**HS2 PROMO – The Strategic Case for HS2**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I6JP4jkcv6s>

**(verbatim commentary from Promo for ASA accuracy ‘challenges’ highlighted in red, with comments, refs and links at end)**

A modern transport network is essential. It is the circulation system of the nation. It must be healthy and free-flowing

But today it is becoming clogged, railways are crowded, roads congested, the population is growing and demand for travel is rising

The new North-South HS2 line is like a **bypass easing the strain on the** **clogged arteries** **of the system** 1

It will provide the capacity of a 12-lane motor-way but only take the space of a dual carriageway and it will **stimulate growth in towns and cities across Britain 2**

But projects this size need clear justification.

**The £42 billion budget** includes contingency and will be spread over decades for a line **that will repay £2 for every £1 spent 3**

**HS2 will not be built at the expense of other transport 4**

**Much more is being spent on roads and existing railways than on HS2 5**

Some believe technology will remove the need to travel but despite the emergence of social media, Skype and Smartphones **UK rail passenger journeys have doubled 6**

Alternatives to HS2 **wouldn’t deliver enough capacity 7** and would **require years of closures and disruption 8** but concerns about the impact of the line deserve to be heard and **where we can adapt our plans we will 9**

**There is a high speed train from London to Brussels but not Birmingham, to the Alps but not to Manchester 10**  That has to be wrong.

**Britain can only grow properly if it grows together** 11

The new line will **revitalise Britain’s rail network 12**, **provide better connections for 18 of our biggest towns and cities 13** and **create jobs 14 homes 15** and **business 16**

But it’s not just a new line. It’s an **Engine for Growth17 providing a £15bn annual boost to the economy 18** for a **closer 19** growing Britain

***References. Notes and Comments***

1, HS2 ..... bypass easing the strain on the *clogged arteries ...* Using the analogy of clogged arteries, It would seem reasonable that a heart surgeon would choose to bypass the most clogged arteries to assist in curing the patient’s circulation system. According to First Group the WCML is unusual in that it has quite a lot of spare capacity. *1* Euston is the least crowded London terminus bar one. 2 This means that HS2 is not tackling the most critically clogged arteries and this could have catastrophic effects on the rail system.

2. ...stimulate growth in towns and cities across Britain.. HS2 will stimulate some growth but is likely to be quite narrowly restricted to areas around the limited number of stations on the HS2 route rather than ‘across Britain’ . There is however the danger that stimulation of the already most economically strong northern towns and cities will be at the expense of others bypassed by HS2 such as Stoke, Stafford, Coventry, etc. This is discussed at length in Professor John Tomaney’s paper 3

3. ... that will repay £2 for every £1 spent .... The BCR has been recalculated five times and the ratio has changed each time. The Strategic Case for HS2 published on 29th October 4 contained the following statistics

* The BCR for Phase 1 is 1.4
* The BCR for Phase 1 along increased to 1.7 if wider economic inputs are taken into account
* The BCR for the Y network (Phase 1 & Phae 3 together is 1.8
* The BCR for the Y network increases to 2.3 if wider economic inputs are taken into account

During the BBCTV Newsnight report on the launch of the report, political correspondent, David Grossman on BBC TV Newsnight discussing ‘wider economic benefits’ in relation to HS2 said ‘These are far less certain benefits from things like regeneration and the DfTs own guidance says that these shouldn’t actually be included to calculate the benefit cost ratio of a project.’

The ratio 2:1 is disputed by many economists as optimistic and both the National Audit Office and the Public Accounts Committee have suggested that the benefits should be revised down markedly while David Theiss of the New Economics Foundation questions whether, given its diverse goals, HS2 is the best investment possible and ‘it is not enough that it passes a minimum threshold of return.’

Professor Overman giving evidence to the Treasury Select Committee (details below) mentioned 1.8:1 CBR

4. HS2 will not be built at the expense of other transport HS2 at 330 miles is approximately 0.03% of almost 10,000 miles of UK rail network but consumes 54% of rail budget in next six years, leaving just 56% of rail budget for remaining 99.97% 5 *(my calculations need checking our as maths a bit dodgy but massively disproportionate spend on HS2 compared with entire rail network)*

5. UK rail passenger journeys have doubled This is a meaningless statement as it does not state the period during which passenger numbers have doubled. However, the recent trend for long-distance travel appears to be decreasing 6

6. Much more is being spend on the existing roads and railways than on HS2 It appears that around 70% of total transport budget until 2020/1 is allocated for all rail and road infrastructure spend with HS2 construction and associated costs will account for about 25% of all infrastructure investment 7 (as can be seen, costs in later years rise for HS2 costs and are likely to remain high or increase over the time scale of the project) . Just 3% of journeys are by rail 5 and HS2 will account for 330mls of a rail network approaching 10,000 miles which is approximately 0.03% of total UK rail network length

7. . Alternatives wouldn’t deliver enough capacity This statement challenged by 51M 8 and other independent organisation Both the National Audit Office and Institute of Directors reports point to incremental rail upgrades across Britain as alternatives bringing faster, cheaper increased capacity and with increased CBR

8. ... and would require years of closures and disruption Any major rail works will cause disruption. To imply that HS2 will not is fanciful and deliberately misleading. For example, Euston station approach and rebuild is scheduled to take at least a decade; construction works throughout Camden from Euston, the HS1-HS2 Link and several vent shaft sites in the borough together with construction traffic will cause massive disruption for commuters on routes into Euston, on the North London Line, for public transport and general traffic in Camden. The M6 is to be diverted in two places and it is inconceivable that this will not cause disruption.

9. ... but concerns about the impact of the line deserve to be heard and where we can adapt our plans we will. In practice, it has been almost impossible to get HS2 Ltd to adopt alternative less destructive plans except in the Chilterns were concessions have been made. For example, Frank Dobson, MP, has received information that it would cost an additional £160m to tunnel the link between HS1-HS2. This would prevent massive disruption to commuters on the North London Line and traffic running north/south in Camden but has not been agreed

10. There is a high speed train from London to Brussels but not Birmingham, to the Alps but not to Manchester According to the international definition of HSR the East Coast Main Line, the Midland Main Line and the West Coast Main Line already comply with the definition. All three routes could be upgraded and with in-cab signalling installed on trains these lines could accommodate higher speeds which would compare favourably with most EU HSR average speeds. Virgin Rail have recently stated that with far cheaper upgrades to the ECML they could beat the forecast HS2 journey time from London to Edinburgh by 1 minutes 9

HS2 is an ultra-fast high speed railway faster than any other currently constructed (apart from Maglev different system) in Europe. In a country the size of the UK this is an unnecessary speed and expense especially as the now primary rationale for HS2 is that of capacity so should be slowed down and call at more stations.

11. .... Britain can only grow properly if it grows together

Professor Mike Geddes in his Blog critique HS2: the regional impact 10 discusses the unequal impacts of growth associated with HS2 pointing out competition for jobs which will produce losers as well as winners.

Bibliofox evidence to Parliamentary Committee 11 on HS2 highlights cuts to long-distance services that are forecast as a result of HS2.

Passengers post introduction of HS to the Kent Coast faces significant longer and reduced frequency of services to London from towns like Deal on the Kent Coast

12. ... revitalise Britain’s rail network HS2 will revitalise a small part (approximately 0.03% - 330 miles of new HSR ultra fast railway - of the UK rail network (around 10,000 miles) with some relatively small connectivity improvement at a limited number of stations along its route at a disproportionate cost.

HS2 Ltd highlights some £7.2bn of indicative cuts to services 11 frequency and/or lengthened journey times between a number of intermediate cities on the WCML with London

*Extract from The Eddington Transport Study 12*

13. .... will provide better connections for 18 of our biggest towns and cities This may or may not be the case but HS2 will require some currently straight through services to London to change in Birmingham thus generating connections where none previously existed. Express & Star newspaper article 12

14. .... create jobs HS2 will certainly generate many construction jobs during the construction phase and others to maintain the railway. Other than rail-related employment, job creation is contingent on £millions of pounds of public and/or private investment. Some commentators feel there are faster cheaper ways to create jobs starting immediately. Many of the jobs predications are actually relocated from elsewhere which is a recognised effect of HSR (can’t find ref)

HS2 will be directly responsible for the loss of thousands of jobs (In the Draft Environmental Statement HS2 Ltd estimate 2670 job losses in Euston alone with probably a further several thousand at least along the remainder of the Phase One London to Birmingham route. Professor Mike Geddes writes in his Blog HS2: The Regional Impact 10 quotes the Government as saying that HS2 will ‘help to support’ (not create) around 50,000 jobs Forecasts of job creation fluctuate wildly but it is by no means clear that the headline figures are net statistics taking into account the many jobs lost. Geddes also points out there will be competition for jobs which will create losers as well as winners.

15. ... homes  HS2 will not create one home. It may well act as a catalyst for investment in home building but this is separate to the investment sunk in HS2 and would require millions of pounds of public and/or private investment to do so and is not included in the budgetof £42bn (excluding rolling stock) earmarked for HS2. The construction of HS2 will require the demolition of some 1800 homes, several hundred in Euston alone.

16. ... and business  Small and large businesses in the path of HS2 will be demolished and many more will be put at threat because of loss of trade during construction. This applies to Drummond Street traders, mostly restaurateurs’ in the Asian Curry Quarter.

17. ... Engine for Growth... It is likely that the most significant growth with be in the profits of those who gain major contracts worth millions or even billions of pounds.

HS2, like HSR elsewhere could prove a catalyst for economic growth but will be dependent on additional massive public and/or private investment and which is likely to be concentrated around a few stations and not spread across regions of the UK.

One key stated rationale for investing £42bn in HS2 is that it would rebalance the economic geography between the North and the South. Tomaney 2 argues that experience elsewhere suggests most economic benefit accrues to capital cities thus exacerbating the economic imbalance. HS2 Ltd forecast 70% economic growth will accrue to London. Much of this is likely to come from regeneration around the area of Old Oak Common station which is a significant brown field site but again this is dependent on massive public and/or private investment additional to HS2 budget. Larger regional cities may experience some level of regeneration but this could well be at the expense of other smaller towns and cities.

Given the huge cost, the difficulty in forecasting passenger numbers 30 years hence, the growth of technology that could alter travel patterns, there is no guarantee that building a high speed line will in fact generate economic growth without endless public subsidy.

HS1 did not meet forecast passenger numbers and thus did not attain income generation expectations. As a result the CTRL is still being subsidised from the public purse.

Spain has the largest HSR network in EU. If HSR was a guaranteed Engine for Growth, it’s economy should be booming. Instead it is has massive debt to a large extent from HSR construction. Japan is also mired in debt due to HSR construction.

### 18. (HS2) .... provides £15bn annual boost to the economy *–* quote from KPMG report for HS2 September has been widely criticised as exaggerating the wider economic benefits (WEBs).

### In evidence provided to the Treasury Select Committee on 5th November 2013 14 by Professor Dan Graham, Professor of Statistical Modelling suggests the way that the figures have been collated has ‘no statistical basis’ and Professor Henry Overman, Professor of Economic Geography and former advisor to HS2 Ltd and explain their scepticism and argue that the £15bn boost quoted by KPMG has no statistical basis accusing KPMG of using a procedure which is ‘essentially made up’ and suggested that accurate assessment would ‘reduce the estimated magnitude by a factor of six to eight.’ 13,14

### ... closer together.... Sounds cosy but no-one in Britain will be closer because of HS2.

*References*

1. *First Group letter* [pic.twitter.com/GnaGLNllw8](http://t.co/GnaGLNllw8)
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3. *Tomaney, J* ‘**The Local and Regional Impacts of High Speed Rail in the UK: A Review of the Evidence’** prepared as evidence to Parliamentary Committee (HSR14) <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201012/cmselect/cmtran/writev/rail/m14.htm>
4. *Publications Gov.UK The Strategic Case for HS2* [*https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hs2-strategic-case*](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hs2-strategic-case)
5. *The National Travel Survey 2012 p5* <https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/243957/nts2012-01.pdf>
6. *Investing*  in Britain’s Future HM Treasury Cm 8669 June 2013 p8 Table 1 A Government long-term spending plans <https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/209279/PU1524_IUK_new_template.pdf>
7. [pic.twitter.com/n7ajz74vmq](http://t.co/n7ajz74vmq)
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9. Virgin spokesperson <http://www.globalrailnews.com/2013/08/02/east-coast-pendolinos-could-deliver-faster-journey-times-than-hs2-for-anglo-scottish-services/>
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13. Express & Star newspaper article <http://www.expressandstar.com/news/transport-news/2013/09/20/direct-rail-services-will-be-lost-in-hs2-plan/>

### Ref: HS2/074 High Speed Two (HS2) Limited HS2 Regional Economic <http://www.kpmg.com/UK/en/IssuesAndInsights/ArticlesPublications/Documents/PDF/Market%20Sector/Building%20and%20Construction/hs2-regional-economic-impacts.pdf>

### Overman, H (Q114) and Graham, D Treasury Select Committee 5th November 2013 oral evidence <http://data.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/WrittenEvidence.svc/EvidenceHtml/3472>

*I have highlighted what I consider to be 18 contentious statement and/or assumptions the provide to form what I consider to be a very misleading dvd and I have now attached the relevant references, notes and comments.*

*This is a very clever DVD clearly promoting a government scheme which is politically contentious and extremely costly and does not have majority public support.. It has been designed specifically to convince a sceptical public of the merits of the scheme using taxpayers money to do so and as such it should be scrupulously accurate.*

*It has been used on Twitter for a number of weeks and perhaps other social media which I do not use.*

*I believe the accompanying commentary is:*

*•           biased*

*•           contains factual errors*

*•           makes assumption that are not proven*

*•           uses disputed figures and statistics*

*Unclear but followed a link from Twitter @ transportgovuk and I also thinkit has previously been available on @HS2Ltd*

*It was not a product but a video promoting the High Speed Two infrastructure project*

*Twitter social media In the last couple of days. Had seen it previously some weeks ago*