



Spatial Economics Research Centre

Wednesday, 23 May 2012

No Alternative to High Speed Rail?

So, the parliamentary group whose "objectives are to raise awareness of *the need for* high-speed rail among parliamentarians" has [published a report](#) saying that we, er, need high speed rail. I think it would be fair to say that this is not a huge surprise.

I won't reiterate [the overall arguments](#) that I have made many times before. One specific comment, however: by the time HS2 is finished there will be congestion all over the transport network (see the Eddington report). The costs and benefits of easing that congestion are quite well captured by standard cost-benefit analysis. On the basis of standard cost-benefit analysis HS2 does badly relative to other projects. In other words, if the argument in favour of doing HS2 are about capacity (as this report suggests) then HS2 should be far down our list of priorities relative to other investments that address future capacity problems on the transport network.

Posted by [Prof Henry G. Overman](#) on [Wednesday, May 23, 2012](#)

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