

Press release

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Foster + Partners and Halcrow to publish Thames Hub vision

World-leading architects Foster + Partners and global infrastructure consultants Halcrow have been collaborating on a self-funded £100,000 study to produce a detailed vision for The Thames Hub this would bring together rail freight connections between the UK's main sea ports; a 150 million passenger airport to replace Heathrow; a tidal energy barrage and a new flood protection barrier.

The long-term vision, which spans the next 50 years into 2060, is designed to reinforce the United Kingdom's position as the world's leading commercial, tourist and financial centres, ensuring that the country remains globally competitive in the late 21st century and beyond. The Foster + Partners and Halcrow vision represents a significant development of the Mayor of London's call for a new airport in the Estuary, while developing the capacity across all of the UK's transport modes and trade routes.

The team's vision and an initial assessment of the proposals will be released in September 2011.

Lord Foster, founder and chairman of Foster + Partners, said: These visionary proposals are far from future fantasy. They are both essential and down to earth. When you look at the eastwards thrust of London's infrastructure, with the Channel Tunnel and the Olympics, you can see how it would be possible to create a 24-hour airport. This move would greatly improve the quality of life for Londoners by reducing pollution and improving security. It would also allow London to compete with rapidly expanding airports in Europe and the Middle East. The arguments are extraordinarily persuasive and the precedents are also compelling. More than 10 years ago Hong Kong built what was then the world's largest airport at Chek Lap Kok, an island reclaimed from the sea - in just four years.

Halcrow group board director, David Kerr said: The Thames Hub would provide a major economic boost for Kent and Essex, with the creation of hundreds of thousands of jobs over a number of years and provide noise and air pollution relief for London's population. The proposals would make a significant contribution to the UK's commitment to reduce carbon emissions. If the UK is to remain globally competitive, these proposals need to be seriously considered.

The Foster + Partners and Halcrow Thames Hub vision is supported by renowned economist Bridget Rosewell, chairman of Volterra Consulting and founder member of The Thames Estuary Research and Development Company (TESTRAD).

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Huw Thomas, partner at Foster + Partners and Halcrow project director, Ben Hamer are available for interview.

For further information
please contact Katy Harris at
Foster + Partners,
T +44 (0)20 7738 0455
F +44 (0)20 7738 1107
E press@fosterandpartners.com

For further information please contact: Garry A Whitaker Communications manager Halcrow Group Limited D +44 1793 816253 M +44 7803 123202 E whitakerga@halcrow.com

Katy Harris Partner, Head of Communications Foster + Partners T +44 (0) 20 7738 0455 D +44 (0) 20 943 6266 E press@fosterandpartners.com

The Thames Hub The long-term proposals, which represent a significant development of the Mayor of Londons call for a new estuarial airport, have the potential to transform UK trade and provide a major stimulus to employment and economic growth across the whole country. Around 50% of the UKs trade passes through ports within 50km of the Thames Estuary and the infrastructure hub and linkages would provide significant economic opportunities for all regions of the UK. The vision includes: using capacity freed up by the UKs proposed new high-speed network to significantly improve rail freight connections between North West ports, such as Liverpool, logistics distribution centres in the Midlands and ports in, or close to, the Thames Estuary, such London Gateway, Tilbury and Felixstowe. a new 150 million passenger, four runway, airport to accommodate growing air travel demand and which would eventually replace Heathrow airport, with high speed rail links to and road upgrades a tidal energy barrage a flood protection barrier, removing the need to replace the ageing Thames Barrier.

Halcrow Group Ltd, Halcrow Halcrow specialises in the provision of professional planning, design and management services for infrastructure development worldwide. Our purpose is to sustain and improve the quality of peoples lives.

A leading consultancy in transport, development and natural resources, Halcrow employs around 6,500 people and generates an annual turnover of about £500 million. The company has a well-established network of more than 80 offices around the world, from which we contribute to commissions in over 90 countries.

The company is owned by The Halcrow Trust and employee shareholders, making it one of the largest independent consultancies in the UK. We provide consultancy engineering services to a full spectrum of private and public-sector organisations, including government departments, public sector authorities and utilities, industrial and commercial companies, international funding agencies, financial institutions and private individuals.

Halcrows refreshed business structure consists of three practice areas: transportation, natural resources, and development, and four regions: Europe, Middle East and Africa, Asia and Australasia, and the Americas. halcrow.com

Foster + Partners Foster + Partners, led by Founder and Chairman Norman Foster, is based in London with project offices worldwide. The practice has pioneered a sustainable approach to architecture through a wide range of work, from urban masterplans to product design. Projects include the worlds largest airport terminal at Beijing, Swiss Res London Headquarters, Millau Viaduct in France, the German Parliament in the Reichstag, Berlin, The Great Court at Londons British Museum, and Headquarters for HSBC in Hong Kong and London. The practice has received over 600 awards for excellence and won over 100 national and international competitions since its inception in 1967.

The last decades have witnessed key shifts in public attitudes to ecology and energy consumption. We

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Foster + Partners,
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E press@fosterandpartners.com

have always anticipated these trends, pioneering design solutions that use totally renewable sources of energy and offer dramatic reductions in CO2 emissions. Environmental awareness is an integral part of the practices culture as it evolves to meet the challenges of the next forty years. fosterandpartners.com

Bridget Rosewell Bridget Rosewell is a professional economist and business woman. She has founded several economic consultancies, all of which are still successfully operating, and is now also a non-executive director of a major financial institution and chairs its Audit Committee.

Her career has trodden the interface between public policy development and implementation and the contribution that the private sector can make. Her research interests focus on the economic performance of local economies, the performance of markets, and business organisations. She is especially interested in the application of the tools of complex systems analysis to these issues and in questions of validation.

Bridget's current business interests include chairing Volterra Consulting and ensuring its successful growth, alongside non-executive roles and providing professional assistance to a variety of clients. Bridget is currently the Consultant Chief Economic Adviser to the Greater London Authority and between 2002 and 2008 she was the Chief Economist to the GLA. bridgetrosewell.com

The Thames Estuary Research and Development Company (TESTRAD) Founded by Doug Oakervee and Bridget Rosewell, The Thames Estuary Research and Development Company has been established to make sure that the UK is in the best possible position to make good use of the infrastructure possibilities offered by the Thames Estuary. These include the need for flood defence, for use of wind and tidal power, for more extensive crossings of the Estuary by road and rail, for shipping and potentially for airport facilities.

The impetus to form the company arose from the report which Doug Oakervee undertook to prepare for the Mayor of London on the feasibility of an Estuary Airport and which revealed the need for much wider investigation. testrad.co.uk

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