

January 26, 2012 8:10 pm

# Scotland calls on Westminster to extend HS2

By Mark Odell, Transport Correspondent

---

The Scottish government has called on Westminster to commit to extending the proposed high speed rail line between London and the north of England to Glasgow and Edinburgh, with Holyrood offering to pick up half the extra £17bn bill.

Under current proposals, the UK government is planning to spend £32.7bn building the line in two stages between London, Birmingham, Manchester and Leeds by 2032. But Alex Neil, cabinet secretary for infrastructure in the Scottish government, said those plans should be revised and “include Scotland from the very beginning”.

He estimated the line – High Speed 2 – would generate £24bn in economic benefits for Scotland if it was extended to the country’s two main cities. Speaking in London, the day after the Scottish government proposed a 2014 ballot on independence, Mr Neil said Holyrood would be prepared to invest £8bn in extending the line. Initial estimates put the cost of doing this at £17bn.

Justine Greening, transport secretary, said the economic benefits from HS2 “show why we should stick together” but stopped short of committing to extend the route to Scotland. “We do see a stronger case for a longer, bigger network and I am very much looking forward to talking to the Scottish government about how we can progress,” she said.

**Printed from:** <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/29d0f686-484e-11e1-941c-00144feabdc0.html>

Print a single copy of this article for personal use. Contact us if you wish to print more to distribute to others.

© THE FINANCIAL TIMES LTD 2012 FT and ‘Financial Times’ are trademarks of The Financial Times Ltd.