

The Rt Hon Boris Johnson MP
Prime Minister, First Lord of the Treasury and Minister for the Civil Service
10 Downing Street
London
SW1P 4DR

17 January 2020

Re: The importance of HS2 to Britain's future prosperity

Dear Prime Minister,

We are writing to you as senior leaders in the British rail and construction sectors to express our deep alarm at mounting recent media reports that put into doubt the future of HS2.

We want to take this opportunity to reiterate not only the devastating impact any curtailment of HS2 would have on our industry, but the detrimental effect cancellation would have on UK Plc more widely in terms of jobs, manufacturing, investment and export potential. To date, we have very much welcomed the Government's commitment to increased infrastructure spending and investment. However, by putting a project of such national importance at risk, future infrastructure plans will also be threatened, as will the Government's desire to level up the UK economy.

HS2 is essential to joining up the UK and spreading prosperity throughout the country. Latest figures show that the project is already supporting approximately 10,000 jobs, is set to support 15,000 jobs by year end and 30,000 jobs at peak construction and train building activity, as well as 2,000 apprentices. Were HS2 to be cancelled, job losses would be calamitous, as would the missed opportunity to train and upskill the next generation of young people who will deliver the future infrastructure and rolling stock projects that the Government is ambitious to complete.

As the Government reaches its decision, it also needs to be mindful of the fact that the HS2 project is well underway. Indeed, it has been going for more than 10 years and contracts worth billions have been signed. The cancellation of a Government project so far progressed would be unprecedented in the history of British construction. Should this happen, the industry will have to include additional consideration for risk when pricing for future contracts, to bear in mind the risk of the Government cancelling future projects in the middle of delivery. To put it as clearly as possible, future infrastructure projects will cost the Government more, should HS2 be cancelled at this stage.

Finally, we often hear talk of replacing HS2 with other projects elsewhere. To be clear, there is no other 'shovel ready' project in the UK of a remotely comparable size. The Government's commitment to infrastructure projects in the North of England is laudable, but these projects are many years behind HS2 in terms of readiness to begin work and most, like Northern Powerhouse Rail, require HS2 to be delivered to realise their full benefits. A hiatus of this duration in Government investment, at this time, would have a devastating impact on jobs in the sector and risk delaying the infrastructure revolution by a decade.

The project is essential, and irreplaceable, to the Government's goal of fixing the north-south divide which has beset Britain for generations. We urge you to reach a final conclusion as quickly as possible. We urge you to save the jobs of 10,000 people already employed on the project. We urge you to get HS2 done.

Yours sincerely,

David Hughes, CEO, **ABB Ltd**
David Barwell, Chief Executive, UK & Ireland, **AECOM**
Nick Crossfield, CEO, **Alstom UK & Ireland**
Mark Cowlard, CEO, **Arcadis UK and Ireland**

Matthew Behan CEO, **Barhale**
Matt Byrne, President, UK, **Bombardier Transportation**
Vincent Avrillon, Managing Director, **Bouygues**
Jean-Pierre Bertrand, CEO, **Colas Rail Ltd**
Jim Brewin, UK Country Lead, **Hitachi Rail**
Tim Gray, Managing Director, **Hitachi Information Control Systems Europe Ltd**
Dyan Crowther, CEO, **HS1**
Donald Morrison, Senior Vice President and General Manager for People & Places Solutions, Europe, Middle East & Africa, **Jacobs**
Paul Goodhand, Managing Director, **Knorr-Bremse Rail Systems (UK) Limited**
Mike Haigh, Executive Chair, **Mott MacDonald Ltd**
John Murphy, CEO, **J Murphy & Sons Ltd**
Kathryn Nichols, CEO, **Nichols Group**
Wayne Peacock, Managing Director **Pandrol UK Ltd**
Mike Hughes, Zone President, UK & Ireland, **Schneider Electric**
John Whitehurst, Managing Director, Transport, **Serco**
William Wilson, CEO, **Siemens Mobility Ltd**
Raj Sinha, Managing Director, **SSE Enterprise Rail**
Nick Salt, CEO, **SYSTRA Limited**
Frank McKay, CEO, **telent**
Shaun Jones, Vice President, **Thales GTS**
Noel Travers, Managing Director, **Unipart Rail and Unipart Manufacturing Group**
Steve Cocliff, Managing Director, **VolkerRail Group**
Mark Naysmith, UK CEO, **WSP**
Tim Jones & James Fox, Managing Director & Commercial Director, **3Squared Ltd**
Pino De Rosa, Managing Director, **Bridgeway Consulting Ltd**
Noel Dolphin, Managing Director, **Furrer+Frey**
Malcolm Wilson, Managing Director, **IPEX Consulting Limited**
Paul McSharry, Managing Director, **Kilborn Consulting Limited**
Richard Kelly, Managing Director, **Loram Ltd**
Paul Priestman, Chairman and Designer, **Priestman Goode Ltd**
Rui Costa, Managing Director, **SOMAFEL**
Paul Costello, Managing Director, **Wentworth House Rail Systems Limited**
Munir Patel, Managing Director, **XRAIL Group**
David Tonkin & Darren Caplan, Chairman & Chief Executive, **Railway Industry Association**
Simon Babes, SME Group Chair, **Railway Industry Association**
Mike Hulme & Justin Moss, Co-Chairs, **Northern Rail Industry Leaders**
Professor Clive Roberts, Head of School of Engineering and Director, **Birmingham Centre for Railway Research and Education, University of Birmingham**

Cc: Grant Shapps, Secretary of State for Transport
Sajid Javid, Chancellor of the Exchequer
Andrea Leadsom, Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
Rishi Sunak, Chief Secretary to the Treasury
Douglas Oakervee, Chair, independent review of HS2