



Department
for Transport

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From the Minister of State
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Dear Andy,

Thank you for your letter of 6 October to Mark Harper about High Speed Two (HS2) and Old Oak Common station. I am replying as the Minister responsible for this issue.

I appreciate your comments and concerns. As set out by the Prime Minister in the Network North plan, the Government will re-direct all funds intended for the HS2 route beyond Birmingham towards wider transport enhancements, providing unprecedented levels of investment in our towns, cities, and rural areas.

With regard to the offer for London, the Government remains committed to completing HS2 from Birmingham to London Euston, subject to securing the necessary private funding, capturing benefits for customers and taxpayers.

Regarding Old Oak Common, Phase 1 remains on track to deliver initial high-speed services between Old Oak Common in west London and Birmingham Curzon Street by 2033. It is still the plan for Old Oak Common to operate as a temporary terminus for HS2 throughout the mid-2030s and the station has been designed to facilitate interchange numbers expected during this time.

As you know, Old Oak Common will have excellent connectivity, with frequent Elizabeth Line services enabling easy, quick access to central London. For instance, early calculations indicate that it will be faster for passengers to travel to Heathrow Airport and Canary Wharf from Old Oak Common than it would be from Euston. Regarding level boarding, OOC is designed to provide step free access from street to platform, with boarding level on the HS2 platforms and via an assistance ramp elsewhere. The Great Western Mainline platforms, which have been designed to Network Rail main-line standards, are challenging to provide level boarding, due to a need to accommodate multiple types of passenger and freight rolling stock during normal timetable running, planned two-track operations, and periods of

operational disruption. However, officials are engaged with Transport for London to assess the viability of possible technical solutions.

While Old Oak Common has been planned to connect to Old Oak Common Lane primarily, with surface access provided by cycling, bus and taxis, there remains a future opportunity to provide further connections to the east as regeneration plans and business cases develop. My officials are continuing to work with Old Oak Park Royal Development Corporation to enable development and regeneration of the wider Old Oak West site.

The re-allocation of HS2 funding to other projects is still being determined. As such, I cannot yet commit to any additional funding from the cancellation of HS2 being redirected to the Hammersmith Bridge restoration project.

However, the Government remains committed to the Hammersmith Bridge restoration project and has now provided the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham (LBHF) with almost £10 million of funding to date. This includes the £4 million my Department invested toward emergency works following the full closure of the bridge, a further £2.93 million of funding granted to LBHF for the stabilisation works, and £2.5 million for recent geo-technical investigations. In addition, considerable progress has been made with the stabilisation works, which are now nearing completion.

I am grateful for your correspondence and I hope this reply is helpful.

Yours ever,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Huw Merriman'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

HUW MERRIMAN MP

MINISTER OF STATE FOR TRANSPORT