

Rail link: All to play for, say MPs

CAMPAIGNERS for a Leeds to London high speed rail line today declared "there is everything to play for".

A delegation of city MPs this week held a "useful" meeting with Transport Secretary Lord Adonis in which they stressed that a super-fast rail line should travel from London to Leeds without first going via Manchester.

Crucially, the cabinet minister used the meeting to talk down a Network Rail study, which said the first 200mph line should stop at Birmingham, Manchester, Glasgow and Edinburgh but completely bypass Yorkshire.

Policy

Yesterday's meeting at the Department of Transport has attended by Fabian Hamilton (Leeds North East; Lab), George Mudie (Leeds East; Lab), John Battle (Leeds West; Lab) and Greg Mulholland (Leeds North West; Lib Dem).

Mr Hamilton said: "He was at pains to say that the Network Rail proposal is not official policy and has no Government sanction.

"He was interested in our very strong argument that the first high speed line should effectively follow the M1."

Mr Mulholland said: "The message was loud and clear - that the case for direct high-speed rail to Leeds is a very strong one and must be seriously considered by the Government.

"We in Leeds are not prepared to accept anything else."