



Department for **Transport**

From the Secretary of State

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Our Ref: P0007920

16 August 2011

I am writing to confirm that the Department has now completed its search for the information relating to advice to Ministers on the High Speed 2 Hybrid Bill which you requested in your letter of 20 July.

Given that I have yet to make a decision on the High Speed 2 project and the consultation to help inform that decision has only just been completed I have not received detailed advice relating to the powers and scope of the High Speed Hybrid Bill. This is only right as we would not want to pre-empt the results of the consultation exercise. The advice that I have received is enclosed. This is an extract from a wider submission, the rest of which has been withheld as it does not fall within the scope of your request

In keeping with the spirit and effect of the Freedom of Information Act, all information is assumed to be releasable to the public unless exempt. A copy of this response and the information provided may now be published on our website together with any related information that will provide a key to its wider context.

If you are unhappy with the way your request has been handled or with the decisions made in relation to your request you may complain within two calendar months of the date of this letter by writing to the Department's Information Rights Unit at:

Zone D/04
Ashdown House
Sedlescombe Road North
Hastings
East Sussex TN37 7GA
E-mail: FOI-Advice-Team-DFT@dft.gsi.gov.uk

Please see attached details of DfT's complaints procedure and your right to complain to the Information Commissioner.

PHILIP HAMMOND

Your right to complain to DfT and the Information Commissioner

You have the right to complain within two calendar months of the date of this letter about the way in which your request for information was handled and/or about the decision not to disclose all or part of the information requested. In addition a complaint can be made that DfT has not complied with its FOI publication scheme.

Your complaint will be acknowledged and you will be advised of a target date by which to expect a response. Initially your complaint will be re-considered by the official who dealt with your request for information. If, after careful consideration, that official decides that his/her decision was correct, your complaint will automatically be referred to a senior independent official who will conduct a further review. You will be advised of the outcome of your complaint and if a decision is taken to disclose information originally withheld this will be done as soon as possible.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Extract from note to Secretary of State 25th February 2011

[Paragraphs removed as outside the scope of the EIR request]

10. Subject to the outcome of the strategic consultation you have also considered the most appropriate approach to the phasing of the seeking of powers for and construction of a national high speed rail network. In order best to manage the public finances and manage the Parliamentary process for seeking powers, and to ensure a deliverable construction programme, you decided to propose delivery of a Y network in two phases.
11. Given the strong strategic case for connecting the UK's two most populous cities, you determined that building a London-West Midlands line should be progressed first. Lines to Leeds and Manchester could then be delivered concurrently as a second phase. Consideration of potential future phases could be undertaken during the preparation and construction of the initial phases and in conjunction with any relevant parties, such as the Scottish Government.
12. You have indicated your intention to use the hybrid Bill process to seek powers for both phases of the Y network.
13. The proposal is for a Bill for Phase 1 (London-West Midlands) to be introduced to Parliament in October 2013, with the objective of receiving Royal Assent early in 2015. Construction could then commence early in the next Parliament, with the line opening by 2026.
14. The Bill for Phase 2 (Leeds and Manchester) would be brought forward thereafter, with the objective of opening the lines in 2032-33.

[Paragraphs removed as outside the scope of the EIR request]