



## Department for Transport

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From the Parliamentary  
Under Secretary of State  
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*Dear Mr Gladwin*

Thank you for your letter of 8 January to Grant Shapps, about the design and cost of HS2. I am replying as the Minister responsible for HS2.

As you know the Department for Transport announced on 21 August that Doug Oakervee would chair an independent review of HS2. The review was supported by a panel of experts, representing a range of viewpoints, to ensure an independent, thorough and objective assessment. This independent review was tasked with testing all the existing evidence on the project and consider, among other things: "how and whether to proceed" with HS2; its benefits and impacts; affordability and efficiency; deliverability; and scope and phasing.

A draft of the Oakervee Report was delivered shortly before Christmas and is still being considered by the Government. The Transport Secretary, Chancellor and Prime Minister will take a final decision on the future of HS2 and the scope of any scheme taken forward shortly.

It may assist if I explain that the maximum gradient of the HS2 track alignment is compliant with the Technical Standard for Interoperability (TSI) for the Infrastructure system, which limits the gradient to 3.5%. Application of the TSI is mandated under the Railway Interoperability Regulations 2011. The maximum gradient in the Chiltern Tunnel is 2.5%.

You stated that you have raised the issue of tunnel safety on numerous occasions with HS2 Ltd and that HS2 Ltd has never responded to the concerns raised. However, I am informed that HS2 Ltd has met with the Chiltern Society on a number of occasions, both Tim Smart the HS2 Chief Engineer at the time and Reuben McDonald the HS2 Head of System Safety have separately held meetings with the Chiltern Society over the past few

years in order to reassure the Society on the tunnel evacuation procedures. In addition, requests for information under the FOI legislation (reference FOI-19-3090) have been responded to in accordance with the legislation. A Freedom of Information request from the Chiltern Society on HS2 tunnel safety documentation has been appealed to the Information Commissioner who is receipt of HS2 Ltd's reply.

In response to your statement regarding the need for a new £15bn medium sized power station to operate HS2, I can assure you that this is not the case. HS2 Ltd has made formal applications for electrical connections to the National Grid system. As part of its obligations under the Grid Code, National Grid has to manage the demand and supply of energy within the National Grid system, ensuring that there is sufficient power to meet the forecasted demand on the system. The estimated demand of HS2 is used along with other data to forecast the total demand on the grid system in future years and determine the amount of generating capacity required to supply the demand. The construction of new generating capacity is provided by the private sector.

I hope this information is of assistance.

*Yours sincerely*  
*Paul Maynard*

**PAUL MAYNARD**