



Picture: Rail Link Engineering

Euro rail link

The picture above shows what Ebbsfleet station on the Channel Tunnel rail link might look like.

The rail link will be a powerful generator for development as it will not only bring Eurostar and other high-speed European trains but also a raft of new high-speed domestic services from Kent into London.

Picture right is the complex new track layout which is being constructed in the King's Cross-St Pancras area of London. The new international station at St Pancras is also taking shape.

When complete in 2007, the £5.2 billion CTRL will halve journey times from central London to the Channel Tunnel.

The CTRL will create three new international stations at St Pancras, Ebbsfleet and Stratford, in addition to connecting with the existing Ashford International.

Work on section one of the CTRL, started in October 1998, and is the 46 miles from the Channel Tunnel to Fawkham Junction in north Kent. It opened in September this year.

Prime Minister Tony Blair said: "The imagination and vision that has created this project should give us some optimism and some spur as to what we could do in the future."

"We need to renovate a large part of our transport infrastructure in this country and we have shown through the Channel Tunnel rail link that it can happen."

Eurostar's Paul Charles said: "This could clearly be a blueprint for other lines in the future."

Transport Secretary Alistair Darling said: "If you put some money into the railways and manage them properly, you can get a lot more out of them."

Consultation starts soon on the prospects for a new London-Scotland high-speed rail line.

Regular Eurostar 186mph services were expected to begin using section one of the CTRL from 28 September.

Section two, which was begun in July 2001, extends the new high-speed line 24 miles into London's St Pancras.

