



Department
for Transport

From the Minister of State
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Dame Meg Hillier MP
Chair, Public Accounts Committee
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

6 June 2022

Dear Meg,

High Speed Rail (Crewe – Manchester) Bill Update

I would like to update you on progress of the High Speed Rail (Crewe – Manchester) Bill and the “Golborne Link”, the proposed connection from the HS2 network to the West Coast Main Line just south of Wigan.

The Golborne Link

Through our record-breaking £96 billion Integrated Rail Plan, we have a once in a lifetime opportunity to deliver a rail network that will level up the North.

Sir Peter Hendy’s independent Union Connectivity Review stated that the Golborne Link does not resolve all the current constraints between Crewe and Preston and recommended that the UK Government review alternative options.

It is important that we get this right for the North and for Scotland. We therefore intend to remove the Golborne Link from this Bill while we take the time to consider the most effective way to find the right balance between delivering the benefits, improving journey times, controlling costs and understanding the deliverability of alternatives.

Getting HS2 - and the huge economic benefits it brings - to Scotland is not in question. HS2 services between London and Glasgow are set to

be available, based on current timetable assumptions, once HS2 trains start running on the conventional rail network.

Through HS2, we are looking to give the people of Scotland the transport connections they deserve and are committed to exploring alternatives that deliver similar benefits to Golborne, within the £96bn envelope of the Integrated Rail Plan.

Nevertheless, Government is getting on with delivering the benefits of HS2 to Manchester as soon as we can, bringing faster, greener and more reliable train services with this Bill.

Changes being prepared

In addition to the proposed removal of the Golborne Link from the Bill, ongoing design development work has led to changes to our proposals for the planned new railway.

In some areas additional land may be required for these proposed changes. In June and July HS2 Ltd will be holding a series of events for people to come and find out more about the changes affecting their area. For more information please visit <https://www.hs2.org.uk/events/>.

We will continue to engage with people and communities. Those whose property or interests would be specially and directly affected by these proposed changes would be able to submit a petition against the proposals and to have their concerns heard by a special Select Committee appointed for the purpose.

Safeguarding Directions

Revised safeguarding Directions for the Crewe – Manchester Scheme are being published to reflect the Bill limits to help ensure that land that may be required for the construction and operation of the high speed railway is protected from conflicting development.

It is our intention to maintain safeguarding along the Golborne Link while alternatives are considered. This means we plan to keep existing compensation programmes in place for affected homeowners so that they can still access support as needed.

The Government periodically reviews land requirements needed for the project and updates the extent of safeguarding accordingly.

You can find out more about safeguarding at
<https://www.hs2.org.uk/safeguarding>.

Best Wishes,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Andrew', with a long horizontal stroke underneath.

ANDREW STEPHENSON MP

MINISTER OF STATE FOR TRANSPORT