

Railfuture – East Anglia Branch - Comments on HS2 Proposal

In 2011 Railfuture asked all of its branches to comment on the government's proposal for a high-speed railway line between London and Birmingham, known as HS2, prior to Railfuture producing its response to the government's consultation by the late July 2011 deadline.

At the February 2011 branch meeting in Cambridge members discussed the HS2 proposal. Below is the East Anglia branch response to Railfuture's Network Development Committee, which is producing the official response.

General Comments

- Accept need for additional rail capacity to be provided to cater for future growth.
- Recognise that that in the long term, the high speed network will have benefits for Eastern England in creating more capacity on existing routes.
- Funding for HS2 must be additional to current rail funding so that existing schemes on the existing rail network are not affected.
- Services on HS2 must be fully integrated with existing rail services to allow through running from the start and for connecting services to other parts of the country and for people to easily access HS2.
- There is little point in reducing journey times using HS2 if that time is then lost in missed connections or problems in accessing HS2 or extending check in times for HS2 services. The proposed longer trains will increase interchange times.
- In promoting HS2, the Government and rail industry need to present a more complete picture on what HS2 means to the UK and provide more information on the issues detailed below.

Routing and Performance

- Accept route as shown if 400 km/h is essential for future running. However if a lower speed is acceptable does that make other route options more viable? What are the cost and environmental impact if a slower route is chosen that is along an existing transport corridor?

Additional information required

During the next stage of the development of HS2 further information is required on:

- HS2 train services and how they integrate with the rest of the rail network
- Access to/from HS2 and impact on existing local services, for example London Underground at London Euston.
- Details and benefits of new services on existing routes that can be provided if HS2 is built (and a commitment to provide them!)
- Do the claimed benefits of HS2 depend on future phases being built and what happens if they are not?