

High Speed Rail and Scotland

Media Coverage

June 2020

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National

Media Coverage

Three-hour train journeys between London and Scotland proposed

By [PRESS ASSOCIATION](#)

PUBLISHED: 17:40, 10 June 2020 | **UPDATED:** 17:40, 10 June 2020



Three-hour train journeys from London to Glasgow and Edinburgh would be possible under a plan for better links between HS2 and Scotland, rail industry firms have claimed.

A report by High Speed Rail Group called for a programme of investment to upgrade existing lines and build new sections of track to improve cross-border connectivity.

It did not provide an estimated cost, but insisted there is a "sound economic case" for encouraging people to switch from air travel to rail for Anglo-Scottish journeys.


High Speed Rail Group
@HSRailGroup

More journeys are being made between England and Scotland. Extending [#HighSpeedRail](#) to Scotland brings significant benefits. Report [rail-leaders.com/industry-news/...](https://rail-leaders.com/industry-news/)



6 4:58 PM - Jun 10, 2020

[See High Speed Rail Group's other Tweets](#)

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Its plan includes:



Three-hour train journeys from London to Glasgow and Edinburgh would be possible under a plan for better links between HS2 and Scotland, rail industry firms have claimed (Jane Barlow/PA)

- A major upgrade of junctions between Crewe and Preston.
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HS2 is planned to initially run between London and Birmingham, before being extended to Crewe, Manchester and Leeds, but high-speed trains will also serve destinations on conventional lines beyond the core network.

The firm developing the railway, HS2 Ltd, estimates that journeys between London and Glasgow/Edinburgh will take three hours and 40 minutes under current plans.

Jim Steer, author of High Speed Rail Group's report, said it is "essential" that the UK focuses on a "green recovery" from the coronavirus pandemic.

He went on: "Over the past two months we have all seen the positive impact on air quality and the environment.

"While we now focus on our economic recovery, we cannot lose sight of the carbon-cutting goals we have set ourselves.

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Scottish National

Media Coverage

HS2 Scot link would 'boost the economy'

Greig Cameron

Connecting Scotland's railway to HS2 would bring journey times to London down to three hours and improve local economies, according to research.

The High Speed Rail Group has proposed upgrades to infrastructure across Scotland to improve transport connections. Among them is a new line from Carstairs to Rutherglen and a fast approach section to Glasgow Central station. On the east coast the advocacy group suggested a new track running parallel to the existing approaches between Edinburgh and Dunbar.

Its researchers also want the electrification of all main lines out of the central belt connecting to Inverness, Dundee, Aberdeen, Stirling and Perth, and expansion of the Borders railway.

The report, *High-Speed Rail and Scotland*, indicates that joining HS2 to the Scottish network may also help reduce carbon emissions by encouraging more people to ditch air travel.

A journey from Glasgow or Edinburgh to London could take about three hours and ten minutes, almost an hour quicker than now. Services from Scotland to Manchester and Birmingham would also be quicker.

The report suggests that a link to Scotland would benefit places along the line, particularly the north of England.



Call for HS2 to run to Scotland and cut London rail journey time to three hours

The controversial HS2 rail link should run to Scotland to boost connectivity, cut carbon and rebalance the economy post Covid-19, according to a new report published today.

The High Speed Rail Group said that joining the route to Scotland would cut travel time to London to just over three hours and pave the way for a significant reduction of carbon emissions in line with the Scottish Government's 2045 net-zero target.

The report, produced by independent policy research group Greengauge 21, suggests a programme of upgrades to existing lines, as well as new dedicated sections of high speed line.



It recommends a new line from Carstairs to Rutherglen and separation of a fast approach from there to Glasgow Central, as well as further development of capacity at the station; a second new line parallel to the existing approach from Dunbar to Edinburgh, increasing the number of platforms at Waverley station and remedial works to address the threat of coastal erosion to the line north of Berwick.

The report also recommends the electrification of the main lines to Stirling, Perth, Inverness, Dundee and Aberdeen and completion of the Borders railway.

HS2 got the go-ahead in February from Boris Johnson, despite predicted costs reaching £106 billion, but the existing plan for new high speed infrastructure does not extend north of the Manchester-Leeds-York axis, and instead HS2 in Scotland is expected to operate on the existing East

and West Coast main lines.

Yet since 2006, passenger numbers have increased between Glasgow and London by 120 per cent, between Manchester and Scotland by 191 per cent, and between Birmingham and Scotland by 261 per cent, and cross-Border lines are operating at their capacity limits.

The report's author Jim Steer said extending HS2 to Scotland would boost capacity and meet the projected demand for both freight and passenger travel, while cutting journey times to London to three hours and ten minutes.

He said there was also a potential saving of 45,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide every year, from taking freight off the road, and driving passengers off "carbon heavy" short haul flights and on to "green rail". Further, he said the line to Scotland had a higher rate of economic return.

Mr Steer said: "As the UK begins to emerge from Covid-19, the focus on a green recovery is essential.

"As transport is now the largest contributor to the UK's emissions, the sector has a duty to act quickly and decisively to reduce them."

Scottish Greens transport spokesperson John Finnie said Scotland's "antiquated rail network" needed "significant investment". He said: "Many routes are embarrassingly inadequate, with journeys often slower than in Victorian times."



A Transport Scotland spokesman said work would get underway shortly to decide if there was a business case for the recommended improvements. “The Scottish Government welcomes the High-Speed Rail and Scotland Report, which sets out the case for improved Anglo-Scottish connectivity,” the spokesman said. “We are supportive of high speed rail and welcome the economic benefits that HS2 will bring to Scotland.”



HS2 should be an Anglo Scottish endeavour

As the Government in Westminster formulates an Integrated Rail Plan based on HS2 for the English Midlands and the North, they have also sought views on how to improve rail connectivity between Scotland and England.

Current plans for HS2 will already benefit Scotland, with services running on high speed infrastructure as far as Preston before going onto conventional lines for the last part of the journey. But under present plans, while HS2 brings a shrinkage of travel times north-south in England, cross-border travel loses out, relatively speaking. In my view, the ambitions that Holyrood and Westminster transport Ministers signed up to 5 years ago now need to be brought forward. We need to do more to make the London-Scotland journey time much nearer the magic 3 hour mark.

Published this week, High-Speed Rail and Scotland, a new report from Greengauge 21 for industry body High Speed Rail Group, sets out the way in which HS2 could, and should, be linked to Scotland. Not only will this enhance connectivity between the two nations, it will also pave the way for a significant reduction of carbon emissions in line with the Scottish Government's 2045 net zero goals, whilst cementing the UK Government's ambition to 'level up' in the north of England.

Despite early studies into cross-border high speed rail demonstrating the economic benefits, indeed it has been shown that adding a high speed rail line northwards from Manchester to Glasgow/ Edinburgh would have a benefit-cost ratio of 7.6:1, progress on developing firm proposals has been disappointingly slow.



The good news, from a financial point of view at least, is that to get the benefits of HS2 to Scotland it is not necessary to build hundreds of miles of new high speed line all the way from Crewe to Edinburgh and Glasgow.

Instead, based on the emerging views of Transport Scotland and Network Rail, as well as local authorities in the North of England, it is clear that a programme of upgrades to existing lines judiciously combined with new sections of high speed line to bypass slow and congested sections of route is what is needed to meet projected demand for both freight and passenger travel, and get that journey time close to the 3 hour mark. In further good news, the preliminary studies have already been done.

As suggested in the name, the speed in which individuals could travel from London to Scotland is significant. All of the international evidence suggests that once rail has reached a journey time of 3 hours for a route, it has swiftly become the preferred mode of transport for most people making that journey, rather than air. You only need to look at journeys from London to Paris – a route that used to be dominated by the air market. But where, today, most people would think you were mad to do anything but get the high speed train via Eurostar.

This shift is essential for achieving ambitious reductions in carbon emissions and ultimately reaching our net zero goals, which the Scottish Government wants to achieve by 2045. As the UK begins to emerge from Covid-19, the focus on a green recovery is essential. Over the past two months we have all seen the positive impact on air quality and the environment. While we now focus on our economic recovery, we cannot lose sight of the carbon-cutting goals we have set ourselves and air quality improvements which are binding commitments. As transport is now the largest contributor to the UK's emissions, the sector has a duty to act quickly and decisively to reduce them.



HS2 is just as much about capacity as it is speed and its ability to reduce transport sector emissions. And capacity concerns are particularly pertinent when considering cross-border high speed rail. Pre-Covid, the northern parts of the East and West Coast Main Lines were each operating at their capacity limits. Since cross-border rail travel is nearly all long-distance, focused on business, leisure and tourism rather than commuter travel, it is a travel market that is likely to continue to grow as the country emerges from the pandemic. Scotland needs to be part of the HS2 story in order to free-up capacity on the East and West Coast Main Lines so they can continue to support the growth of the major city economies with additional commuter services, and so that more freight traffic can be switched to rail.

Our report sets out an ambitious timescale. We need to deliver this by the end of the decade or else we will miss the opportunity to contribute towards meeting the transport sector's carbon reduction goals going forward. In order for the true potential of HS2 to be achieved, and for Scotland to properly benefit, we need to invest now to make it happen.

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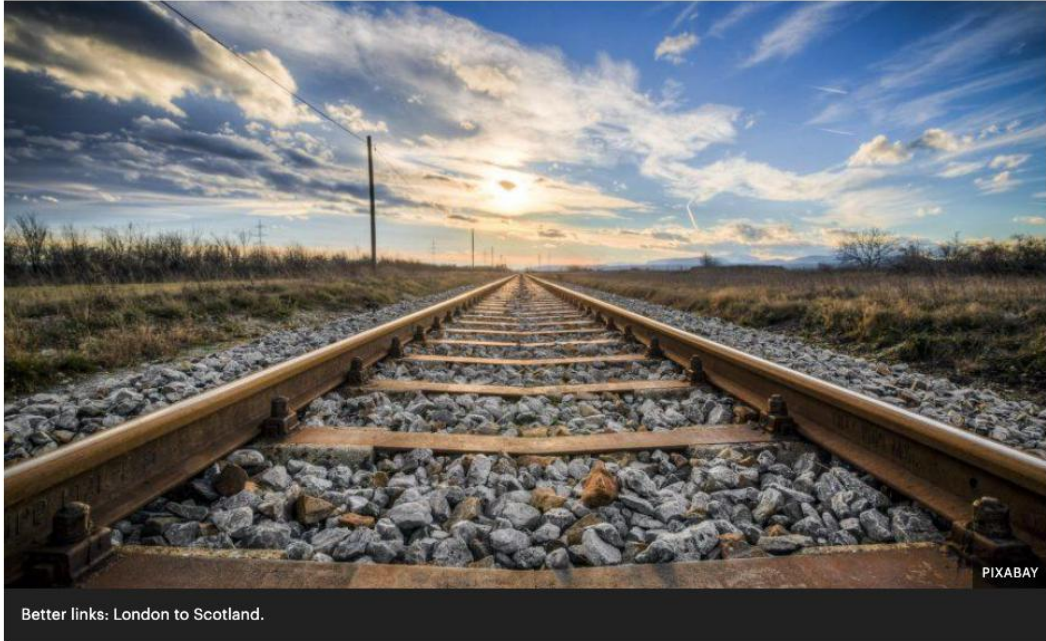
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Broadcast

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A Rail Industry Group says three-hour journeys between London and Edinburgh could be possible if suitable investment was made to link the North East with the High Speed Two project, which is set to go as far as Leeds.

A report by High Speed Rail Group is calling for the upgrading of Newcastle Central Station so it can take longer trains and it wants a new line built alongside the existing one between Dunbar and Edinburgh.

The changes would knock about an hour and twenty minutes off the journey from London to Edinburgh and greatly improve times to Newcastle as well.



New calls are being made for investment in the railways in Cumbria so our county can benefit from high speed rail. A new study has been published by a leading not-for-profit transport lobby organisation. It argues that making improvements between Manchester and Scotland will boost the economy of Northern England and reduce carbon emissions.

The government gave high speed rail approval in February. Initially it will link London to Birmingham, with a second phase to Manchester and Leeds. It aims to significantly cut journey times, increase capacity and cut carbon emissions. But delays and spiralling costs means the project still has its vocal critics.

In Cumbria it wasn't even clear whether high-speed trains would stop here, or if they would simply pass through. But now Greengage 21, a not-for-profit organisation set up to research and develop the case for a high-speed rail network in the UK, has published a detailed study of how Scotland and Northern England could significantly benefit.

It was transport expert Jim Steer who wrote this report and he joins us now, Jim good morning to you. You want to make Carlisle an interchange station for high-speed rail, how will that benefit Cumbria?

Jim: Carlisle is already of course a great interchange station, if you were coming from Merryport, Whitehaven, Workington and so on, and of course from across the border from Dumfries and so on. With high-speed rail services of course the attraction of travelling by train is that much greater and the ability to persuade people not to use their car for long-distance journeys is all the stronger. But of course they may not be trying to get to or from Carlisle it may be the surrounding parts of Cumbria and that's why you need a good hub station.



There had been ongoing concerns about high speed trains not stopping here at all, you're very much against the idea of them not stopping?

Jim: Indeed we have been quietly campaigning about this point. The good news is that the plan now from HS2 Ltd is that trains, Anglo Scottish trains, will stop at Carlisle. But there is still no sign of trains that will continue southward onto high speed two from Penrith and Oxenholme, and that's still a challenge to be addressed I think.

I'm guessing one of the other challenges to be addressed is the cost of all of this – we'll be talking eyewatering amounts of money, and HS2 might have already cost taxpayers £100 billion.

Jim: Well I think the recommendation we have, and it's based on work done by Network Rail, HS2, Transport Scotland and the Department for Transport, but not published yet or at least initial studies were but they didn't really conclude anything in truth. We are saying we don't need to build a high-speed line from Crewe, which is where the current scheme will finish, but you do need to avoid low speed sections of the route, and you need to make sure there's enough capacity to run a mix of faster and slower freight trains for instance which are on the line. So that means targeted investment and a lower cost than building a high speed line across Cumbria.



HS2, you will be well aware, has its critics. Do you think you can win over those in Cumbria, who view this as a massive waste of money that is only going to benefit people 'down south' as it were?

Jim: I think we can, but we need to tell the story a lot better. I mean not having any trains stop anywhere in Cumbria, even though they go through it, was a pretty silly approach for a start. But I think people need to realise that going forward we have a huge problem in the transport sector, it is the biggest contributor to carbon emissions, it is the only one that is still growing and electrified rail has really got to be the cornerstone of our national network, not short-haul flights and not long haul car journeys, and preferably not so many lorries either because how are you going to decarbonise them? Nobody has a good answer yet.

Regional Media

Media Coverage

Please note the following is a selection of the key regional titles, out of over 180 pieces of regional coverage

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The UK Government has a policy of reducing the country's greenhouse

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Three-hour train journeys between London and Scotland proposed

By Press Association 2020



A busy rail station

**High Speed Rail Group**
@HSRailGroup

More journeys are being made between England and Scotland. Extending #HighSpeedRail to Scotland brings significant benefits. Report 📄 [rail-leaders.com/industry-news/...](https://rail-leaders.com/industry-news/)



Passenger numbers between Birmingham and Scotland have increased by **261%** since 2006. Manchester-Scotland rail travel has increased by **191%** and Glasgow-London by **120%**



Destination: Glasgow, Manchester, London, Birmingham
Departure time: 17:20



6 4:58 PM - Jun 10, 2020

[See High Speed Rail Group's other Tweets](#)

The fastest train services currently take around four hours and 30 minutes for London to Glasgow and four hours and 20 minutes for London to Edinburgh.

The report, entitled High-Speed Rail and Scotland, stated that three-hour journeys on both routes are possible if the measures it recommends are implemented.

Its plan includes:

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Group calls for HS2 to be extended to Scotland

June, 2020



A high speed rail group has urged UK officials to include Scotland in the HS2 route, following a report on the potential benefits.

The *High-Speed Rail and Scotland* report, by Greengauge 21, details how connecting the HS2 route to Scotland would 'enhance' connectivity between the two countries through the cutting of travel time between London and Scotland to just over three hours.

Greengauge 21 is a not-for-profit company founded by transport sector specialist, Jim Steer. The organisation acts as an umbrella under which all those with an interest in a high speed rail network can come together and openly and publicly debate subjects such as alternative implementation strategies for rail.

The report also mentions the potential economic benefit to travel markets, towns and cities that could be achieved through the demand for travelling between the two countries. Greengauge 21 said that from 2006, passenger numbers between Glasgow and London have increased by 120%, Manchester-Scotland an increase of 191% and Birmingham-Scotland increased by 261%.

An extract from the report read, "Greengauge 21's substantive study into options for the nation's high-speed rail network, found that adding a line northwards from Manchester to Glasgow/ Edinburgh had a strong economic case with a benefit:cost ratio of 7.6:1, a much higher return than all other routes studied. But progress on developing firm proposals in the intervening ten years has been disappointingly slow."

The report's author, Jim Steer, commented, "As the UK begins to emerge from Covid-19, the focus on a green recovery is essential. Over the past two months we have all seen the positive impact on air quality and the environment. While we now focus on our economic recovery, we cannot lose sight of the carbon-cutting goals we have set ourselves. As transport is now the largest contributor to the UK's emissions, the sector has a duty to act quickly and decisively to reduce them."

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Borders Railway group's campaign remains on track

A campaign group calling for the Borders Railway to be extended to Carlisle have welcomed last month's report which backs their calls.



Simon Walton, chairman of the Campaign for Borders Rail, pictured at Fountainhall.

The 'High Speed Rail and Scotland' report, prepared for the National Infrastructure Commission by the High Speed Rail Group, recommends the completion of the Borders Railway on the grounds of economic regeneration, social inclusion, and strategic deployment of network capacity made possible by the construction of HS2.

The Campaign for Borders Rail says these are all the criteria upon which its own case is built, and the report represents an independent and credible confirmation of its demands for extending the line from Tweedbank through Hawick to Carlisle.

Simon Walton, chairman of the Campaign for Borders Rail, said “The findings of the High Speed Rail Group, which represents a very broad church of informed industry opinion, take a very relevant look at demand for rail services in the light of the post-coronavirus demand, environmental imperatives, and shift towards rail transport.

“The strategic importance of an extended Borders Railway, as an asset for the entire network, has been recognised at its true value in this report.

“Our campaign has always argued that a new cross-border rail link will be of benefit far beyond the Borders.

“Building the railway will not just be a tremendous fillip for the communities it directly serves, it will be an asset that helps solve challenges of capacity and

reliability all over the network.”

The report said Borders Railway completion should be undertaken to “support new regional services and enhance connectivity”. The Campaign for Borders Rail agrees, and says the full potential of the line has yet to be realised.

Mr Walton added: “As a very popular commuter service in Midlothian and a regional service in the central Borders, the line has proved its worth since opening in 2015.

“With over four million passengers already having used the service, despite considerable capacity constraints, the case for extension could not be clearer.

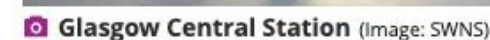
“It is already apparent that extension has widespread support in the community, commerce and all levels of government. We therefore urge no further delay in commissioning the project.”

The group notes, as does the report, that funding is in place for a comprehensive feasibility study, and strongly encourages co-operation between government agencies on both side of the Border to progress this formal step with urgency. “With so many green lights in front of us, immediate progress is the obvious course of action,” added Mr Walton.

Three hour train journeys between Glasgow and London targeted under new HS2 plans

HS2 intend for Glasgow to become an integrated high speed station where passengers can catch HS2 trains and access the high speed network to the south.



 (Image: SWNS)

Train journeys between Glasgow and London will be cut to just over three hours under new High Speed 2 (HS2) proposals to better connect Scotland and England.

A High Speed Rail Group report entitled 'High Speed Rail and Scotland' sets out how a mixture of [new high speed lines](#) and the upgrading of existing lines could enhance connectivity between the two nations - as well as cut travel time between London and Scotland to just over three hours.

And HS2, the firm developing the plans, confirm their intentions to see [Glasgow](#) become an integrated high speed station where passengers can catch HS2 trains and access the high speed network to the south.

Which would see journeys between London and Glasgow reduced from four hours 20 minutes to three hours and 40 minutes under current plans - although the report contains an 'interim target' rail journey time of three hours 10 minutes.



Provisional measures contained within the report to enable HS2 to meet the target include 400m platforms and segregated fast line approaches at [Glasgow Central](#), HSR from Rutherglen to Carstairs and station modernisation at Carlisle and Preston.

[The report](#) also notes that, alongside cutting travel time, the upgrades would also pave the way for a significant reduction of carbon emissions in line with the Scottish Government's 2045 net zero target.

Report author Jim Steer said: "As the UK begins to emerge from Covid-19, the focus on a green recovery is essential. Over the past two months we have all seen the positive impact on air quality and the environment.

"While we now focus on our economic recovery, we cannot lose sight of the carbon-cutting goals we have set ourselves.

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Trade Media

Media Coverage



The HS2 rail link should run to Scotland to boost connectivity, cut carbon and rebalance the economy post Covid-19, according to a new report published today.

An article in The Scotsman says the High Speed Rail Group says joining the route to Scotland would cut travel time to London to just over three hours.

The report, produced by independent policy research group Greengauge21, suggests a programme of upgrades to existing lines, as well as new dedicated sections of high speed line.

Transport Scotland says work would get underway shortly to decide if there was a business case for the recommended improvements.

High Speed Rail Group calls for HS2 to be linked to Scotland



Rob O'Connor

10 June 2020

**Topics**

High Speed Rail

HS2

Scotland

The High Speed Rail Group (HSRG) has called for HS2 to be linked to Scotland to boost connectivity, cut carbon, and rebalance the economy.

The report, *High-Speed Rail and Scotland*, claims that joining the route to Scotland would enhance connectivity between the two nations by cutting travel time between London and Scotland to just over three hours, pave the way for a significant reduction of carbon emissions in line with the Scottish government's 2045 net zero target, and level up the north of England post Covid-19.

Through a programme of upgrades to existing lines, combined with new dedicated sections of high speed line, the report claims that joining HS2 to Scotland will boost capacity and meet the projected demand for both freight and passenger travel, whilst cutting journey times to 3h10.

With the Scottish government targeting net zero by 2045 and the UK government committing to the same by 2050, the report aims to demonstrate that joining HS2 to Scotland will make a major contribution to decarbonising travel, saving 45,000 tonnes of CO2 per year from taking freight off the road, and driving the modal shift needed to move passengers from aviation to green rail.

With London to Scotland being among the busiest aviation routes in Europe, the report claims that reducing the journey time of rail routes will cut demand for carbon-heavy short haul flights, as has been achieved between London and Paris since the introduction of HS1.

High-Speed Rail and Scotland claims that, since cross-border routes are travelled for business or leisure, this travel market will continue to expand post-pandemic. Boosting capacity through linking with HS2, says the report, will ensure that the cities, towns and regions along the lines of route can grow and thrive at a time when they need it most, and deliver on the government's ambition to level up the country.

Report author Jim Steer said: "As the UK begins to emerge from Covid-19, the focus on a green recovery is essential. Over the past two months we have all seen the positive impact on air quality and the environment. While we now focus on our economic recovery, we cannot lose sight of the carbon-cutting goals we have set ourselves. As transport is now the largest contributor to the UK's emissions, the sector has a duty to act quickly and decisively to reduce them."



As construction of the high-speed railway HS2 from London to Birmingham gets underway, the High Speed Rail Group (HSRG) has called for HS2 to be linked to Scotland to boost connectivity, cut carbon, and rebalance the economy.

In a **report** entitled High-Speed Rail and Scotland, the group argues that joining the route to Scotland would enhance connectivity between the two nations by cutting travel time between London and Scotland to just over three hours, pave the way for a significant reduction of carbon emissions in line with the Scottish Government's 2045 net zero target, and level up the north of England post Covid-19.

Through a programme of upgrades to existing lines, combined with new dedicated sections of high-speed line, joining HS2 to Scotland will boost capacity and meet the projected demand for both freight and passenger travel, whilst cutting journey times to 3 hours 10 minutes. Since 2006, passenger numbers have increased between Glasgow and London by 120 per cent, between Manchester and Scotland by 191 per cent and Birmingham to Scotland by 261 per cent.

With the Scottish Government targeting net zero by 2045 and the UK Government committing to the same by 2050, the report demonstrates that joining HS2 to Scotland will make a major contribution to decarbonising travel, saving 45,000 tonnes of CO2 per year from taking freight off the road, and driving the modal shift needed to move passengers from aviation to green rail. With London to Scotland being among the busiest aviation routes in Europe, reducing the journey time of rail routes will cut demand for carbon-heavy short haul flights, as has been achieved between London and Paris since the introduction of HS1.

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HSRG report.

regions along the lines of route can grow and thrive at a time when they need it most, and deliver on the Government's ambition to level up the country.

Report author Jim Steer commented: "As the UK begins to emerge from Covid-19, the focus on a green recovery is essential.

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High speed rail link to Scotland could be delivered before 2035

11 JUN, 2020 | BY CLAIRE SMITH

Upgrades to existing lines as well as new high speed rail connections could deliver a link for High Speed 2 (HS2) to Scotland that would drive post-Covid growth for the region, a new report suggests.

According to the High Speed Rail Group's High Speed Rail and Scotland report, which was written by transport think tank Greengauge 21, linking HS2 to Scotland would boost connectivity, cut carbon and rebalance the economy.

These improvements could also be delivered to coincide with the opening of Phase 1 on HS2 – which is to be phased between 2029 and 2035 – to add to the benefits of the work for passengers and post-Covid recovery of the construction sector.

The group claims that a link would cut travel times between London and Scotland to just over three hours and would help the Scottish government meet its target to be carbon net zero by 2045. The report also suggests that such a link would “level up” the north of England during the post-Covid recovery.

“As the UK begins to emerge from Covid-19, the focus on a green recovery is essential,” said Greengauge 21 director Jim Steer who authored the report.

“Over the past two months we have all seen the positive impact on air quality and the environment. While we now focus on our economic recovery, we cannot lose sight of the carbon-cutting goals we have set ourselves. As transport is now the largest contributor to the UK's emissions, the sector has a duty to act quickly and decisively to reduce them.”

Data put forward by the report shows that the business case for an Anglo Scottish high speed rail link is much stronger – 7.6:1 – than the current business case for HS2 between London and Birmingham/Manchester which is 2.9:1. The report adds that this strength is due to travel between London and Scotland being the only pre-coronavirus market where short haul flights were prevalent over rail, adding to the green credentials of the proposal. The report described the Anglo-Scottish transport market as representing “low hanging fruit” for carbon reduction.

According to the report, the link could be delivered through a programme of upgrades to existing lines, combined with new dedicated sections of high speed line but delivery would need Transport for the North to be given an oversight role in the scheme to allow it to coordinate with Transport Scotland.

HS2 Ltd identified in 2016 that a high speed connection by enhancing the East Coast Main Line or West Coast Main Line was not possible but the report suggests that high speed rail bypasses of congested and slow areas on the routes could be delivered. The High Speed Rail and Scotland report looks at the different options depending on whether the east or west route was favoured.

Key elements of the upgrades proposed in England for the western option include a bypass of the line north of Preston through Lancaster and Oxenholme; a major upgrade of junctions between Crewe and Preston; provision of dynamic loops for freight services; upgraded stations and track approaches at Warrington, Preston and Carlisle; and progressive applications of European Train Control Systems train control as signalling is renewed. In Scotland the programme of work called for includes new line from Carstairs to Rutherglen and separation of a fast approach from there to Glasgow Central and capacity enhancements at Glasgow Central station.

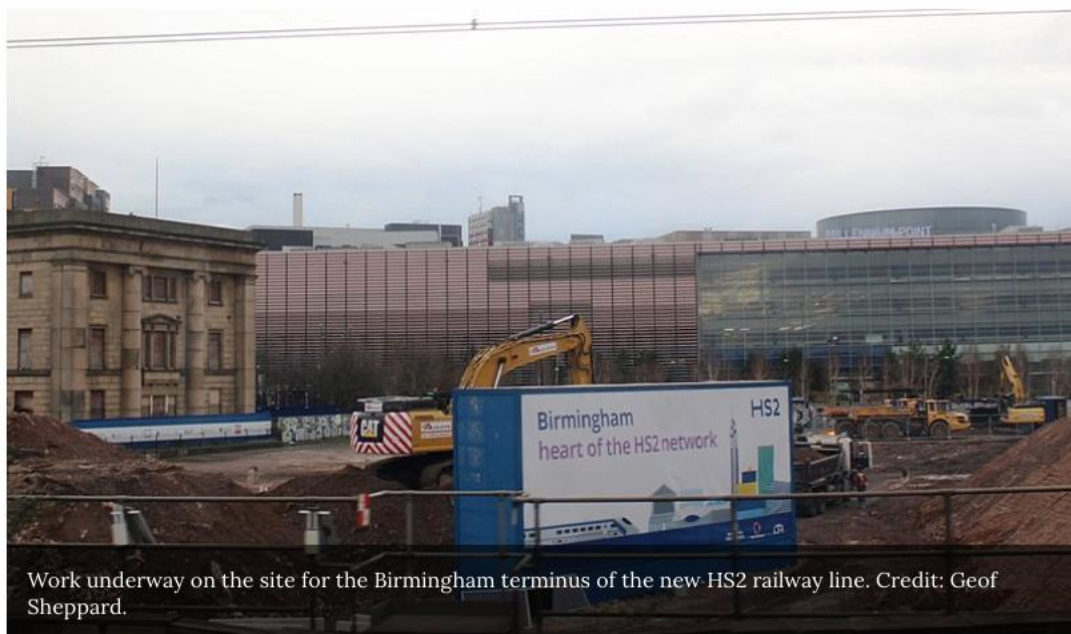
The eastern proposal for England includes an upgrade to Newcastle Central station to allow the operation of longer trains; improvements to York and Darlington stations and their approaches; and creation of a separate route for freight services between Northallerton and the approaches to Newcastle, with the scope to improve accessibility to places which have lost their local rail service. While in Scotland, the eastern route upgrade would call for a new line parallel to the existing approaches from the Dunbar area to Edinburgh; additional platforms at Edinburgh Waverley station; and may also call for major remedial works to address the threat of coastal erosion to the line north of Berwick.

According to the report, the main benefit of these proposals is that the improvements can be implemented incrementally and could be delivered to be completed in line with Phase 1 of HS2.

The High Speed Rail Group is calling for the planning gap that is preventing such proposals being implemented to be urgently addressed.

“Post-Coronavirus there will be questions about the scale of peak period commuting demand. But this has little direct bearing on the case for investment in the Anglo-Scottish corridor where other travel purposes predominate,” states the report. “It is already apparent that the aviation sector is unlikely to return to business on a ‘before outbreak’ scale. And in any case regional air services make little sense in the face of the climate emergency — especially if there is a reasonably fast electrified surface transport option. Providing this capability through an investment programme in high-speed rail that can commence without delay is a national priority.”

High Speed Rail Group calls for linking of HS2 and Scotland



Work underway on the site for the Birmingham terminus of the new HS2 railway line. Credit: Geof Sheppard.

UK-based High Speed Rail Group (HSRG) has urged officials to connect HS2 with Scotland, which will increase the connectivity, decrease carbon and rebalance the economy.

The organisation published a report, titled High-Speed Rail and Scotland, which states that the connection of the route to Scotland will increase connectivity by reducing the travel time between London and Scotland.

This is said to be in line with the Scottish Government's 2045 net-zero target.

With upgrades to existing lines and new sections of high-speed line, the linking of HS2 and Scotland will increase capacity and address the demand for freight and passenger travel.

Additionally, this is expected to decrease the journey time to three hours and 10 minutes.

The passenger traffic between Glasgow and London has increased by 120% since 2006 while the traffic on the Manchester-Scotland and Birmingham-Scotland routes increased by 191% and 261%, respectively.

The report also shows that the connection of HS2 with Scotland will contribute to the efforts to decarbonise travel and save 45,000t of CO₂ annually.

This move will remove freight from the road and boost the passenger shift from aviation towards green rail.

The London-Scotland aviation route is said to be the busiest in Europe and the reduction of rail travel time will decrease the need for 'carbon-heavy short-haul flights'.

the report author Jim Steer said: "As the UK begins to emerge from Covid-19, the focus on a green recovery is essential.

"Over the past two months, we have all seen the positive impact on air quality and the environment. While we now focus on our economic recovery, we cannot lose sight of the carbon-cutting goals we have set ourselves. As transport is now the largest contributor to the UK's emissions, the sector has a duty to act quickly and decisively to reduce them."

In April, the UK Department for Transport (DfT) gave the [notice to proceed for the construction of HS2](#).



New mixed-use line proposed for Scotland-England

Published on 12-06-2020 at 10:17

UK's influential High Speed Rail Group proposes a significant new-build line between England and Scotland to complement the east and west coast main lines and solve capacity issues. The group, representing member organisations from across the industry, made this recommendations in a new report: *High-Speed Rail and Scotland*.

The UK government appointed National Infrastructure Commission has been recommended to support construction of a new cross-border rail link between England and Scotland. An enhanced freight and passenger network should take full advantage of capacity released by HS2 and to cope with future demand for rail traffic.

Lobby group vindicated

One of the report's key recommendations is completion of the existing Borders Railway – a commuter line south from Edinburgh, which the High Speed Rail Group say should be upgraded and extended as a through route, and made fit to carry freight traffic, principally timber from forest plantations locally. "Joining the route would enhance connectivity between the two nations," says the report, paving the way for a significant reduction of carbon emissions in line with the Scottish government *2045 net zero* target, and levelling up investment and opportunity in the north of England in the post pandemic economy.

The railway would represent a reinstatement of a line closed in 1969 as part of a radical rationalisation of the UK network. Nick Bethune, who is secretary of the Campaign for Borders Rail, says the report vindicates the efforts of the lobby group, and widens the debate on modal shift to rail. "The report shows that the line would be a strategic arm of the national network", he says. "The collateral economic benefits of taking heavy goods off rural road routes are there to see. With environmental considerations moving up the agenda, there are many places around the UK that would benefit from as radical a modal shift as is proposed here."

Anticipated freight demand

While the National Infrastructure Commission does not have a direct remit to cover Scotland, the devolved government there collaborates with Westminster through its own agencies. The report observes that significant growth in cross-border freight traffic can be expected, with, for example, the large-scale expansion of Mossend freight terminal near Glasgow already underway – as RailFreight.com [reported](#). The Scottish government too has expressed a greater interest in rail freight growth, as part of their ambitious zero-carbon programme.



The report, which has been produced by the independent policy research group Greengauge21 on behalf of the High Speed Rail Group, says that boosting capacity through linking with HS2 will ensure that cities, towns and regions along the lines of route can grow and thrive at a time when they need it most, and deliver on the UK government ambition to level up the economy across the country.

Dynamic freight loops and dedicated new tracks

Other freight specific developments are recommended. They include dynamic freight loops for the East and West Coast Main Lines – a relatively rare operational arrangement in the UK, but employed on the Borders Railway, and widely used in continental Europe. There is also an ambitious proposal for additional segregated freight capacity over entire 200 route miles (360km) between Newcastle and Peterborough.

The development of HS2, and the anticipated running of HS2 trains northwards to Glasgow and Edinburgh, over the existing rail network, will present operational challenges. The pathing of more mixed traffic on the coastal routes, says the report, strengthens the case for reinvigorating the inland 'Settle and Carlisle' line, and joining it to a rebuilt railway in the Scottish Borders, formerly known as the 'Waverley Route'.

Environmental benefits

In addition to expected freight growth, the report author, Jim Steer, says the environmental benefits are such that the economic advantages have become even more prevalent, especially in the months of lockdown in the UK. "We have all seen the positive impact on air quality and the environment", he said. "While we now focus on our economic recovery, we cannot lose sight of the carbon-cutting goals we have set ourselves. As transport is now the largest contributor to the UK's emissions, the sector has a duty to act quickly and decisively to reduce them."



The report commissioned by High Speed Rail Group and delivered by Greengauge21 makes many recommendations including building a new line across the border between Scotland and England

The 66-miles (106km) of new railway required for the Borders Railway would be the single biggest reinstatement of a closed line in the UK. If the report is accurate, it may well not be the last, by some considerable margin.

Feature image of rail infrastructure work on the Borders Railway, courtesy Robert Drysdale