

## Introduction by Professor Sadie Morgan

Shortly after the HS2 Independent Design Panel was established in 2016, a Governance Advisory Group was set up to help keep the operation and effectiveness of the panel under review. Meeting quarterly, the Group also helps to inform reporting of key issues to HS2 Ltd senior management and the Department for Transport.

The Governance Advisory Group includes myself (as Chair of the panel), Tony Burton (Vice Chair) and the recently appointed Deputy Chairs, Xanthe Quayle and David Ubaka.

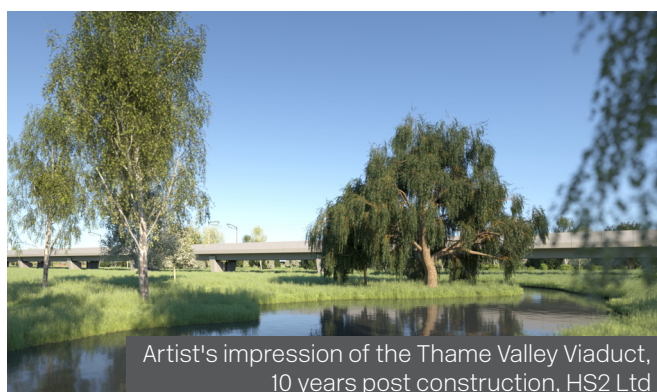
## Top 5 recommendations

At the most recent quarterly meeting, held in March, we identified and reflected on the key themes and issues which have emerged from Design Panel meetings during the previous quarter.

### Sharing design lessons

The cross-fertilisation of lessons and design solutions is an essential component of any effective design development process, particularly for a project on the scale of HS2.

The sharing of ideas between schemes, areas and contractors has the potential to offer efficiencies, and to help ensure all aspects of HS2 deliver the design quality standards required by the HS2 Design Vision.



Artist's impression of the Thame Valley Viaduct, 10 years post construction, HS2 Ltd

Robust processes are needed to facilitate and encourage the sharing of design ideas. These will be important to the delivery of high quality route-wide approaches, such as the Common Design Elements, as well as to site-specific designs.



Schedule 17 designs for Curzon Street Station, HS2 Ltd

### Design assurance post-Schedule 17

Overall, the panel continues to be supportive of the design quality promised by the Schedule 17 stage designs it has commented on. However, Schedule 17 is only a moment in time, and a significant amount of design work will be required before completion.

Assurances are needed that any opportunities illustrated, but not fixed, at Schedule 17 stage will be realised. Landscape design is an example of a key aspect of design that is often subject to a later approval process.

It is important that mechanisms are in place to ensure the design quality and benefits promised at Schedule 17 are delivered.

### Response to the climate emergency

HS2 aims to be the most sustainable high-speed rail network in the world. While progress has been made towards this goal, awareness of how urgently a response is needed to the climate emergency has greatly increased since HS2 was first conceived, both within the industry and among the wider public.

In January 2022, HS2 Ltd launched an Environmental Sustainability Vision, setting out a vision for cutting carbon emissions and for nature recovery.

As HS2 Ltd's response to the climate emergency evolves, it is important that mechanisms are in place to ensure all those involved in the delivery of HS2, including the supply chain, can embrace their responsibilities in responding to the global emergency.



Schedule 17 designs for Old Oak Commons, HS2 Ltd

## Maximising regeneration benefits

The success of HS2 will depend to a great extent on the way it maximises opportunities for regeneration – a 'catalyst for growth' – delivering a positive, lasting legacy for the nation.

The panel has warmly welcomed the work of the HS2 Urban Design and Integration team, which lays the foundations for future conversations with stakeholders and plays an important role in identifying potential benefits for areas along the route.

Urban integration studies are a means of understanding the context surrounding HS2 and identifying opportunities. It is important that mechanisms are in place to ensure opportunities are delivered, both within the HS2 'red line' boundary and beyond.

Stakeholders such as local planning authorities and community groups will be essential to the delivery of many of the opportunities identified, and so should play a central role in shaping ideas through mutual discussion.

## Design leadership on customer experience

HS2 requires the design of new trains, stations and railway systems. This offers an important opportunity to innovate, and create a step change in the customer experience of travelling by train.

HS2 Ltd has shown strong design leadership in developing the HS2 Customer Experience Vision. It is essential that this work remains at the forefront of thinking and decision making, including aspects such as station signage.

In future discussions with the recently appointed train manufacturer, for example, the focus should be on the 'art of the possible', building on the high-quality work HS2 Ltd has completed to date. As has been seen in other parts of the project, harnessing fresh perspectives, for example from artists, could also provide insight into potential design solutions to help address challenges which may arise.

This will require robust design leadership from HS2 Ltd, setting clear expectations for the delivery of the customer experience vision, and for ways of working to achieve this.

## Looking ahead

Alongside Phase One schemes approaching Schedule 17 stage, a key focus for the Design Panel's work in the coming months will be train design and Phase 2a.

The panel continues to offer its support to HS2 Ltd, championing the role design can play in ensuring the project can realise its full potential.



Frame Projects  
Secretariat to the  
HS2 Independent  
Design Panel

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