



18th April 2014

## **HS2: Is the government prematurely closing off options?**

There is concern that the government may be prematurely closing off options for connecting HS1 to HS2

"We support the principle of a connection between HS1 and HS2, because connectivity is essential in making high-speed rail work" said Bruce Williamson from the campaign group Railfuture. "It's right that the previous proposal for an HS1-HS 2 link via the North London Line has been scrapped, because it was never going to work satisfactorily and it represented poor value for money. That doesn't of course mean that we don't need a link at all, and we share Lord Berkeley's concern that the Secretary of State for Transport may be prematurely closing off alternative options"

Lord Berkeley has written to Secretary of State for Transport Patrick McLoughlin expressing concern about instructions to the Transport Select Committee, who have been told not to consider submissions as to "*whether or not there should be a spur from Old Oak Common to the Channel Tunnel Rail Link*"

He writes: "Whereas I fully support the exclusion of discussion on the HS1-2 link which you proposed to remove from the Bill, excluding discussion on alternatives could seriously jeopardise any future proposal to link Old Oak Common to HS1."

"We agree with him" said Bruce Williamson "It's important that we don't prejudice a future HS1-HS2 connection by ruling out options. Schemes such as Lord Berkeley's Euston Cross offer the opportunity for a central London super hub with hugely improved connectivity. Failing to include passive provision at an early stage could prove very costly in the long-term. Indeed, Sir David Higgins suggests that passive provision should be included for a future link, so he would appear to be slightly at odds with the Secretary of State here"

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The full text of Lord Berkeley's letter is below:



From Lord Berkeley  
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Rt Hon Patrick McLoughlin MP  
Secretary of State for Transport  
Department for transport  
76 Marsham St, London SW1

12 April 2014

Dear Patrick,

### **HS2 Bill - Instruction to Select Committee**

I have read with interest the various motions which you tabled in the Commons last week, and commend you for seeking to progress the bill as quickly as possible.

However, one section, Paragraph 29, Instruction to Select Committee, '2. *The Committee shall not hear any Petition to the extent that it relates to whether or not there should be a spur from Old Oak Common to the Channel Tunnel Rail Link*' causes me serious concern.

Whereas I fully support the exclusion of discussion on the HS1-2 link which you proposed to remove from the Bill, excluding discussion on alternatives could seriously jeopardise any future proposal to link Old Oak Common to HS1.

As you know, there are many options for the route of a HS1-2 link, including directly to Stratford with or without central London station(s), and the Euston Cross proposal promoted by Lord Bradshaw and myself. This could provide such a link if the HS2 tunnels to Euston are moved to join the West Coast Main Line in the Queens Park area; we expect to support a petition on this. However, whichever route is chosen, I am sure that you agree that a good passenger interchange between HS1 and OOC is highly desirable in the long term. If such a link were able to take regional trains, such as an extension of the Javelin services to the NW, that would significantly improve the cost/benefit of such a link. Clearly there is much more discussion to be had on this.

The problem is that, if such a link is to connect to OOC, then there needs to be at least passive provision made for it wherever it may diverge from the main tunnels to Euston, if one is to avoid serious disruption to HS2 services later. HS2 has rightly maintained that all tunnelling from OOC eastwards must start from there because there is nowhere suitable to erect a tunnel boring machine (TBM) near Euston or beyond. Since the TBMs must be erected on what is to be the future station platform area at OOC, any tunnelling or preliminary works for a future HS1 link clearly must be completed before

the station is fitted out and trains can operate from there up HS2 and to Euston. If there is ever to be a link to join up with HS1, either a single or double track, then this will also need to be in tunnel, starting from OOC. If there is to be a junction further east in the tunnel from OOC to Euston, then this also needs building before fitting out of the main tunnel.

I think it would benefit the HS2 project greatly if this Select Committee were able to hear petitions about options for alternative links to HS1 and passive provision for them. Without this, people will believe that the HS1-2 link will never be built, and that they will be condemned for many decades to the trudge along Euston Road from Euston to St Pancras as the only link between two parts of the European High Speed Rail network!

I know that a number of MPs and other experts are very concerned about this proposed Instruction, and do urge you either to modify it or accept an amendment from a member of parliament to allow the Select Committee to consider alternatives proposals for the HS1 link.

Yours, Tony



Lord Berkeley

Cc Lord Bradshaw

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**Notes to editors:**

Railfuture is the UK's leading independent organisation campaigning for better rail services for both passengers and freight.

Railfuture's website can be found at: [www.railfuture.org.uk](http://www.railfuture.org.uk)

Follow Railfuture on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/Railfuture>

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