



Department
for Transport

Baroness Randerson
House of Lords
London
SW1A 0AA

From the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State
Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon

Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road
London
SW1P 4DR

Tel: 0300 330 3000
E-Mail: Lord.Ahmad_PUSS@dft.gsi.gov.uk

Web site: www.gov.uk/dft

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Dear Jemy

Due to the limited time remaining at the end of the Second Reading of the High Speed Rail (London to West Midlands) Bill, I was unable to respond to many of the points raised during the debate. I therefore write to outline my response to your comments where I was unable to do so during the debate itself.

We are fully confident in HS2 Ltd's ability to deliver a world class railway in HS2, under the able leadership of Sir David Higgins and Simon Kirby, truly world-class leaders in the construction industry. They will ensure that we have the rigorous controls in place to allow us to constantly bear down on costs and challenge our suppliers to ensure we deliver long-term value for money for the taxpayer as well as a world-class railway for all our passengers, stakeholders and communities along the line. With regards to costs, we are committed to delivering value for money. The November 2015 Spending Review confirmed a budget for the whole of HS2 of £55.7bn at 2015 prices. The budget has not gone up – it has simply been updated in line with inflation.

You raised the issue of a link between HS2 and HS1, Following completion of the HS2-HS1 Connectivity Study last year, we have concluded that the provision of an enhanced walking route between Euston and St. Pancras would provide a positive option for passengers connecting between HS2 and HS1 services. This option will provide HS2 passengers arriving at Euston with access to the full range of international services that operate from St Pancras, providing passengers with maximum flexibility.

The enhanced walking route will also complement the underground works already included as part of HS2, which will provide convenient step-free access for passengers transiting between Euston and St Pancras via the Circle Line. We have asked HS2 Limited to work in partnership with Camden Council to work up detailed proposals for the proposed walking route. In addition, assurances provided to the Camden Council include the provision of £3 million of funding to support the creation of the enhanced walking route.

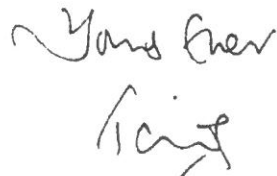
You also raised additional investment in the north alongside HS2; through strong partnership working between northern authorities and my Department, significant investment has been secured for the two new franchises in northern England which will provide more frequent services to more places, with improved journey times. On top of the over £1 billion committed for the Transpennine Upgrade and Northern Hub programmes, the new Northern and Transpennine Express franchises will see a £1.2 billion boost to rail services.

In addition to the complete removal of the outdated 'Pacers' by the end of 2019, and investment of £400 million in 281 brand-new air-conditioned carriages, the new Northern franchise will see more than 2,000 extra services each week, with around 400 additional Sunday services. This will include new direct journeys from Bradford to Wakefield, Sheffield, Nottingham, Liverpool and Hull; from Leeds to Chester and Bridlington; from Lincoln to Leeds; and from Manchester Airport to Warrington, Bradford and Halifax.

The new TransPennine Express franchise will deliver 220 new carriages, equivalent to 44 trains and worth more than £400 million, providing fast 125 mph services across the network.

I hope this answers the points mentioned sufficiently.

A copy of this letter has been placed in the libraries of both Houses.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Yous Gher' followed by a stylized flourish.

LORD AHMAD OF WIMBLEDON