

The Rt Hon Mark Harper MP
Secretary of State for Transport
Department for Transport
Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road
London
SW1P 4DR

23 October 2023

Dear Secretary of State

Re: Construction of the HS2 tunnel from Old Oak Common to Euston

BusinessLDN welcomes the Government's commitment to Euston being the London terminus of HS2 and the private sector stands ready to work in partnership with you to address the challenge of delivering the project at minimal cost to the public purse. Euston's transformative potential can deliver economic and social benefits both for the capital and the UK as whole, providing better connectivity, new homes, jobs and economic growth.

While the structure of the new Euston Development Corporation, the scope of the project and the funding and financing package remain under discussion, I am writing to highlight a crucial issue that needs to be addressed as part of these considerations; namely, the need to proceed with the tunnelling from Old Oak Common to Euston.

A contract has been agreed for construction of the London HS2 tunnels from Euston to West Ruislip, including the Old Oak Common to Euston section. The design of the tunnels has been agreed and tunnel boring machines contracted. Whilst this part of the contract has not been implemented yet, the Skanska, Costain and Strabag contractor team are fully mobilised and currently constructing the tunnels west of Old Oak Common.

In around 10 months' time this section will be complete and the most logical and cost-efficient next step is for the same team to seamlessly continue construction of the final eastern section of the tunnel into Euston. This will take advantage of costs already incurred, existing infrastructure and site teams, and be by far the quickest and cheapest solution: there will never be a cheaper time to build this tunnel than now. Delaying this decision could jeopardise the ability to take advantage of the existence of the current contractor, leading to more time needed, aborted costs incurred to date and significant remobilisation costs.

We recently brought our members, with both direct and indirect interests in Euston, together with key public sector colleagues in London to discuss how the private sector can support the construction of a successful scheme that delivers for London and the country. The clear message from all participants was that a genuine partnership between the private sector and central and London government will be integral to the success of the scheme.

I would be happy to discuss this issue with yourself and officials and convene our members with the Department for Transport to support your thinking on this important project.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Dickie', written in a cursive style.

John Dickie
Chief Executive

Cc: Rt Hon Jeremy Hunt MP, Chancellor of the Exchequer