



Department
for Transport

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

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Dear Lord Turnbull

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 respect to your concerns regarding the design of the HS2 Euston Station and line as it approaches the station, our proposals are the culmination of studies and analyses undertaken over a period six years to consider the full range of options for a London terminus and then station design options around Euston. We have aimed to strike a balance between satisfying technical and operational requirements, incorporating appropriate mitigation, managing the conflicting interests of passengers and local residents, and seeking value for money.

Most HS2 passengers will be travelling to and through central London and a terminus at Euston and an intermediate station at Old Oak Common will provide effectively for this requirement. At all the HS2 stations, including Euston, there will be exceptional long term opportunities for regeneration and enhancement of the area within walking distance. There will be scope for further modifications, improvements and mitigations of the Euston station proposals as the scheme progresses through detailed design and construction planning.

With regards to whether the HS2 station and approach could be within the existing Euston station footprint (part of the 'Euston Express' proposal), HS2 Ltd has undertaken a full review of the

Euston Express proposals and 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. A report by HS2 Ltd on the Euston Express proposal can be found at http://www.parliament.uk/documents/commons-committees/hs2/Correspondence/2015-16/Euston_Express_petition_proposal.pdf.

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, the Euston Express 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.

The proposed arrangement of the Euston Express scheme would be expected to add approximately 2 years to the construction programme and cost significantly more than the current scheme.

The alternate HSUK Euston proposals were built on the premise of an alternate high speed line alignment that broadly followed the M1 as opposed to the hybrid Bill proposals and therefore against the principle of the Bill agreed at Second Reading in the Commons. The proposals also suffered from the major flaw of needing to divert services during construction without a clear plan on how this could be achieved.

There is an extensive level of mitigation of the construction impacts planned around the new HS2 Euston Station as set out in the Environmental Statement and Supplementary Environmental Statement to the Bill. Alongside this the project's Code of Construction Practice and the Environmental Minimum Requirements will provide an effective level of protection for Camden residents against the construction impacts around Euston. Finally, as the London Borough of Camden themselves have stated, the over 100 additional assurances they have secured from HS2 Ltd on key measures (over and above the previously mentioned protections) will mitigate even further the construction effects on the lives and livelihoods of local residents and businesses.

I hope this answers the points mentioned sufficiently.

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

Yours sincerely,

J. Ahmad of Wimbledon

LORD AHMAD OF WIMBLEDON