

APM response to scrapping of second phase of HS2

United Kingdom – Today, 4 October 2023, the Prime Minister Rishi Sunak announced that the second stage of the HS2 rail link project between Birmingham and Manchester will be scrapped, with the £36 billion cost being earmarked for other transport projects around the country.

In response to the announcement, Andrew Baldwin Head of Policy and Public Affairs, Association for Project Management (APM), said:

“Sadly, this project has been plagued with uncertainty since the outset and the original scope has been changed multiple times. Major projects of this nature need political and economic stability to work – investors need to trust that their investment will be worthwhile.

“Ultimately, you can fix projects by rescoping and reassessing; you can’t fix them by scrapping them. There was a need for HS2, and that need remains, irrespective of the other projects mentioned in the speech.

“We are of course pleased to see this money will be retained to use on other major projects and look forward to concrete proposals on those, particularly Network North. But we had a concrete plan to deliver a major project that would have improved capacity between Manchester, Birmingham and London. We now have uncertainty, speculation and a list of projects that may or may not get spades in the ground before the next general election.

“And investor enthusiasm will be low, so the Government needs to be clear on what new projects they’re funding, the scope and timescales involved, and ensure that they won’t be cancelled when the going gets tough politically.

“As the chartered body for the project profession, we acknowledge the importance of learning from setbacks and disruptions. There will be lessons from the political side of HS2 that we must learn for future projects.”

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About APM

- APM (Association for Project Management) is a professional membership organisation that sets the standards for the project profession and raises its profile.
- APM is the only chartered organisation representing the project profession in the world.
- As a registered charity, APM delivers learning and networking opportunities, qualifications, research, resources, events and best practice guidance for the project community, helping the profession deliver better.
- APM is the only chartered organisation representing the project profession in the world with over 40,000 individual members and more than 400 corporate partners based across 140 countries.