

Secretary of State for Transport
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

07 March 2023

Dear Secretary of State,

We are aware that a decision is soon to be made about the chosen location for the Great British Railways HQ.

As representatives of South Yorkshire's business and skills communities, we would like to take this opportunity to impress upon you the merits of South Yorkshire's bid and to reiterate why Doncaster is clearly the right choice.

When the bidding process opened last year, the government set out six distinct assessment criteria, which would be used to identify the best possible candidate. Below is an itemised breakdown of how we meet each of these requirements.

Alignment to Levelling Up Objectives

Doncaster's bid aligns very clearly with the Government's own Levelling Up White Paper. If the GBR headquarters were to be based here, there would be significant benefits in terms of the Net Present Value of the GVA, as well as the welfare impact that would be felt across various levels of employment.

South Yorkshire is eager to help the Government achieve its levelling up aims. The focus on skills and young people within our bid is just one of many examples of how we could do this.

Connected and Easy to Get To

Ideally situated in the centre of the UK, the City of Doncaster is well linked to all parts of the UK by rail and by road. Our bid explored those key connections in more detail, including how easy we are to reach for the other nations in Great Britain. If South Yorkshire were chosen, the HQ site would be within a five-minute walk of Doncaster Railway Station.

Opportunities for Great British Railways

Our bid also noted how Doncaster (and, by extension, South Yorkshire) is poised to help GBR fulfil its ambitious goals. Specifically, we referenced how we fit into the vision of the Williams Review — looking at the role of the guiding mind — and how our world class rail engineering sector will be able to partner with GBR to create numerous innovation and agglomeration benefits.

Railway Heritage and Links To The Network

Rail is an inseparable part of our DNA in South Yorkshire. The iconic Flying Scotsman locomotive — which is celebrating its 100th anniversary — was designed and built in Doncaster.

We are proud of our illustrious railway heritage and of how our industry connections endure to this day. Indeed, we have a strong cluster of innovative businesses that have chosen to base themselves here, so it only makes sense for GBR to join them.

Value For Money

Our bid set out how we can deliver Value for Money both in terms of financial efficiency (in areas like property and labour costs) but also in terms of Green Book criteria. We are confident that Doncaster will offer better Value for Money, using Benefit Cost Ratios, than any of the other competing locations.

Public Support

The local community has wholeheartedly rallied behind Doncaster's bid. It was a collaborative effort between the South Yorkshire and Doncaster public sector, as well as businesses and academic representatives from across the region.

Expanding well beyond transport-related firms, there has been an outpouring of support from a diverse range of businesses and residents, many of whom have penned enthusiastic letters and evidenced their support on social media.

In short, we are convinced that we have a highly compelling bid, one that meets all the government's criteria. As such, we await the outcome of the competition with eager anticipation.

Yours sincerely,

Daniel Fell
Chief Exec
Doncaster Chamber




Andrew Denniff
Chief Exec
Barnsley & Rotherham Chamber



Louisa Harrison-Walker
Chief Exec
Sheffield Chamber



Gareth Rawson
Principal
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Professor Conor Moss
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Yiannis Kouris OBE
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Barnsley College



Angela Foulkes
Chief Executive & Principal
The Sheffield College




John Rees
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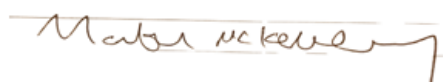
Jason Austin
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