



Department  
for Transport

Rt Hon Owen Paterson MP  
House of Commons  
London  
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From the Secretary of State  
**The Rt. Hon. Grant Shapps**

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Our Ref: MC/277433

24 FEB 2020

*Dear Owen,*

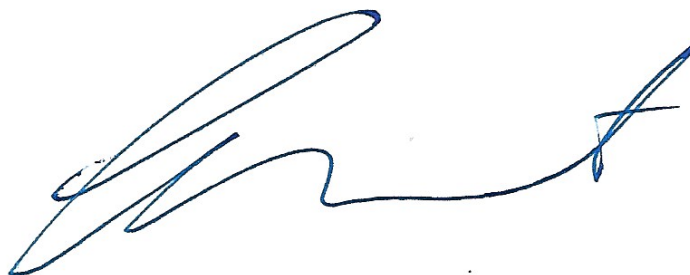
Thank you for your letter of 31 January, enclosing correspondence from your constituent, Michael E Cowey of Mistletoe Bungalow, Candle Lane, Woore, Crewe, Cheshire, CW3 9RB about the future of the High Speed 2 (HS2) rail project.

The Prime Minister has announced that, after careful consideration, HS2 will go ahead, alongside a revolution in local transport. This local transport revolution is to ensure that towns and cities in every region have the modern, joined up network needed to fire up economic growth and includes a multibillion pound package to transform buses and cycling. The PM also pledged further upgrades for local connections including measures to cut congestion and boost the local road network across the country by accelerating local schemes to the next stage of development.

HS2 is an important part of our Government's mission to level up our regions – ensuring everyone in our country has the same access to jobs and opportunity. Government has looked carefully at the alternatives. Even if we made all the interventions we think could be viable ways of adding capacity on the West Coast Main Line, we would have used that capacity by the 2030s if demand continues to grow in line with historic trend (around 4% each year). That means if we didn't go ahead with HS2 now, we'd likely have to come back to it again in 10/15 years' time anyway at a likely higher cost, having wasted £10bn now in abandoning the programme.

The Government has now published the Oakervee Review in full and will publish a response to it shortly. Nevertheless, I realise the decision to go ahead with HS2 will be disappointing to your constituent. I trust you will be able to convey the importance of pressing ahead with HS2 and the local transport revolution in levelling up the country.

Yours ever,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Grant Shapps', written in a cursive style.

**Rt Hon Grant Shapps MP**

**SECRETARY OF STATE FOR TRANSPORT**