



From Lord Berkeley  
07710 431542, berkeleyafg@parliament.uk

Andrew Stephenson MP  
Minister of State  
Department for Transport  
London SW1

11 June 2020

*Dear Andrew*

**HS2 – Old Oak Common**

Thank you for your letter of 3<sup>rd</sup> June and for clarifying the role of Lend Lease.

In relation to the option of terminating at Old Oak Common (OOC), I make a number of points. I am aware that TfL argues that there would not be enough capacity on the Elizabeth Line if HS2 terminated at OOC. However, at Euston, TfL has also argued that Crossrail 2 will be needed to cope with HS2 traffic in addition to traffic on the Network Rail lines. So, I fear that TfL is not disinterested on this issue and HS2 will of course support TfL's campaign for an early completion of Crossrail 2. More recently I have been made aware, after the completion of the Oakervee Review, that the cost of Crossrail 2 and the realistic time for its delivery is under further detailed review, which adds additional pressure on the available capacity at OOC over a much longer period. For these reasons, I challenge the current views of TfL and HS2 Limited about the need for Euston as a terminus.

There are several issues relating to OOC that need to be addressed. The first is – how many trains should be planned for? Although HS2 has used 17 or 18 trains per hour per direction in its Benefit/Cost calculations, there is no evidence that this number of trains can be operated safely. The Oakervee Report and my own Dissenting Report both challenged this figure, which would make the BCA look better, but cannot be delivered in practice. A figure of 12 would seem to be more realistic, as I have said in my previous response.

10 trains per hour are planned for Phases 1 and 2A; if there really is a demand for more than 12 trains per hour if Phase 2B is built as currently planned, then there will have to be some re-organisation of the destinations and timetables to keep to the limit of 12, whether they terminate at Euston or OOC or, as we have suggested before, upgrading the Chiltern line to increase its capacity for most Birmingham passengers.

Evidence given to the House of Lords Economic Affairs Committee and that Committee's Report of May 2019 recommended that OOC should be the terminus at least for Phases 1 and 2A. I do not think that the Committee considered in detail whether more than 12 trains could be operated on HS2.

I have noted your comment that 'The Department does not believe that this (OOC as a terminal) could be reliably achieved over a sustained period, because the track layout is designed for through running not for terminating'.

Based on the evidence from two experts, Chris Stokes and Jonathan Roberts, I must disagree. They confirm that the six platform layout could operate as a terminus with 10 to 12 trains per hour; that there is no need for grade separation of the approaches, and that, although some additional crossovers might be required, these can be accommodated within the existing track layout limits. The same comments apply, of course, to the Euston approaches – there is no need for grade separation on the approaches, especially if the whole design of Euston is re-examined to allow sharing of some platforms between HS2 and Network Rail. Jonathan Roberts has suggested that operation at 12 trains per hour at OOC could be facilitated by extending tracks into the eastward tunnels from OOC station for a short distance to allow trains to be repositioned in different platforms.

Chris Stokes has also published a useful paper confirming that it is quite possible, even for trains terminating at OOC, for passengers to be dispersed in a satisfactory manner onwards into London from OOC. These papers are attached.

So, I would suggest that, for the achievable maximum of 12 trains per hour, terminating at OOC is quite possible. Whereas there are good reasons for both TfL and HS2 to want to terminate at Euston to justify their present plans and try to get a government commitment to funding Crossrail 2, I believe that £8bn can be saved from HS2 costs by terminating at OOC. The Elisabeth Line and GWR suburban services are more than capable of taking the expected number of HS2 passengers from 12 trains per hour.

The time from OOC to Tottenham Court Road (TCR) Underground station (where the Elisabeth Line and Northern Lines cross) will be similar to that between TCR and Euston – based on the rule of thumb of two minutes between stations, but from TCR to OOC via Euston one has to add in the HS2 part of the journey as well.

Finally, some believe that the name Old Oak Common is not attractive enough. There are, as we know, developers interested in creating a business park adjacent to OOC; I am sure that the name can be changed if that is what it takes to create an attractive HS2 terminal there.

I would very much appreciate a meeting with you and your officials along with Jonathan Roberts and Chris Stokes to discuss these issues – I am sure it can be done remotely if we need!

I look forward to your comments,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tony Berkeley". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Tony Berkeley

Attached:

Chris Stokes – Dispersal from Old Oak Common

Jonathan Roberts - **Comments on Old Oak Common (OOC) as an HS2 terminus**