

**From:** [Petitions: UK Government and Parliament](#)  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Government responded to "Stop work on HS2 immediately and hold a new vote to repeal the legislation"  
**Date:** 15 January 2021 03:49:08

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The Government has responded to the petition you signed – [“Stop work on HS2 immediately and hold a new vote to repeal the legislation”](#).

Government responded:

HS2 will provide essential North-South connectivity, greater capacity and shorter journey times. This railway will play a vital role in delivering the Government’s carbon net zero objectives.

The Government has carefully considered the merits and disadvantages of proceeding with HS2 and has firmly concluded that it should go ahead. HS2 will transform our country’s transport network, and help to rebalance opportunity fairly across the country. This railway is a long-term investment which will bring our biggest cities closer together, boost productivity and provide a low-carbon alternative to cars and planes for many decades to come. During construction, we want HS2 to be the most environmentally responsible major infrastructure project in UK history.

HS2 has rightly been subject to a great deal of Parliamentary and public scrutiny. Phase One was the subject of considerable debate in Parliament during the passage of the High-Speed Rail (London-West Midlands) Act 2017 (“the Phase One Act”). The Phase 2a Bill is currently being taken through Parliament. The Government agreed with the Oakervee Review’s conclusion that splitting Phase 2b into smaller sections, and more than one Bill, could facilitate scrutiny in Parliament, and make its management and construction more manageable. Just this month, Andrew Stephenson MP, the dedicated HS2 minister, went before the Transport Select Committee to discuss HS2 in depth, and a record of this hearing can be found on [Parliament.UK](#).

Ministers have made a clear commitment to greater transparency on HS2, and Andrew Stephenson is reporting bi-annually to Parliament on the project.

We are continuing work on managing the full impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic on delivery of the HS2 programme. We intend to update

Parliament on the latest position as part of the next six-monthly Parliamentary Report, expected in Spring 2021.

This Government takes its environmental commitments extremely seriously. The environmental impacts of HS2 were closely scrutinised by Parliament during the passage of the Phase One Act, which gives statutory and planning authority for the construction of Phase One. Alongside the Act, the Government also published a suite of additional environmental commitments to further reduce the impacts of the project.

As well as environmental protections, a range of measures to mitigate and compensate for environmental impacts have been put in place. This includes a commitment to seek to achieve 'no net loss' to biodiversity and the creation of a 'green corridor' alongside HS2, which will provide bigger and better habitats for wildlife, and integrate HS2 into the landscape. Phase One expects to support 33 square kilometres of wildlife habitat - an increase of around 30% compared to what's there now.

All environmental measures, whether they be the creation of new habitats or the enhancement of existing habitats, will be supported with long-term management plans and agreements. This will ensure that the new railway leaves a long-lasting legacy for both wildlife and future generations.

HS2 will give us a step-change in capacity delivering better connectivity between our largest towns and cities. The Government's decision to proceed with HS2 supports our objectives on climate change as the railway will play a key role in decarbonising our transport sector. This is because, once HS2 is in operation, it will offer a low carbon alternative to cars and domestic air travel. It will also free up space on the existing railway for thousands more passengers to travel by rail and to move more goods by rail freight, taking lorries off our roads.

Securing the land and property needed to construct the line of route across all Phases is vital to the programme's success and is often the first impact that we have on line of route communities. A range of statutory and non-statutory property compensation schemes are available that seek to compensate affected parties fairly while protecting the public purse.

Our policy is to provide fair compensation for those directly and indirectly impacted but the process and disputes for claims can inevitably be traumatic for some. Andrew Stephenson commissioned a detailed review of the acquisition and compensation process to ensure that there is a renewed focus on those who are being impacted by the new railway. The report contained 36 recommendations which are actively being implemented which will see rapid improvements for local communities.

For the reasons set out above, the Government has no plans to repeal any legislation relating to the development and delivery of HS2. However, we will continue to welcome further public and parliamentary scrutiny of the project.

Department for Transport