope of this investigation would potentially fall within questions one, two and five (please see Appendix 2 for list of questions). The Committee could use their meeting on 14 July 2011 to invite guests to discuss submissions gathered in the previous two months. In doing so, the Committee would draw heavily on work being undertaken to model the potential effect on London's transport network. There may also be the opportunity to organise site visits to major affected areas such as Euston Station or Old Oak Common prior to the meeting.

### **Background information on High Speed Rail**

- 3.4 High Speed 2 is a proposed link between London and major cities in the north of England and Scotland. The Y-shaped structure is designed to cut journey times between London, Birmingham and Manchester along one spur, and the East Midlands and Yorkshire along the second branch (with trains continuing north along existing lines). Further extension of the network to Edinburgh and Glasgow would be based on negotiations with the Scottish Government.<sup>1</sup> Euston station is the proposed terminus for HS2 in London. In addition, the Government plans to connect HS2 to Heathrow via Crossrail at a new station at Old Oak Common, and later, via a separate spur to the airport. A connection to the Channel Tunnel high speed line (HS1) is also proposed.<sup>2</sup> Current estimates put the cost of fully constructing HS2 at £32 billion.<sup>3</sup> Phase 1, which would include the London to Birmingham section and Heathrow via Crossrail, would be completed by 2026, with the extension to Manchester and Leeds following by 2033.<sup>4</sup>

## **4. Issues for Consideration**

### **Arguments for and against HS2**

- 4.1 HS2 is currently supported by all three main political parties. Supporters of HS2 claim it: will cut journey times between London and other cities, helping economic regeneration in the North; is the best way to free up capacity on the East Coast and particularly the West Coast Mainline; will help to cut domestic flights and inter-urban road journeys and cut CO2 emissions; and will generate £44 billion in benefits and £27 billion in revenue.<sup>5</sup>
- 4.2 The benefits of HS2 have been disputed by various groups. While many local groups and boroughs have objected to the location of the route, broader concerns about the necessity of the network have been raised. In letter to the Daily Telegraph, a group of 21 business leaders, economists and politicians, criticised HS2 as an "extremely expensive white elephant" that only "a minority of fortunate passengers" would use.<sup>6</sup> The Federation of Small Businesses believed that the money would better benefit their members if spent on roads. Councillors in Camden, have protested the cost of HS2 in light of cuts to local transport projects.<sup>7</sup> The Green Party has also formally come out against the proposed HS2 scheme.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Built-Environment/planning/National-Planning-Policy/npf/HSRLondon>

<sup>2</sup> *High Speed Rail: Investing in Britain's Future*, Department for Transport, February 2011 page 4

<sup>3</sup> *High Speed Rail: Investing in Britain's Future*, Department for Transport, February 2011 page 9

<sup>4</sup> *High Speed Rail: Investing in Britain's Future*, Department for Transport, February 2011 page 3

<sup>5</sup> Rationale taken from *High Speed Rail: Investing in Britain's Future*, Department for Transport, February 2011 pages 9 - 11

<sup>6</sup> 'Business Leaders urge abandonment of H2S', *Rail News*, March 2011 -

<http://www.railnews.co.uk/news/general/2011/03/10-business-leaders-urge-abandonment-of.html>

<sup>7</sup> [http://www.hamhigh.co.uk/news/camden\\_councillors\\_protest\\_against\\_hs2\\_costs\\_in\\_open\\_letter\\_1\\_817863](http://www.hamhigh.co.uk/news/camden_councillors_protest_against_hs2_costs_in_open_letter_1_817863)

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.greenparty.org.uk/news/26-02-2011-high-speed-rail-decision.html>

## **Euston Station**

- 4.3 Designating Euston Station as the London terminus for HS2 would have a major impact on the station over a period of up to eight years. Currently, Euston Station is a multi-modal interchange and ranks as the sixth busiest station in London.<sup>9</sup> Intensive inter-urban services to Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham and Glasgow, along with suburban services, run daily. The Victoria and Northern lines also call at the station. Current plans include extending it to the south and west, building platforms two metres below the current level to allow construction on top and developing a new east/west through-way.<sup>10</sup> Widening of the rail corridor outside the station would also require the demolition and replacement of a significant number of homes in four local authority blocks.<sup>11</sup> This could affect congestion, air and noise pollution in the area.
- 4.4 The Committee could examine the potential consequences for London should the project go ahead. These include the level of disruption likely to be caused at such a key transport interchange, and how TfL and Network Rail might mitigate the effects on service levels and overcrowding during construction. It could examine if alternative routes in and out of the station could lessen the overall impact of the works. The Committee may also wish to examine how Euston might operate should HS2 be built, and what further effects this could have on bus, Tube and Overground services, as well as passengers. Finally, it may explore the case for extending HS2 past Euston to other stations in London.

## **Old Oak Common**

- 4.5 In order to maximise the potential benefit of HS2, the Government is proposing to link the line to Heathrow via a new Crossrail station during Phase 1 of construction, with a separate HS2 spur to be constructed during Phase 2. A new station at Old Oak Common in west London is proposed as the site for this interchange. The station would also eventually allow access to HS1 and the Channel Tunnel through a tunnel to the North London Line, which would then use existing infrastructure to reach HS1 at St Pancras.<sup>12</sup> This would transform Old Oak Common into one of the capital's most important interchanges.
- 4.6 The planned development at Old Oak Common has been controversial. In opposition, current Secretary of State for Transport Theresa Villiers criticised Old Oak Common as being too far from Heathrow.<sup>13</sup> Press reports indicated that one option preferred by BAA and the Conservative Party was to have the West London hub at Heathrow rather than Old Oak Common.<sup>14</sup> The Mayor has yet to confirm support for the plan, and said more research was needed before committing to Old Oak Common.<sup>15</sup> Network Rail and TfL have both raised concerns about the effect that HS2, and the HS1 extension, might have on their plans to develop the North London and West London Lines.<sup>16</sup> In light of these concerns, the Committee could examine the issues around Old Oak Common, and the possible effect it may have on the development of London's orbital rail network.

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<sup>9</sup> Data taken from ORR - <http://www.rail-reg.gov.uk/server/show/nav.1529>

<sup>10</sup> Route taken from *High Speed Rail: Investing in Britain's Future*, Department for Transport, February 2011 page 21

<sup>11</sup> Route taken from *High Speed Rail: Investing in Britain's Future*, Department for Transport, February 2011 page 15

<sup>12</sup> Route taken from *High Speed Rail: Investing in Britain's Future*, Department for Transport, February 2011 page 17

<sup>13</sup> 'New Plan for Fast Rail link hits red signal over Heathrow', *The Times*, 15 February 15 2010

<sup>14</sup> 'No Heathrow direct link in high speed rail plans' *The Guardian*, 4 March 2010

<sup>15</sup> 'Boris Johnson clashes with David Cameron on High Speed Rail', *The Evening Standard*, 12 March 2010

<sup>16</sup> *London and South East Route Utilisation Strategy (Draft)*, Network Rail, February 2011, page 109

## **Past Committee work on Rail infrastructure**

- 4.7 The work will draw on the Committee's past investigations on the growth of London's rail network. This includes: work examining how plans for future infrastructure should be prioritised and implemented;<sup>17</sup> the development of London's orbital rail network;<sup>18</sup> and the passenger experience.<sup>19</sup>

## **Proposed terms of reference**

- 4.8 The proposed terms of reference are:
- To consider the Government's consultation on High Speed 2, with particular focus on the potential effects on London's transport network, taking into account the work undertaken in TfL's response; and
  - To consider any actions that should be included in the final plan to mitigate any negative impact and ensure maximum benefit for London, should the scheme go ahead.
- 4.9 It is proposed that the Committee hold a public meeting to discuss the arguments for and against HS2 to inform the debate ahead of the deadline for the end of the public consultation. Any subsequent Committee response to the consultation would focus on potential implications for London should HS2 go ahead and would not seek to take a Committee line on the cases for and against HS2.

## **Key stakeholders**

- 4.10 The following will be asked to contribute views and information in the ways listed. Further details about the information that will be sought and how it will be analysed are set out in Section 5.
- a. Mayor and TfL – in writing and/or at the meeting;
  - b. High Speed Two Ltd – in writing and/or at the meeting;
  - c. Londoners and passengers – in writing and/or online;
  - d. Local rail user groups in affected areas – in writing and/or at the meeting;
  - e. Groups supporting/opposing HS2 – in writing and/or at the meeting;
  - f. LB Camden (Euston), LB Hammersmith and Fulham (Old Oak Common) – in writing and/or at the meeting;
  - g. Network Rail – in writing;
  - h. London Travelwatch and/or Passenger Focus – in writing;
  - i. London Councils – in writing; and
  - j. BAA – in writing.

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<sup>17</sup> *Track to the Future*, The London Assembly Transport Committee, March 2007

<sup>18</sup> Letter to the Mayor re: London's Orbital Rail Network, June 2010

<sup>19</sup> *The Big Squeeze*, The London Assembly Transport Committee, March 2009

## 5. Timetable and methodology

5.1 The proposed timetable for this investigation is as follows:

- Agreement of terms of reference and scope: May 2011;
- Desk-based research/gathering written views and information: May – July 2011;
- Site visits to Euston and/or Old Oak Common site: May – July 2011;
- Formal meeting to gather information: 14 July 2011; and
- Submit Consultation response: before 29 July 2011.

5.2 In advance of its meetings, the Committee would request relevant written views and information from High Speed Ltd seeking further details on plans for Euston Station and Old Oak Common. The Committee could also request information from TfL and Network Rail on the effect of the HS2 route on London transport. Submissions from groups opposing and supporting HS2 at both a local and a national level would also be sought. Views from Londoners and passengers, as well as local rail user groups in directly affected areas could also be gathered. Other groups would be contacted for specific information related to parts of the investigation (eg BAA for their preference for the West London interchange at Heathrow, or Travelwatch for the effect on overcrowding at stations).

5.3 There is also the potential for the Committee to undertake site visits as part of its investigation which would inform the 14 July meeting and subsequent consultation response. This could include a tour of Euston station to get an idea of how extensive the redevelopment will be, and/or viewing the site of the proposed Old Oak Common station. The meeting on 14 July would be an opportunity for the Committee to hear evidence on both the case for HS2 and the proposed line's effect on London's transport.

## 6. Legal Implications

6.1 The Committee has the power to do what is recommended in this report.

## 7. Financial Implications

7.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. Any costs incurred during the completion of this investigation will be covered by the scrutiny budget for 2011/12.

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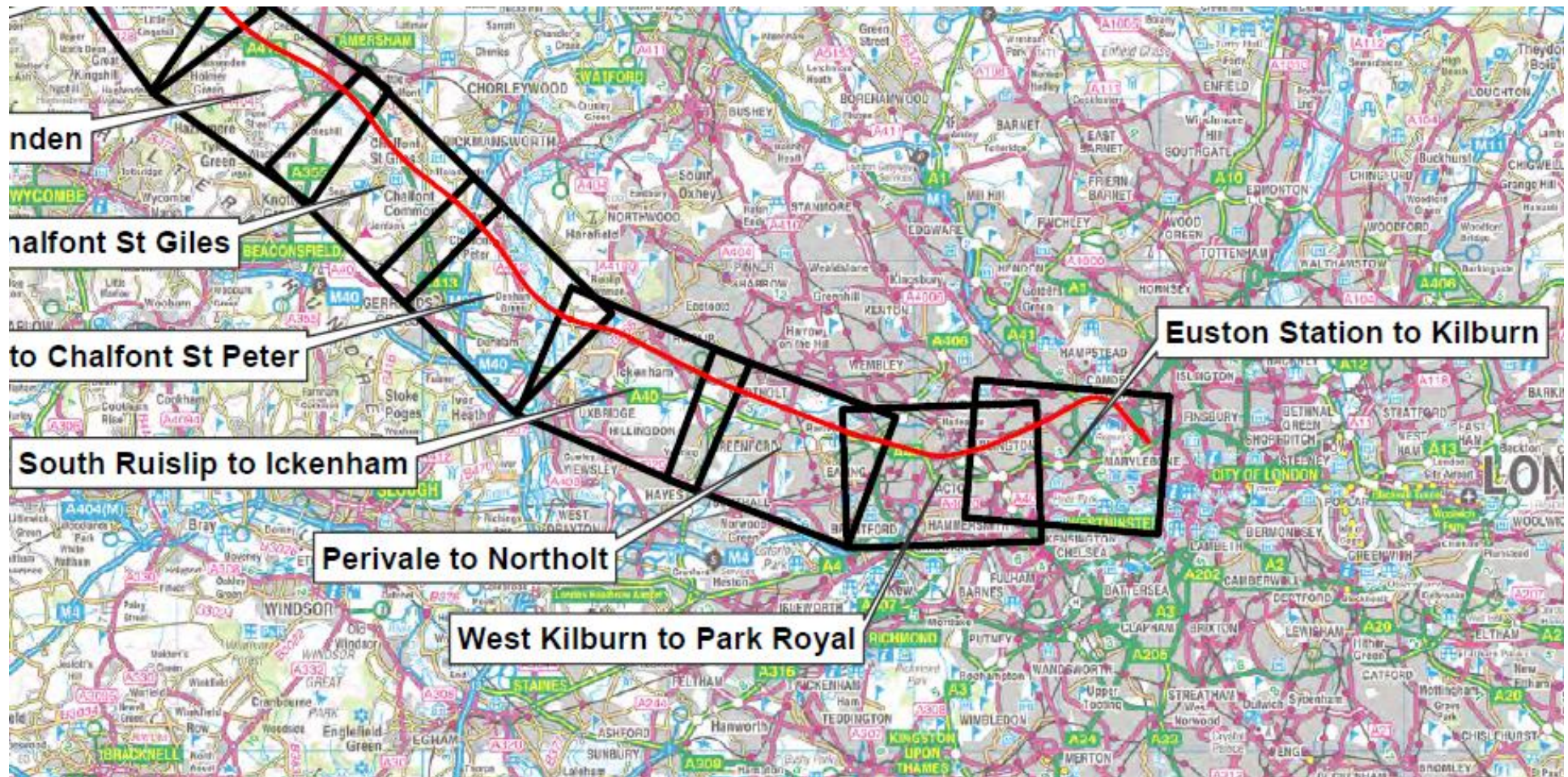
### List of appendices to this report:

Appendix 1 – Map of London route for High Speed Rail 2

Appendix 2 – List of questions for Government consultation on High Speed Rail 2

<b>Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985</b>
List of Background Papers: None
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Appendix 1 – Map of London Route for High Speed 2



## Appendix 2 – List of questions for Government consultation on High Speed 2

### *The Government's consultation questions on HS2*

1. Do you agree that there is a strong case for enhancing the capacity and performance of Britain's inter-city rail network to support economic growth over the coming decades?  
*[This question is about the strategy and wider context (Chapter 1)]*
2. Do you agree that a national high speed rail network from London to Birmingham, Leeds and Manchester (the Y network) would provide the best value for money solution (best balance of costs and benefits) for enhancing rail capacity and performance?  
*[This question is about the case for high speed rail (Chapter 2)]*
3. Do you agree with the Government's proposals for the phased roll-out of a national high speed rail network, and for links to Heathrow Airport and the High Speed 1 line to the Channel Tunnel? *[This question is about how to deliver the Government's proposed network (Chapter 3)]:*
4. Do you agree with the principles and specification used by HS2 Ltd to underpin its proposals for new high speed rail lines and the route selection process HS2 Ltd undertook? *[This question is about the specification for the line between London and the West Midlands (Chapter 4)]*
5. Do you agree that the Government's proposed route, including the approach proposed for mitigating its impacts, is the best option for a new high speed rail line between London and the West Midlands?  
*[This question is about the route for the line (Chapter 5 and Annex B)]*
6. Do you wish to comment on the Appraisal of Sustainability of the Government's proposed route between London and the West Midlands that has been published to inform this consultation? *[This question is about the Appraisal of Sustainability (Chapter 5)]*
7. Do you agree with the options set out to assist those whose properties lose a significant amount of value as a result of any new high speed line? *[This question is about blight and compensation (Annex A)].*