

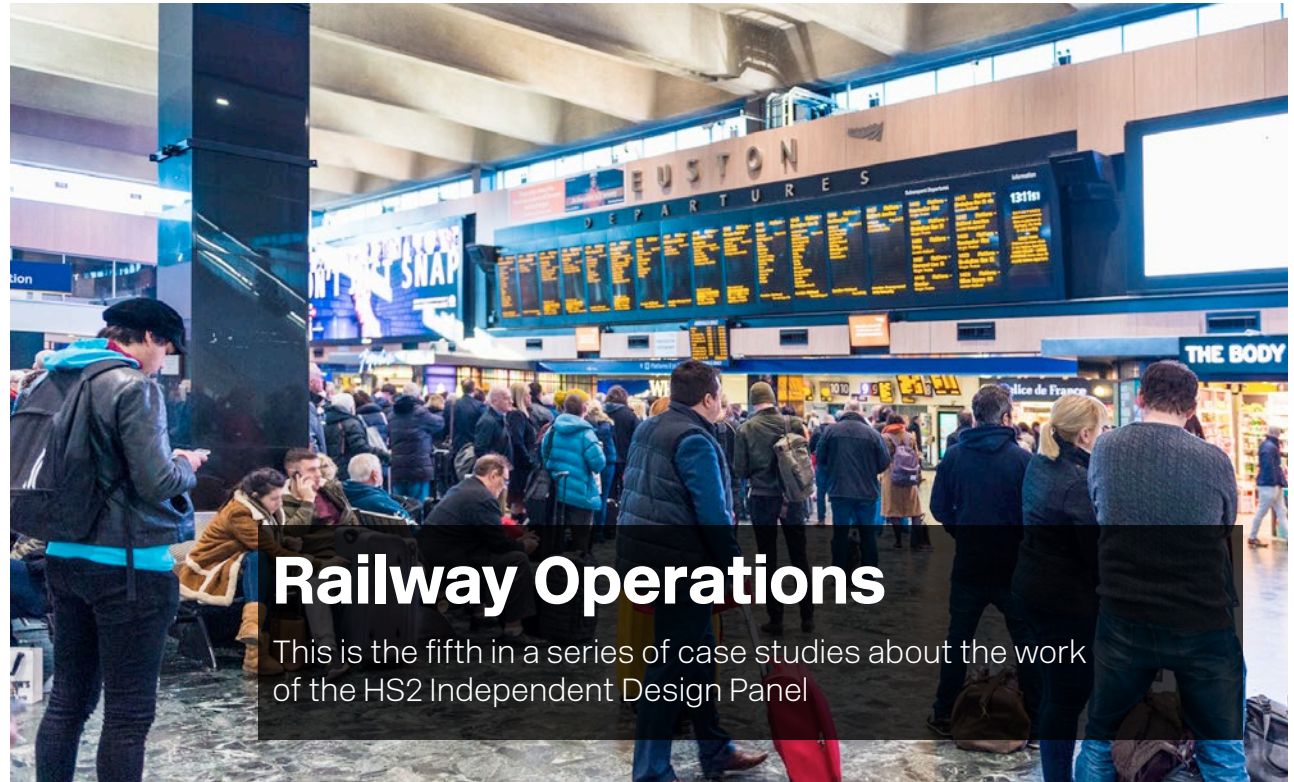
Case Study #5

HS2 INDEPENDENT
DESIGN PANEL

HS2 Ltd published its Proxy Operator Strategy in January 2017. This sets out the principles and requirements for customer service and for railway operations, including the relationship between HS2 and the rest of the railway network. The document aims to ensure that the needs of end users (principally passengers) and future operators of HS2 are properly reflected in the development of design and delivery proposals.

The HS2 Independent Design Panel held three review meetings to discuss versions of the draft document. These took place in October 2015, January and November 2016.

Process: the HS2 Independent Design Panel provides support in a number of ways, from a full review to individual mentoring. In this case, workshop review meetings were held with three or four panel members. The panel members attending these meetings included experts in: consultation and engagement; marketing and customer experience; and digital service design. HS2 Ltd representatives from railway operations, customer experience, rolling stock and inclusive design teams attended the meetings, along with a market research consultant. HS2 staff and their consultants presented the approach to railway operations, as set out in the evolving Proxy Operator Strategy document, for discussion with the panel.



Railway Operations

This is the fifth in a series of case studies about the work of the HS2 Independent Design Panel

Project headlines

- The HS2 railway operations team has produced a Proxy Operator Strategy
- This aims to ensure the needs of end users and operators of HS2 are reflected in its design

- The panel emphasised the need to innovate to deliver new levels of customer experience
- The completed document will inform design work on many aspects of HS2 including rolling stock, ticketing, digital services, and station design

Panel comments

The panel endorsed the ambition shown in the Proxy Operator Strategy. It encouraged HS2 Ltd to look beyond current expectations of a railway journey, informing their plans by profiling the likely needs of future customers, building in new and future technologies, and creating a service with the flexibility to be tailored and to change over time.

Some of the comments made by the panel, which have informed the final document, are outlined below.

1. Customer experience

The panel encouraged HS2 Ltd to base design requirements on substantial customer research, with the aim of innovating to meet future customer needs. Market research has informed design in areas such as luggage, seating, catering and ticketing, but the panel asked that observational studies should also be carried out, looking at what passengers do as well as what they say.

The future demographic of HS2 users is important, with a likelihood that more passengers will be older, and potentially with more health problems.

HS2 also aims to attract new passengers who do not currently use trains. These people are likely to have different service expectations, and these need to be understood.

2. Rolling stock design

The panel was keen to emphasise the importance of creating a minimum standard of experience on HS2 trains, rather than a minimum standard of rolling stock design. Achieving this will require attention to intangible aspects of customer experience – how it will feel to travel by HS2.

Collaboration should be enabled between designers and manufacturers - to help achieve the levels of innovation required. Responsibilities that could fall between the train builder and train operator should also be anticipated and addressed. The turn around time between a train arriving, and being prepared for its next departure would be one example of this.

The panel also agreed that the scope for innovation would be enhanced by pushing back the tender process for HS2 rolling stock as far as possible. This should help ensure trains are designed as close as possible to the HS2 opening date, and incorporate the latest technologies and design standards.

3. Health and environment

The panel asked HS2 Ltd to innovate in both public health and environmental performance. Techniques used in aircraft to prevent germs from circulating in air conditioning could be equally applicable to HS2. Opportunities to introduce new technologies, for example hygienic nano-coatings on surfaces, should be investigated.

The panel also asked HS2 Ltd to take a systematic approach to reducing the environmental impact of railway operations. This could include looking at solutions such as bio-toilets, which are already used by other European rail operators.

