

A High Speed future for Europe's Regions

Facts & Findings of HSTconnect & HSTintegration



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HIGHSPEEDTRAINS

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"What you have been able to achieve is very, very impressive"
James E Brathwaite CBE,
Chairman SEEDA

Foreword

I am delighted to introduce this report on the results of the High Speed Train (HST) projects led by the South East of England Development Agency.

The two INTERREG IIIB projects, HSTintegration and HSTconnect, set out to demonstrate the benefits of extending access to the high-speed train networks for the North West Europe region. With a combination of practical investments, studies, transnational exchange and policy influence they have successfully made that case.

I am especially pleased to see the way that the partnership has managed to use the European Regional Development Fund grant to leverage in extra investment from other sources, and to get new infrastructure projects up and running. Also, and just as importantly, they have successfully convinced politicians, transport operators and other stakeholders to engage in the further development of the high-speed network. These initiatives, and the good practice highlighted by them, bring lasting benefits to European regions. They facilitate faster travel for citizens and businesses; promote economic growth whilst at the same time reducing the region's carbon footprint.

In January 2008 I was able to see some of the achievements myself on a visit to the South East of England. I was impressed to learn how the high-speed train network can be used as a spark for regional and urban regeneration and development and to see the practical support offered by HSTintegration in connecting the recently opened international station at Ebbsfleet with surrounding communities through the Fastrack service.

I would like to thank the HST project partners from five European countries for their contribution to regional transport policy. I look forward to hearing about their continued success in new ventures to better connect Europe's regions and people.

Danuta Hübner
European Commissioner for Regional Policy



Introduction

This report summarises the achievements of a five year cross-border collaboration aimed at maximising the benefits of the high-speed train (HST) network in North West Europe.

The aim of the HSTintegration and HSTconnect projects was to enhance the high-speed train network throughout the region (Belgium, France, Germany, the Netherlands and the UK), through targeted infrastructure investment, upgrading of station environments and accessibility, and the creation of multi-modal transport hubs.

Around €23 million of funding came from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) under INTERREG IIIB for North West Europe. INTERREG III is a European Community initiative which aims to stimulate interregional cooperation in the EU. INTERREG IIIB aims to promote better integration and encourage a sustainable and balanced development of the European territory. Over €26m additional match funds came from a range of local, regional and national agencies.

HSTintegration focused particularly on the stations and services on the primary high-speed rail network, while HSTconnect improved the feeder connections to that network. Together, the HST projects' successes have been many.

They helped to leverage in additional funding and get new projects started.

They provided evidence and raised awareness that:

- Investing in the infrastructure and environment around high-speed train stations brings additional economic and social benefits
- Better stations and connectivity lead to higher rail passenger numbers
- Better station environments can generate business activity and raise property values
- Better connectivity to the high-speed network helps smaller cities to compete and regions to develop

The transnational partner exchange created ideas and transferred knowledge on:

- Station design and development
- Station environments
- Infrastructure funding
- Master planning
- Partnership work
- Stakeholder involvement
- Policy development

The 27 partners in the HST projects, led by the South East England Development Agency (SEEDA), are clear about the positive impacts for their towns and regions. The legacy of their collaboration is documented here.



Results: Investments

The HST investments in transport infrastructure acted as a catalyst for regeneration and improved competitiveness and resulted in benefits to passengers and businesses. Although each investment was specific to its own location, there were many common themes across the partnership that formed the basis for joint work, exchange and dissemination. Here we explain the nature of the investments and illustrate them with examples.

Acting as a catalyst for further investment

One of the major successes for HST has been the level of additional investment leveraged in by partners for further developments. It is estimated that a total of €767m has been invested¹ in the HSTconnect and HSTintegration projects. The HST funds helped to attract money for other elements in regeneration packages. Many were delivered much more quickly than might otherwise have been the case.

After the initial work completed under HST, the city council of *Heerlen* has agreed to enter into the second phase of the Maankwartier project. This consists of a €160m investment in the station area. A contract has also been signed with ProRail,

responsible for the Dutch rail infrastructure, for the construction of a new platform with the total match funding provided by the Province of Limburg at a cost over €4m. The province also unanimously adopted a proposal to invest an extra €20m into (cross-border) public transport. This improved public transport integration means better access to the HST network in *Aachen* for the 240,000 people living in the Parkstad-Limburg region.

Sea Space in *Hastings* has, through public funding that includes the HSTconnect element, levered in £12.5m of private sector investment in the Priory Quarter redevelopment area in Hastings town centre.

¹ HST Impact Study



Results: Investments

Prorail has committed €4m to resolve the technical problems on the *Maastricht* - Brussels link. This will shorten the connection time between Maastricht and Brussels even further from the current one and a half hours.

The project at *Dover Priory Station* has led to significant further investment in road and footway improvements between the station and the town centre, and pedestrian access between the station and the adjoining deprived residential area of Tower Hamlets which was not envisaged in the original project. Significant further investment by the UK government in car parking provision at the station is expected as a direct result of Dover's domestic connection to High Speed 1 next year.

In *Ashford*, €1.6m ERDF through HSTintegration has helped enable a substantial investment of over £15m in public realm improvements that link the town centre to the station, incorporating a transformational 'shared space' scheme that is a UK first and follows the principles established in, and learnt from, northern Holland. A further investment of around £4m will now be carried out to improve and extend the International Station and to integrate both international and new high-speed domestic services at Ashford.

"With a modest amount of cash we managed to instigate a lot of delivery."

Reading Borough Council has now approved a further upgrade to the bus station following the completion of HST funded improvements. Moreover, the HST masterplan for Reading made an important contribution to the successful bid for £425m Department for Transport funding for station and rail improvements.



Artists impression of Reading station



Reading masterplan

"HST projects have acted as a catalyst for much larger investments from elsewhere."

Improving station environments

HST support has helped to make stations safer and more welcoming, to integrate stations within city environments and to reduce the physical and psychological barriers to train usage.

Leiedal region invested more than €7m in the improvement of five station areas, of which €3.3m was funded by INTERREG IIIB. All projects strengthened the spatial and functional relationships between station areas and city centres by improving accessibility and encouraging the use of different transport modes. In most of the cities, the investments are considered crucial to the success of other urban renewal plans.

Armentières station is located in a deprived area surrounded by redundant industrial land. With the HST projects support, an old warehouse has been removed and the former freight station site regenerated. The re-development includes new parking facilities, road construction and an upgraded traffic plan, improvement of public transport accessibility and bicycle facilities, and rearrangement of the station square. The improvements have a symbiotic relationship with the regeneration of the town centre, which includes a landmark new building housing a library, community facilities and a conference and concert venue. The impact has been to redirect inhabitants from the neighbouring cities and from West Flanders via Armentières towards Lille, to develop intermodality as an alternative to the car; and to stimulate economic, social and cultural developments.



Dover station



Bus information screens at Reading station



Heerlen bus station

Results: Investments

Aachen Hauptbahnhof enjoyed a facelift to the forecourt at the front of the station to provide a safer and more attractive entrance and, crucially, to provide a pedestrian friendly connection to the centre, linking with the city's public space strategy.

Cross River Partnership used HST investments to improve the environments around London's international stations of Waterloo and St Pancras/Kings Cross, with measures including new signage, paving, and traffic calming.

Dover Priory Station benefited from a package of investments to re-design the layout and forecourt, to connect the station better to the town and to improve signage and information for international travellers. This is in anticipation of the new domestic high-speed services due to start in 2009.



Kings Plaza

Improving transport information

Many investments provided better signage, in some cases multilingual information, to help passengers move between transport modes and around the station environment. Several included upgrading systems to Real-time Passenger Transport Information on buses, at bus stops and in stations.

Rail travellers arriving at *Reading* station are now immediately able to access information on bus departure times and locations thanks to HST.

In *Maastricht* an extensive, successful marketing campaign was undertaken to promote the new express service to Brussels, leading to a significant uptake of the service.

Several projects addressed technical issues to facilitate through ticketing for cross-border services, such as Heerlen-Aachen and Maastricht-Brussels.



Aachen station forecourt

Improving feeder and interchange services

Several investments have helped to improve connections from the secondary to primary train networks and also between bus and train and for cyclists and pedestrians.

The Fastrack rapid transit system, part funded by HST, links *Ebbsfleet* International Station with adjacent development sites and the towns of Dartford and Gravesend, serving the Thames Gateway - one of Europe's largest regeneration areas. In essence, Fastrack runs like a tram with the flexibility of a bus. The service has bus priority junctions and passenger information at every stop and 70 per cent of the routes are segregated from other traffic. Fastrack has already won a number of national awards for excellence in transport innovation.



Before HST investment

Synchronising rail and bus operator timetables in *Heerlen* has given passengers smoother connections and faster travel times.

At *Dover Priory* Station the forecourt was re-designed to improve the bus/rail interchange.

In *Armentieres* and the five stations areas in the *Leiedal* region, there is improved access for cyclists and new cycle lanes and parking facilities have been provided.

The HST driven initiatives in *Hastings* saw new pedestrian focused urban routes and town centre regeneration which links functions so that, for example, educational facilities are sited next to the station as students are likely to use rail transport.



New bus priority junction for Fastrack service

Improving connectivity for smaller towns

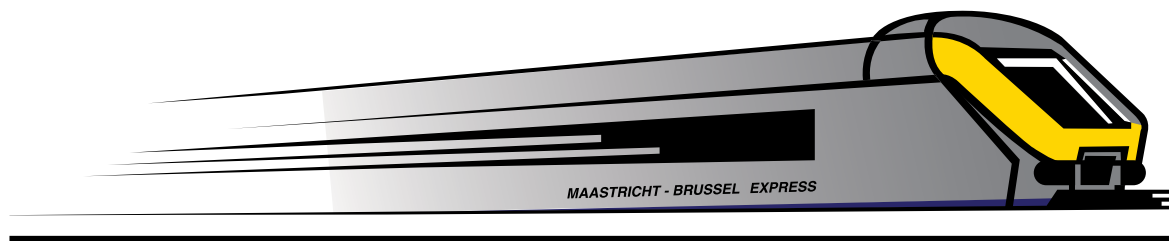
Many of the HST investments increase access to the high-speed network for smaller towns and cities, which are in danger of being bypassed and losing out on the economic benefits of network development.

Heerlen's new light rail stops, for instance, will allow residents' access to HST services in Aachen. Moreover, the national border will no longer restrict logical travel or commuting patterns and the service will greatly increase the region's travel catchment area.

The HST supported Fastrack service allows connection between Ebbsfleet international station and the towns of Greenhithe, Gravesend and Dartford and new developments in the Thames Gateway. This improved connectivity assumes even greater significance with the introduction of domestic HST services in 2009, when the journey time from Ebbsfleet to St. Pancras will be 17 minutes.



Maastricht now has a direct and fast connection with Liège and Brussels offering comfortable and quick transport towards Paris and London. This opens opportunities for businesses, students and tourists travelling to and from Maastricht.



LE PLUS FAST NAAR BRUSSEL!

Feasibility work

The HST projects funded a number of pre-investment studies. In the Netherlands a report explored the feasibility of a Travellers' Lounge, a dedicated business lounge for travellers on main rail services in the large scale redevelopment of *The Hague* Central Station.

In *Ashford*, a study reported on urban reconfiguration around both sides of International Passenger Station to improve accessibility by bicycle, foot and public transport.

The *Ashford-Hastings* rail enhancement study undertaken under the auspices of HSTconnect has resulted in this vital South East corridor connection being entered on Network Rail's rail scheme list.

In *Stratford*, London the project investment has been used at the design stage to look at providing a pedestrian friendly focus of activity and to maximise footfall with a seamless surface and improved connection via a number of identified key routes to the regional train station. Although it proved impossible to progress this work under the auspices of HSTintegration, it will be useful in the light of major infrastructure developments such as Stratford City shopping centre and the preparation for the Olympics in 2012.



Stratford regional station

Results: Investments

Encouraging cross border travel and cooperation

A three year contract was signed in November 2008 for the continuation of the HST projects supported Brussels - *Maastricht* train service at a major launch bringing together the Dutch and Belgian rail operators and other key stakeholders.

HSTconnect developed the 'Cross Border Business' case study for the links between Eindhoven – Venlo – Mönchengladbach – Düsseldorf and Eindhoven – Heerlen – Aachen – Köln with an agreement signed between 19 Dutch and German authorities. The implementation of this connection is being taken forward by the RoCK (Regions of Connected Knowledge) project under the INTERREG IVB programme.



Opening of Heerlen investment



Best practice visit - Maastricht



“The transnational component was of crucial importance to us because it gave us a foothold on the national government level, both in the Netherlands as well as in Germany. Each time we had problems in external co-operation or securing match funding we were able to outline the fact that Europe supported our plans with a 50% grant.”

Results: Investments

Increasing rail passenger numbers

The number of passengers on the new Maastricht to Brussels line has increased from 16,000 to 64,000 per month

As a result of combined efforts, including the HSTconnect work, to enhance and promote the Ashford-Hastings line there has been encouraging growth of use, up by around 50 per cent over four years.

“The most important thing is that the travellers in our region will now have four brand new places where they can use public transport in our cross border region. And that this will in the end reduce our carbon footprint for the region.”



Best practice visit - Ashford



Results: Studies

Three complementary studies were produced by the HST projects. These were conducted by transnational consortia of universities and independent research institutes and companies. Each study was directed by a “Theme Leader” from within the HST Partnership.

- HST Policy
- HST Connectivity
- HST Impact

The results fed into strategic policy work and underpinned the investments across the partnership. The conclusions provide evidence to influence industry and transport experts on the way forward for extending the high-speed train network.

“High-speed trains contribute to regional economic growth and play a role in the urban development of cities,” said Alan Lewis, a Director at Transport and Travel Research Ltd and principal author of the Impact study.

“The introduction of high-speed train services can provide better access to jobs through both inbound and outbound flows, access to markets and skills”

The **HST Spatial Planning and Transport Policy Study** reviewed national planning policies for transport and spatial development, how they function and their strengths and weaknesses. It made a series of recommendations for effective project implementation through improved policy instruments, such as conflict resolution in the planning processes, reconciliation of local, regional and national interest and public private sector financing.

The South East England Regional Assembly, a strategic partner in the HST projects, led the “Strategic Policy” theme and oversaw the work of the research consortium of Bureau Buiten (the Netherlands), Sinclair Knight Merz – (UK), Planco (Germany) and Stratec (Belgium).



The Connectivity Study included an analysis of passenger needs and developed a toolkit presenting the range of barriers and solutions to a better train network. It concludes that expansion of the high-speed network has economic and environmental benefits and requires:

- Better infrastructure and synchronised schedules
- Better connections and better integration with other transport modes to spread benefits to wider catchments
- Better integration of stations in urban environment;
- Better multi stakeholder collaboration in planning and delivery

Paul Bowker from the London Borough of Newham directed the researchers from Newrail, Newcastle University (UK), University of Southampton (UK), Bureau Buiten (The Netherlands), IVV-Aachen (Germany) and EC DE Lille (France)

The Impact Study looked at how the investment projects were removing barriers to high-speed services. It also analysed the impact of the investment in relation to the themes of

- Transport and mobility
- Urban regeneration
- Economic benefits
- Social benefits

The study flagged up that many of the HST investments were part of broader packages, where HST was a defining, contributory factor but not the sole element of major redevelopment, hence proving the value of fully-integrated planning and regeneration. In some cases, it is too early to conclusively attribute direct impacts on the project investments, but the study was clear on many of the benefits:

- **HST plays an important role in urban development strategies**
- **Good national and international connections are a magnet for businesses and people**
- **HST connectivity and well designed station environments make places where people want to live, work, shop, and spend leisure time**
- **Mixed use developments help to revitalise a station area**

The HST network currently serves mostly economically strong areas. The study emphasised how the HST projects have demonstrated the value of connecting peripheral areas to spread those benefits over a wider area, creating a larger labour pool for employers and more work opportunities for citizens. It highlighted how the railway network needs to reflect the changing lifestyle patterns of people in North West Europe, who increasingly think beyond borders and are unwilling to be constrained by them.

Henri Looymans from Parkstaad Limburg oversaw the research undertaken by Transport & Travel Research (UK), Bureau Buiten (the Netherlands), University of Southampton (UK), Catholic University of Leuven (Belgium) and Spiekermann & Wegener (Germany).

HST also supported specifically targeted studies within the partnership. For example; Calais Chamber of Commerce was able to study the future of commuting between South East England and the North of France and the opportunity to develop new services. This will feed directly into the RoCK project with INTERREG IVB funding.

Leiedal Intercommunale in Belgium developed a strategic transport plan and an economic study for the region. These not only supported the investments under the HST projects

but also helped focus stakeholders on the importance of improving links to the main urban centre, across the border in Lille.

The HST projects supported the work of three PHD students in European universities working on these closely linked to the themes of the HST Projects:

- HST - an opportunity for reurbanisation and scope for long-distance commuting (University of Dortmund)
- The flow of people as an indicator for the appraisal of HST related strategies and interventions into urban space (Technical University of Darmstadt)
- The attractiveness of HST locations (University of Amsterdam Urban Planning)



Architects concept for Utrecht station

Results: Transnational partnership

The HST projects provided an opportunity for people working in the same field across the North West Europe region to get together to explore best practices. Partners working on similar challenges were able to cooperate on concrete projects and take part in guided site visits. The joint reflection helped partners to be more open to change, review ideas and try out new approaches. Although transport infrastructure and regulatory regimes vary across regions, many experiences based on daily good practice were transferred at project level.

Transnational exchange has improved the knowledge base in HST transport planning in the region and increased the capacity of many partners to deliver better schemes.

Partners reported on the benefits of participation.

“Being part of an EU funded project and having the involvement of the EU commission gives credibility and kudos to what we are doing.”

“Learning from each other improves cross-cultural understanding.”

“It was interesting to see there are common denominators in all our cities that make or break the situation.”

“There is a different approach on the continent to the UK. The UK doesn’t have the same pride in its public realm spaces and doesn’t consider it to be value for money to spend in these areas. More should be done to encourage the ‘continental’ approach.”

“I found the seminar in Utrecht extremely useful; in terms of understanding rail developments in neighbouring EU states.”

“There was a positive cycle at work. An improvement in knowledge, leading to an increase in confidence, leading to an increase in backers and supporters of our goals”



Results: Good Practice

Good Practice in Station Design and Development

A transnational workshop held in Utrecht focused on sharing experience on station design to achieve best possible physical, social and economic integration with the surrounding area. Experts from diverse backgrounds - transport and town planners, architects, as well as representatives of governmental bodies - from each of the five North West European countries (Belgium, France, Germany, The Netherlands and the United Kingdom) came together to critically investigate station design, resulting in 'Top-Tips' for station development:

- Create a project identity and a long term perspective
- Involve landowners and other stakeholders. Make room for private initiatives
- Make strategic choices about synergy, quality, progress, money and maintenance
- Keep partners informed, manage expectations and engage stakeholders in milestone events
- Set deadline, but be flexible
- Avoid rising costs by means of optimism bias and flexible bilateral contracts
- Proactively manage the timing and funding
- Merge practicality and quality. Make use of the city's main attractions and image in the new design
- Engage a project champion with influence to help drive things through more quickly
- Look through the eyes of different user groups and give careful consideration to safety liability, information and communication
- Change the image of the surrounding area by realising a new and attractive mix of functions
- Remain pragmatic and optimistic and don't give up



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Good Practice in Project Management

The HST Team in SEEDA rose to the challenge of leading two of the biggest INTERREG projects in the INTERREG IIIB programme. They kept all 27 partners consulted, informed and actively involved throughout the five years. They managed the complex budget and maximised efficient use of all ERDF resources. They attracted media interest and support from politicians which paved the way for successor projects and bilateral spin offs.

Although HSTconnect and HSTintegration were awarded funding at different times, a number of activities and outputs were undertaken jointly, e.g. the Best Practice Visits, Core Executive meetings and the study work to achieve economies of scale and avoid duplication.

The HST partnership now shows the characteristics of a mature, successful network, built on trust and understanding of each others situations. Problems and issues are tackled and addressed collectively. For example, renegotiating individual partners' involvement in the projects and the reallocation of funding due to changing circumstances were undertaken in a positive and supportive manner. Put simply, everybody wanted the projects to succeed.

Key success factors:

- Strong leadership
- Common goals
- ERDF expertise
- Trust
- Willingness to succeed
- Respecting cultural and linguistic differences

An indication of the strength of the partnership is shown by the numbers of existing partners who want to work together in future projects, as well as the large number of potential partners queuing up to join the HST network.

"High Speed Trains can be and have been a catalyst for economic and social regeneration as well as bringing people of Europe closer together – and quickly"





Results: Influencing Policy

From the outset the HSTintegration and Connect projects never lost sight of the fact that it was just as important to influence strategic policy as to deliver practical investments on the ground. The concrete initiatives undertaken were designed to provide evidence and act as catalysts to convince government and operators that better connectivity makes good sense. Enthusiasm for further investments grew as the authorities saw the positive outcomes. In this way the projects achieved a wide reaching impact within the region and beyond. A few examples are included.

In the UK, SEEDA influenced the commissioning of a study, funded by all the Regional Development Agencies, to look into taking HST North from St. Pancras to Birmingham, Manchester, Newcastle, and ultimately, Scotland. Findings of the study will be presented to UK Government in 2009 and will influence the key decisions for future network development.

The HST projects have led to investment in facilitating Dutch access to the German HST network, and secured political support for this improved connectivity. In Eindhoven, it was the HSTconnect project that succeeded in getting the right people around the table to cooperate on infrastructure development. As a result an accord has been signed between German and Dutch

councils, rail operator and commercial companies to develop the new connections to the German high-speed network.

Through contacts with Eindhoven, partners are looking at new inter-urban transport systems using guided vehicle technology. This knowledge transfer from Dutch partners is being used to inform solutions in developing the western access corridor to London Heathrow airport.

In Reading without the HST Masterplan, the Borough Council would not have been able to submit additional plans to government to attract huge further investment in station access and rail infrastructure.

Results: Influencing Policy

The development of a new pilot service linking Maastricht in the Netherlands and Liege and Brussels in Belgium under HSTconnect gave direct access to the high-speed network and rail networks of both countries. This culminated in an agreement to continue the service for another three years, without ERDF support. It was achieved through the cooperation of both national rail operating companies and infrastructure managers, along with the support of Thalys, an international high-speed train operator.

Links were also developed with Eurostar, the operator of Paris-London-Brussels rail passenger services in order to improve accessibility for the regions. These led to successes such as the favourable amendment of timetables to ensure regional connectivity. These improved communication links with operators will be invaluable as RoCK is implemented.



All project partners have attracted significant media coverage by publicising their successes with launches and events. Three major conferences were held during the lifetime of the project and successfully attracted policy makers and key stakeholders.

In January 2008 HSTintegration hosted a visit from European Commissioner Danuta Hübner. She visited Ashford International station and was briefed on the HST projects developments in the South East of England, including a tour of the Fastrack works on the Thames Way.

Cross River Partnership celebrated the completion of public realm improvements in The Cut near Waterloo station at a breakfast launch attended by several politicians and hosted by Kevin Spacey, Director of the Old Vic theatre.





TOURNAI

La ligne de bus vers Courtrai abandonnée

La création de la ligne de bus Tournai-Courtrai n'aura pas lieu. Le ministre wallon des Transports et du Développement territorial André Antoine l'a précisé ce lundi en commission du parlement wallon au député MR Philippe Bracal.

«Le temps de parcours de telle desserte n'est pas compatible par rapport à la desserte existante», a-t-il expliqué.

En juillet dernier, suite aux conclusions d'un groupe de travail sur la mobilité internationale des demandeurs d'emploi et des travailleurs, André Antoine avait annoncé la mise

en place d'initiatives visant à combler le déficit de mobilité entre la Wallonie et la Flandre et améliorant ainsi les dessertes des poches d'emploi.

Ouverture début décembre

NMBS > Treindienst Maastricht-Brussel

Voortaan is er elke werkdag van 8 tot 2 uur een verbinding tussen Brussel, Luik en Maastricht. De Brussel-Maastricht Express maakt volwaardig deel uit van het internationale NMBS-aanbod. In loop van 2006 was een proefproef begonnen met een trein die van Brussel naar Luik, Visé en Maastricht reed. Gezien het succes van het proefproef werd beslist het traject in het internationale NMBS-aanbod op te nemen.

BOITSFORT SÉCURISATION

La gare sera détruite

Cela fait des semaines que les riverains et le bourgmestre de Watermael-Boitsfort se battent pour sécuriser les abords de la gare de Boitsfort. C'est enfin chose faite. On ne craint plus les accidents et on attend sa destruction. Depuis quelques semaines, la bourgmestre et son échelon de l'Urbanisme Xavier Bismelin font tout pour sécuriser cette gare. Ce week-end, une barrière interdisant l'accès aux véhicules a été placée par l'infanterie Patrimoine, gestionnaire du site.

La zone était particulièrement dangereuse. Jusqu'à samedi, les quads étaient accessibles aux voitures depuis le parking de la gare. Le fait est que bien souvent, des automobilistes malveillants se garaient sur ces quads. Ce qui conduisait à des accidents graves pour les piétons. Un autre souci persiste encore: des poubelles par centaines s'amoncellent sur le sol ainsi que d'autres objets trauchants et

des barres de fer. Du coup, riverains et bourgmestre craignent qu'ils soient utilisés à des fins criminelles. C'est pourquoi, Martine Fayta a demandé à la ministre fédérale des Entreprises Publiques Inge Vermeir de faire disparaître ces objets. "Faitout de leurs nouvelles. Il ne faut jamais de faire quelque chose dans les jours qui arrivent. Ces mesures d'urgence sont urgentes et urgentes sont rassurer les riverains. Ce serait une bonne chose".

PASSE REPORT
Vu la situation sur le terrain, le bourgmestre a également obtenu que la gare de Boitsfort soit détruite plus tôt que prévu. Les risques d'accidents étant constamment présents, la décision a été prise par la SNCB de la démolir dès le mois de février 2009. Normalement, cette destruction, prévue dans le cadre de l'implantation du RER, ne devait être effective que bien plus tard. ■

MAURO BACCIONI



La gare de Boitsfort vit ses derniers instants.

NOUVEAU TRAIN

Bruxelles-Liège-Visé et Maastricht

La SNCB élargit son offre internationale avec l'express Bruxelles-Maastricht à la suite de la signature hier de l'accord définitif entre la SNCB, Maastricht, le Limbourg et les chemins de fer néerlandais.

Concrètement, il y aura chaque jour des liaisons entre Bruxelles, Liège et Maastricht. Les trajets de Maastricht vers Bruxelles dureront 1h18.

L'express Bruxelles-Maastricht fonctionnera chaque jour ouvrable de 8h à 20h entre Bruxelles-Midi et Maastricht. Il s'agit d'une liaison à grande vitesse. Il y a en plus des liaisons entre Liège-Guillemins et Maastricht avec des correspondances à Liège vers Bruxelles.

Un projet pilote avait débuté en 2006 avec un train qui roulait de Bruxelles vers Liège, Visé et Maastricht. Les objectifs de fréquentation ont été atteints: de 660 voyageurs par jour la première année, on est passé à 1.000 la seconde. ■

NOUVEAUTE TRANSPORTS EN COMMUN

Liaison gare/aéroport

En collaboration avec la Région wallonne et l'Aéroport de Liège-Miviers a décidé la création, en 2009, d'une ligne régionale assurant la liaison entre Liège-Guillemins et l'aéroport de Miviers.

Cette desserte importante, assurée par les lignes de Liège-Guillemins, sera assurée au moyen d'un bus 15 places. ■

minis, la rue du Plan Incliné, l'autoroute A602 jusqu'à la sortie "Biermen" avec un passage à proximité du centre de formation du FOREM. Cette ligne circulaire chaque heure entre 6 et 19 heures, tous les jours de l'année. Elle sera assurée au moyen d'un bus 15 places. ■

W.F. FERNANDEZ

The Future

The transnational networking promoted by INTERREG IIIB funding has led to strong bi- and multi-lateral relationships that will outlive the HST projects. A number of initiatives have grown directly out of this exchange.

RoCK - Regions of Connected Knowledge - a new project approved under INTERREG IVB is led by the city of Eindhoven. The new project aims to develop improved, efficient, interoperable and user-friendly railway networks, including transnational connections, in and between knowledge regions - making use of existing infrastructure and developing and implementing smart solutions to improve the network quality.

RoCK will also specifically allow the continuation and future development of the networks made through the life of the HST projects.

The project also incorporates the Transmanche Metro scheme which will ultimately lead to a pilot inter-regional service between Nord Pas de Calais and South East England, to compliment the existing Eurostar services.

Other potential options being explored for future collaboration include "Norse Connect", a project concept to improve infrastructure assessment methods in the light of climate change and look at HST development in Scandinavia. "Transenergy", a collaboration between Belgium, the Netherlands and the UK would look at the integration of renewable energy systems into new transport networks of next generation zero/low emission/hybrid vehicles.

For the vast majority of project partners the HST projects were the first experience of transnational exchange and ERDF funding. The learning curve was steep. But at the final Steering Group meeting all partners reported that they were now moving on to further collaborations, many at cross border level, and into more complex transport initiatives related to the high-speed train network. HSTintegration and HSTconnect have built the capacity of cities and individuals to continue to develop the work started here.



"We must find ways to keep this group together because it has been very successful"

Fact file

HSTintegration and HSTconnect were funded under INTERREG IIIB North West Europe. Match funding came from national, regional and local sources.

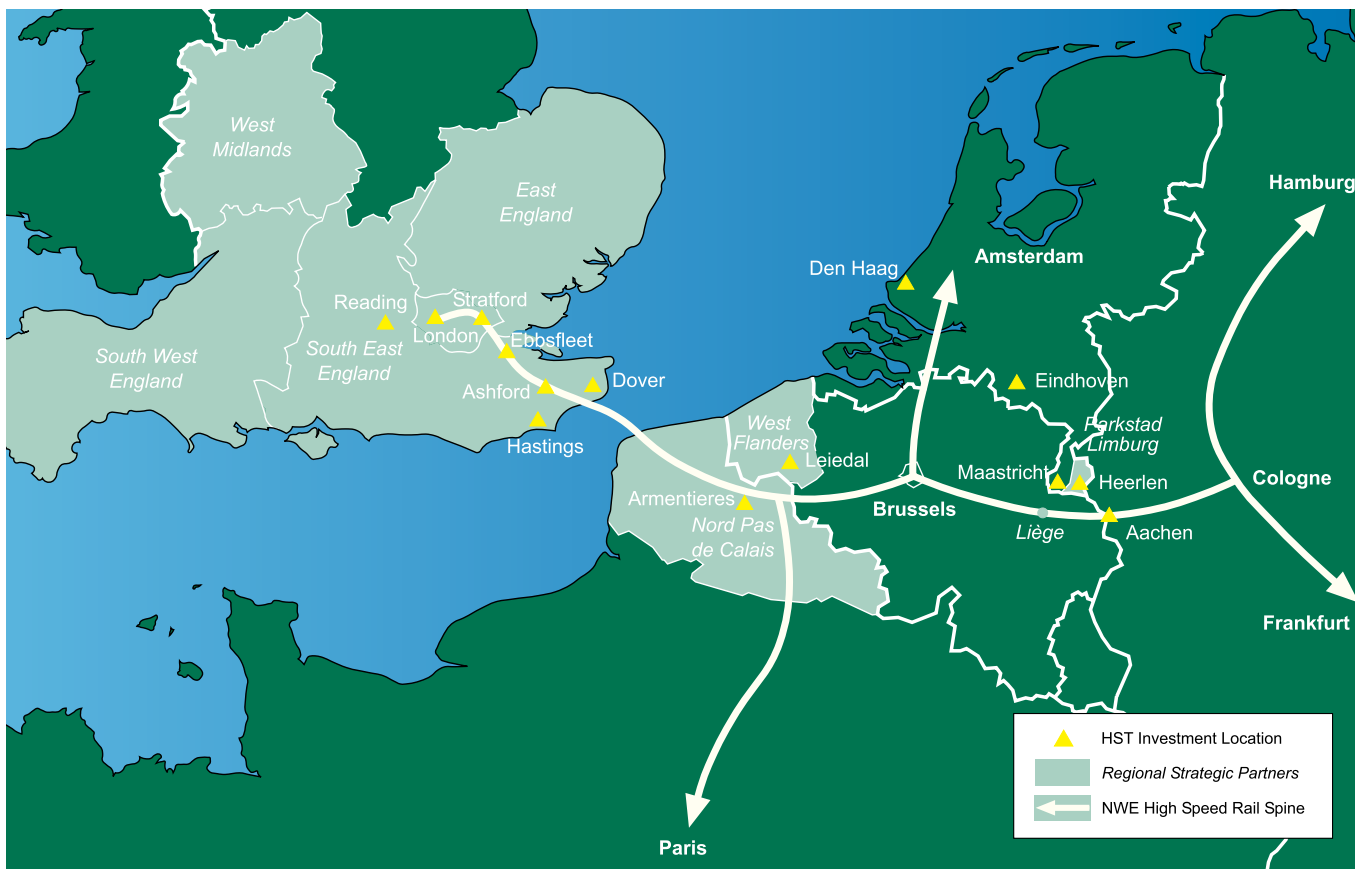
- **27 partners, from 5 countries**
- **€50m total budget**
- **3 studies**
- **12 investments**
- **3 International workshops and conferences**

Websites:

www.highspeedtrains.net

www.rock-project.eu

www.nweurope.eu





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This booklet summarises the achievements of the HSTconnect and HSTintegration projects. Through targeted infrastructure investment offering improvements to station environments and accessibility and an allied research programme, the projects sought to maximise the opportunities offered by high-speed rail services in North West Europe and contribute to future sustainable growth across the region.

Credits

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