



Department
for Transport

Lord Bradshaw
House of Lords
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From the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State
Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon

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Dear Lord Bradshaw

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.

With regards to whether the HS2 station and approach could be within the existing Euston station footprint, HS2 Ltd has undertaken a review of providing HS2 platforms within the existing Euston station and the conclusion is that it is not feasible to do so. Such a scheme could not be built without closing most or all of the existing Euston station for an extended period during construction.

HS2 Ltd have also reviewed proposals for connecting to and using existing lines to run into Euston. The conclusion of this work is that this would have substantially detrimental impacts on existing services which could not be operated with an acceptable degree of reliability or flexibility, and could not accommodate the proposed 2026 West Coast Mainline (WCML) train services. Importantly, such a proposal would not provide capacity for future growth – reducing the benefits of HS2 and not tackling the longer term problem of capacity on our main north-south rail lines.

Such a proposal would also be expected to add approximately 2 years to the construction programme and cost significantly more than the current scheme.

You also suggested the Select Committee, once established, immediately commission work to assess how to maximise the removal of excavated material in London by rail. HS2 Ltd has already committed to the London Borough of Camden during the Select Committee process in the House of Commons to undertake such a study, and we expect that work to be complete this summer.

We recognise that this is a key issues for the residents of Camden. Whilst our view is that Camden should not be last in the order of petitions to be heard by the Select Committee, it is only right that their petitions are scheduled at a time that allows petitioners to make their arguments in the light of the results of this and other studies and the promoter's proposed response to them.

Finally, I have written separately to you and other Noble Lords in relation to the powers of the HS2 Select Committee, including the appropriateness of that Committee appointing an independent adviser on rail matters.

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

I hope this answers the points mentioned sufficiently.

Yours sincerely,
J Ahmad of Wimbledon

LORD AHMAD OF WIMBLEDON