# HS2 Euston project at risk as government’s mismanagement fuels delays and cost overruns



Despite a purported review aimed at bolstering governance over massive infrastructure projects, the planned central London terminus for HS2 at Euston station remains fundamentally at risk — not because of environmental or community opposition, but because of the government’s profligate mismanagement and dysfunctional decision-making. The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) has sounded the alarm that the government’s definition of ‘mega projects’—which supposedly determine the level of scrutiny—is dangerously narrow, excluding critical initiatives like the long-overdue Euston redevelopment. This deliberate loophole leaves the project exposed at a fragile stage, ripe for further cost overruns and indefinite delays.

The government’s handling of HS2 exposes a pattern of irresponsibility and reckless prioritisation. The cancellation of HS2’s northern extensions, notably to Manchester, was presented as some sort of fiscal pragmatism, yet it actually revealed a total lack of strategic coherence. Critics now question whether any remaining portions, such as the London terminus, can be delivered at any acceptable value — especially when the government’s track record on infrastructure projects consistently demonstrates waste and incompetence. Rather than embracing accountability, they insist that the project will be completed “at the lowest reasonable cost,” all while mounting evidence suggests that costs are spiraling out of control under their watch.

MPs have rightly condemned the entire HS2 initiative as a “casebook example of how not to run a major project.” The truth is, the Department for Transport has repeatedly failed in oversight and financial discipline, particularly regarding Euston station’s development. These governance failures threaten to inflate costs further and erode the government’s credibility, especially as the UK seeks to attract genuine private investment in its infrastructure. Under this government’s stewardship, what should be a flagship project risks becoming a financial and logistical disaster, with the broader economic consequences hardly manageable.

The governance issues are especially stark when scrutinising Euston station. After more than eight years of design work, the Department for Transport remains clueless about what they truly want the station to be — a testament to their inability to steer the project effectively. The PAC has urged them to use the current construction hiatus to establish concrete goals and stick to realistic budgets. Yet without swift, decisive leadership, parts of HS2, including Euston, face stalling indefinitely. The warning is clear: unless the government makes a definitive decision soon, “the project will literally run out of time,” leaving taxpayers with billions of pounds spent on plans that lack clarity or purpose.

Financial transparency and accountability have been fleeting at best. For over a decade, the UK’s biggest infrastructure project has been shrouded in uncertainty — about costs, benefits, and timelines. The government’s own agencies and HS2 Ltd reveal a staggering inability to deliver on promises of infrastructure upgrade, raising serious doubts about whether they possess the capacity to complete such ambitious work without further waste. Meanwhile, the government’s reckless delays threaten to damage the UK’s international reputation, scaring off potential investors who could otherwise help fund vital projects.

Euston, as a critical junction linking HS2 with London’s existing rail and Underground systems, should be a strategic lynchpin. Instead, the project languishes in limbo, hampered by indecision since the PAC’s last report in May 2020. This protracted delay undermines the station’s potential to serve as a true hub of connectivity and economic growth. It exemplifies the government’s inability to deliver strategic infrastructure that aligns with Britain’s needs — all while squandering taxpayer money and fueling public cynicism.

In summary, HS2’s flagship status is more a mirage than a reality. The government’s failure to deliver northwards extensions, unresolved plans for Euston, and its chronic mismanagement paint a bleak picture of delays, spiraling costs, and reputational damage. Unless the authorities embark on a serious overhaul of oversight and undertake decisive reform, we can expect further disappointment. The current pause in Euston’s construction should serve as a wake-up call — if not to the government, then to taxpayers and investors, who deserve better stewardship and transparency from those entrusted with Britain’s future infrastructure.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.bdonline.co.uk/news/hs2s-euston-terminus-still-at-risk-of-poor-decision-making-mps-tell-treasury/5138055.article> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-68217031> - The BBC reports that MPs have warned that the cancellation of HS2's northern legs means the project will be 'very poor value for money'. The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) also expressed scepticism about the government's ability to attract sufficient private investment to build a new station at Euston. The Department for Transport disagreed, stating that HS2 would be built 'at the lowest reasonable cost'.
3. <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2025/feb/28/hs2-a-casebook-example-of-how-not-to-run-a-major-project-mps-say> - The Guardian reports that MPs on the Public Accounts Committee have described HS2 as 'a casebook example of how not to run a major project'. The committee highlighted enduring concerns about the redevelopment of Euston station and the surrounding area of London. They concluded that the Department for Transport had failed in its oversight and financial control over the project, leading to reputational risks for the UK.
4. <https://www.ft.com/content/591a5746-f4ac-43f5-b94b-5fc287525cc7> - The Financial Times reports that MPs have criticised the HS2 railway project as a cautionary example of mismanagement. Despite over 13 years since its approval and the cancellation of the northern section to Manchester, there remains uncertainty regarding its benefits, costs, and completion date. MPs doubted the capabilities of the Department for Transport and HS2 Ltd to successfully deliver the project, warning of reputational damage as the chancellor seeks foreign investment.
5. <https://committees.parliament.uk/committee/127/public-accounts-committee/news/196287/> - The UK Parliament's Public Accounts Committee reports that the Department for Transport still does not know what it is trying to achieve with the High Speed 2 (HS2) station at Euston, despite spending over eight years planning and designing it. The committee calls on the Department to use the current pause in construction to establish the design and expectations for the station against what it is willing to spend.
6. <https://www.bbc.com/news/business-58638229> - The BBC reports that MPs on the Public Accounts Committee have expressed concern that there is 'no clear end in sight' to HS2 costs and delays. The committee is 'increasingly alarmed' about key parts of the project, including a lack of progress at Euston Station. Without a government decision on the station, the project 'will literally run out of time', the committee fears.
7. <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm5802/cmselect/cmpubacc/329/report.html> - The UK Parliament's Committee of Public Accounts reports that Euston station is a key element of the HS2 programme, both as the London terminus and a link to the existing railway network and London Underground. The committee raised concerns over the lack of clarity in the design and delivery of Euston station, noting that the Department for Transport has made no final decisions since their May 2020 report.