

Dear Prime Minister,

We are writing to express deep concern over the constant uncertainty that continues to plague the delivery of HS2.

At a time when the economy is facing a challenging outlook, it is vital that the UK invests for the future to improve connectivity, productivity and prosperity across the country. We cannot afford to stand still.

Business across the country need certainty to efficiently plan and deliver long-term economic growth. The repeated mixed signals on HS2 with its related Northern Powerhouse Rail scheme East to West are damaging the UK's reputation as a place to do business. They are also damaging the country's wider supply chain, as spending commitments cannot be made with confidence.

Over the last two decades we have had repeated promises of infrastructure investment made to cities including Manchester, Glasgow, Leeds, Sheffield and London. As business leaders, we have invested in our industries on the back of those promises.

Two years ago, Yorkshire and the North-East lost the Eastern Leg of HS2, with no settled alternative yet identified following protracted delays. Earlier this year, construction work at Euston was paused by the Department for Transport. It is now reported that the entire line from Birmingham to Crewe (allowing access to Scotland), the new line to Manchester, and Euston station as the terminus may all be cancelled entirely in the upcoming Autumn Statement.

We share your focus on managing the cost of major projects. However, delays and change create uncertainty and add cost, especially at this late stage when construction is already well underway. That is why we do not support the recent delays to the new line towards Crewe and work at Euston, which together will eventually cost taxpayers an additional half a billion pounds. Chopping off whole sections of the route would be even more damaging: it makes no sense for the country to build a high-speed railway from Curzon Street in Birmingham to Old Oak Common on the outskirts of London.

History has shown time and again that committing to investment in major infrastructure pays dividends. The positive benefits of the Elizabeth Line, for example, are clear for all to see. Large-scale projects will always be challenging to deliver but the long-term economic interests of the UK demand that we deliver HS2 and NPR in full as quickly as possible. We urge you to re-commit yourself to the project, consistent with your previous promises whilst at HM Treasury, to support jobs, growth and productivity in the North, London and across the country.

Yours Sincerely,

Professor Juergen Maier CBE, Vice-Chair, Northern Powerhouse Partnership
John Dickie, Chief Executive, BusinessLDN

Shevaun Haviland, Director General, British Chambers of Commerce
Gary Neville, Broadcaster, former professional football player and business owner
Alan Brookes, Global CEO, Arcadis
Dame Nancy Rothwell, Vice-Chancellor, University of Manchester
Mark Reynolds, CEO, Mace
David Duffy, Group Chief Executive, Virgin Money
Charlie Cornish, Chief Executive Director, MAG Airports
Jim Brewin, Chief Director UK & Ireland, Hitachi Rail
Colin Wood, Chief Executive, AECOM Europe and India
Heidi Mottram CBE, CEO, Northumbrian Water Group
Richard Robinson, CEO (UK & Europe), Atkins
Simon Carter, Chief Executive Officer, British Land
Nick Walkley, Principal & UK President, Avison Young
Clive Memmott, CEO, Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce
Miranda Barker OBE, Chief Executive, East Lancashire Chamber of Commerce
Simon Bird, Director Humber, Associated British Ports
Chris Oglesby, CEO, Bruntwood
Tom Grundy, CEO, Hybrid Air Vehicles Ltd
Alan Belfield, Chair, Arup Group
Vincent Hodder, CEO, Leeds Bradford Airport
Thomas Faulkner, Executive Vice President, Skanska UK
Mark Horsley, CEO, Northern Gas Networks
Gareth Scargill, Director, Nexus
James Bain, COO, Worldline
John Heaps, Chair, Yorkshire Building Society
Noel Meaney, CEO, Stellium Datacenters
Martin Hathaway, Managing Director, Mid Yorkshire Chamber of Commerce
Thomas Martin, Chairman, Arco
Andrew McFarlane, Head of UK Regions, Colliers
Ammar Mirza CBE, Chair of Asian Business Connexions CIC
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Simon Moorehead, Managing Director, Pippa Beauty (Limited)
Brian Scowcroft, Chairman, Kingsmoor Park Properties
Gill Morris, Executive Chair, Devolnfect
Mark Thompson, Managing Partner, Ryder Architecture
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Barry Leahey MBE, President, Playdale Playgrounds Ltd
Neville Chamberlain CBE, Chairman, Cheshire Business Leaders
Andrew Mooney, Managing Director/Founder, Actikem Ltd
Sam Booth, Chief Executive, Pro Manchester
Bill Walker, Chair, Future Humber
Jonathan Oxley, Chair, Lupton Fawcett LLP
Darren Forshaw, Co-Founder & Partner, Endless LLP
Sarah Tulip, Head of Northern Delivery Centres, Cognizant
Ian Ward, General Manager, The Broadway
Gareth Scargill, Director, Nexus
Anthony Cope, Investment Manager, FSE Group
Mark Mattinson, General Manager, The York Dungeon
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Tim Roberts, CEO, Henry Boot PLC
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Marc McLoughlin, Managing Director, Greenarc Vehicles Ltd
Charlotte Scheffman, Dean of Higher Education, Nelson & Colne College Group
Ian Hartley, Commercial Director, Pendle Doors Ltd

Mark Sears, Managing Director, Heritage Envelopes Ltd
Oli McCann, Partner, After Athena Ltd
Ged Ennis, Director, The Low Carbon Energy Co Ltd
Peter Catlow, Director of Sustainability, Businesswise Solutions Ltd
Mark Dempsey, Head of Culture and Hospitality, Burnley Leisure & Culture
Niamh Allen, Sales & Marketing Director, IoT Horizon Ltd
Stephen Dunn, Managing Director, North West Logistics Ltd
Craig Fishwick, Director, Mayes Accountants
Neil Evans, Managing Director, Veka PLC
Ian Edwards, Managing Director, The Energy Desk (UK) Ltd
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Ros Morgan, Chief Executive, Heart of London Business Alliance
Patricia Moore, UK Managing Director, Turner & Townsend
Nick Crossfield, Managing Director, Alstom UK & I
Howard Dawber, CEO, City Strategy
Ruth Duston OBE, Founder and CEO, Primera
Andy Knowles, Owner, Assetiam