

Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> October

Dear Prime Minister,

We are writing as representatives of businesses from across the North and London to express our deep disappointment at reports that HS2 is to be cancelled north of Birmingham and at Euston.

Our message to you and all your Cabinet colleagues is that there is a way to make this work and we urge you not to throw away decades of progress and billions upon billions in private investment without working with business to explore how costs could be reduced and private investment increased.

If the Cabinet were to take such a short-sighted decision it would pull the handbrake on the long-term benefits of growth, levelling up and sustainability that HS2 and Northern Powerhouse Rail would have delivered for communities across the country. It would cut the north off from the line, Yorkshire from Liverpool and will leave Euston as a gaping hole in the centre of London. As the Mayor of West Midlands Andy Street has acknowledged, this would also damage the UK's reputation as a place to invest. Research by Arcadis reveals that planning applications in three mile radius of stations and depot in the West Midlands region have gone up 400% since the law to build the route was passed. These opportunities could be replicated up and down the route.

Other countries have proven that there are cheaper ways of building high-speed rail and the business community is ready to work with the government to deliver major savings on the project, without losing any of the ambition. That could include bringing in more private investment, as well as rethinking the design and the operating model.


It would be madness to leave what was meant to be the UK's flagship infrastructure project like this effectively reducing our High Speed Network to a shuttle service connecting Curzon Street and Wormwood Scrubs. It would be the death knell for Northern Powerhouse Rail and Levelling Up as a whole would be finished. And it would make it impossible to deliver any future major project by undermining investor confidence in doing business in the UK.

We would request an urgent meeting before a final decision is made.

Yours sincerely,



John Dickie  
Chief Executive, BusinessLDN



Henri Murison  
Chief Executive, Northern Powerhouse Partnership