

Rt Hon Lord Andrew Adonis
Secretary of State for Transport
Great Minster House
76 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DR

22 January 2010

Dear Lord Adonis

WINTER WEATHER: ROAD DAMAGE

I wanted to follow up urgently on a very useful conversation between Sadiq Khan and the LGA Regeneration and Transport Board yesterday, and on some exchanges between our officials.

You will be aware of the reports coming in from councils about the impact of this winter's harsh weather on the need for road maintenance. It is too soon to estimate the extra financial burden that repairing this season's potholes will put on councils, but, with typical shire counties estimating the additional bill at £5million each, I am confident that if we put a £100million price tag on the problem, we would be underestimating it.

I know that you appreciate this problem. We both recognise that one of the major reasons for it is the overall priority, or lack of it, which transport investment receives within the overall public expenditure settlement. It is also clear from what Sadiq told me yesterday that this cannot be accommodated within the usual mechanisms for funding the infrastructure impacts of extreme weather.

It is also clear, though, that this is an issue that cannot wait and in many places the damage to roads is harming vehicles and drivers significantly, now. Councils need to be able to get on with making repairs as soon as the weather clears in order to minimise the consequential damage to vehicles and interruption to traffic.

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I am therefore writing in order to ask that you consider, as a matter of urgency, whether your department might be able by reprioritisation within existing central budgets for 2009-10 to direct immediate emergency financial assistance to councils of up to £100million to allow us to deal at once with this high profile pressure.

I would be very happy to discuss with you if that would help.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Sadiq Khan.

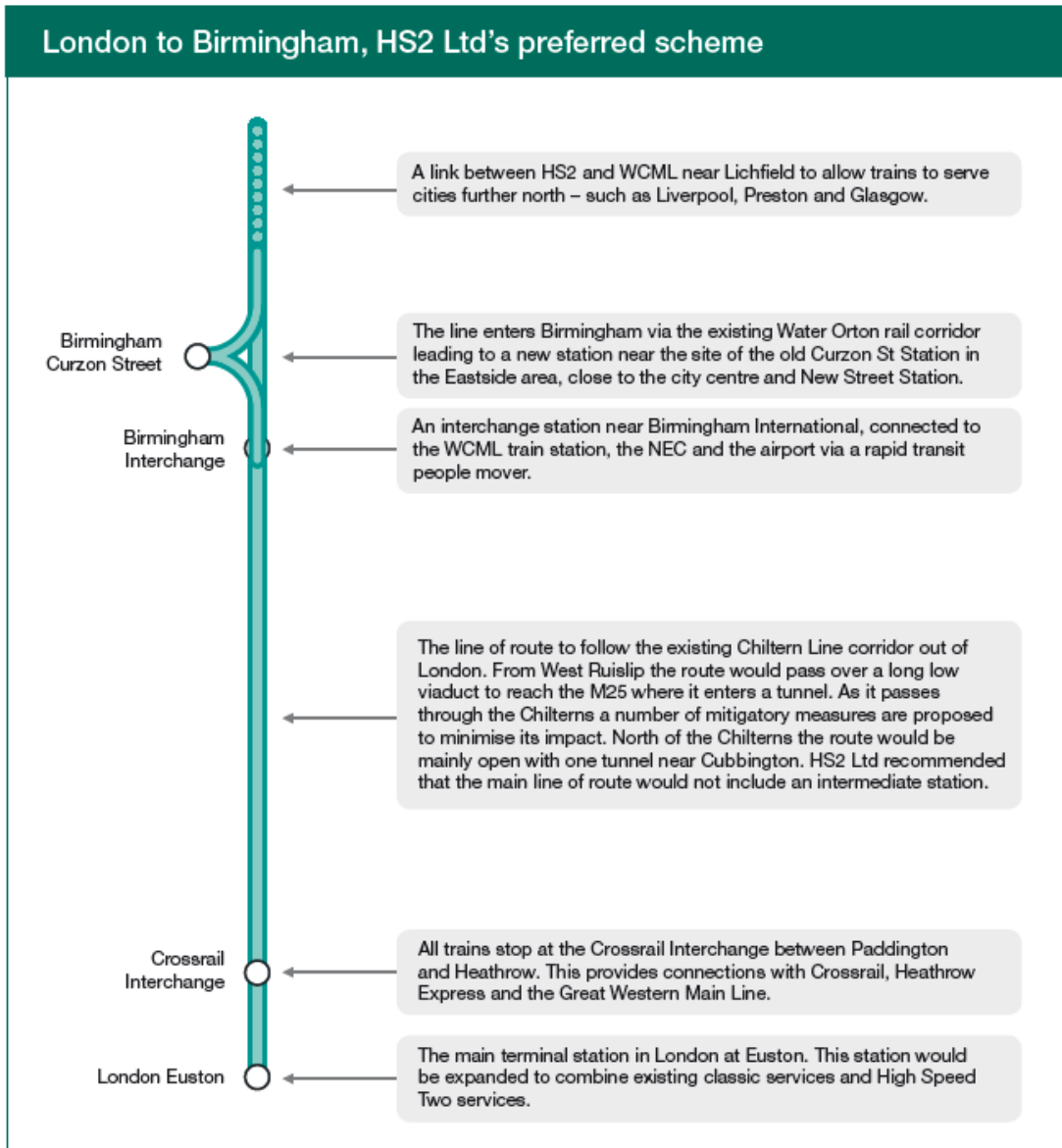
Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Sparks', written in a cursive style.

Cllr David Sparks OBE
Chair, LGA Regeneration & Transport Board

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Annex C



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