



Phase 2b Western Leg Information Paper

E24: Archaeology

This paper outlines HS2 Ltd's approach to assess and reduce as far as reasonably practicable the impact on archaeological remains that could result from construction works for the Proposed Scheme.

It will be of particular interest to those potentially affected by the Government's proposals for high speed rail.

This paper was prepared in relation to the promotion of the High Speed Rail (Crewe - Manchester) Bill. Content will be maintained and updated as considered appropriate during the passage of the Bill.

If you have any queries about this paper or about how it might apply to you, please contact the HS2 Helpdesk in the first instance.

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 High Speed Two (HS2) is the Government's scheme for a new, high speed north-south railway, which is being taken forward in a number of phases. Phase One will connect London with Birmingham and the West Midlands. Phase 2a will extend the route from the West Midlands to Crewe. The Phase 2b Western Leg will connect Crewe to Manchester. As set out in the Integrated Rail Plan, published in November 2021, HS2 East is proposed to deliver a new high speed line from the West Midlands to East Midlands Parkway.
- 1.2 HS2 Ltd is the non-departmental public body responsible for developing and promoting these proposals. The company works under the terms of a Development Agreement entered into with the Secretary of State for Transport.
- 1.3 The construction and operation of Phase One of HS2 is authorised by the High Speed Rail (London – West Midlands) Act 2017 and Phase 2a by the High Speed Rail (West Midlands – Crewe) Act 2021.
- 1.4 In January 2022, the Government introduced a hybrid Bill to Parliament (hereafter referred to as 'the Bill'), to seek powers for the construction and operation of the Phase 2b Western Leg (the Proposed Scheme), which is called the High Speed Rail (Crewe – Manchester) Bill. The Proposed Scheme comprises the Phase 2b Western Leg from Crewe to Manchester and several off-route works. It also facilitates the delivery of Northern Powerhouse Rail by providing the Crewe Northern Connection and junctions and other infrastructure to be used in future schemes.
- 1.5 The work to produce the Bill includes an Equalities Impact Assessment and an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), the results of which are reported in an Environmental Statement (ES) submitted alongside the Bill. The Secretary of State has also published draft Environmental Minimum Requirements (EMRs), which set out the environmental and sustainability commitments that will be observed in the construction of the Proposed

Scheme. For more information on the EMRs please see Information Paper E1: Control of environmental impacts.

1.6 The Secretary of State for Transport is the Promoter of the Bill through Parliament. The Promoter will also appoint a body responsible for delivering the Proposed Scheme under the powers granted by the Bill. This body is known as the 'nominated undertaker'. There may be more than one nominated undertaker. However, any and all nominated undertakers will be bound by the obligations contained in the Bill, the policies established in the EMRs and any commitments provided in the information papers.

1.7 These information papers have been produced to explain the commitments made in the Bill and the EMRs and how they will be applied to the design and construction of the Proposed Scheme. They also provide information about the Proposed Scheme itself, the powers contained in the Bill and how particular decisions about the Proposed Scheme have been reached.

2 Overview

2.1 This information paper is about archaeological assets - the physical remains of past human activity, either above or (largely) below ground. Archaeological remains include evidence of our ancient environment and geological deposits which contain evidence of human activity. They are part of our historic environment.

3 Archaeological assets

3.1 It should be noted that archaeological remains are an element of heritage assets, which are addressed in Chapter 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and items 135-151 'Valuing the Historic Environment' of Scottish Planning Policy (SPP). The SPP does not include a definition of a 'heritage asset'; however, Annex 2 of NPPF contains the definition of a 'heritage asset' as:

“A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).”

- 3.2 HS2 Ltd has sought to avoid direct impacts on all heritage assets, including archaeological remains, during the development of the route for the Proposed Scheme and the design of associated works. All heritage assets potentially affected by the Proposed Scheme are considered in the EIA process, the findings of which have been reported in the ES.
- 3.3 The construction of the Proposed Scheme will include works (such as ground-breaking and excavation) that may affect archaeological remains. HS2 Ltd has sought to design the Proposed Scheme and to approach the task of construction in ways that reduce the impact on archaeological remains, as far as is reasonably practicable. Where such remains are affected, HS2 Ltd will seek to use the opportunities presented by archaeological investigation to deepen our understanding of history. This information paper sets out how HS2 Ltd plans to achieve this.

4 Approach to assessment

- 4.1 Archaeological studies were undertaken as part of the EIA for the Proposed Scheme. The results are presented in the ES Volumes 2 and 5 reports and map books on historic environment.
- 4.2 The ES, particularly in Volume 5, sets out the archaeological assets identified through desk-based study – termed the ‘baseline conditions’. More information was incorporated into this baseline using, for example, the results of:
- walkovers and site reconnaissance carried out from public areas and areas where access was granted;
 - remote sensing data (including Light Detection and Ranging survey (a high-resolution remote sensing techniques to capture 3D data) and aerial photographs); and

- non-intrusive surveys (field walking and geophysical survey).

4.3 These non-intrusive techniques allow insight into what archaeological information lies beneath the ground.

4.4 The archaeological assessment in the ES evaluated:

- whether there were likely to be archaeological resources in land affected by the Proposed Scheme;
- how important such resources might be; and
- how they would be physically affected by the construction and operation of the Proposed Scheme.

4.5 In determining the overall significance of the effect, we evaluate the significance of the asset and the magnitude of the impact; we also consider how the effect could be mitigated. The scope and methodology report prepared for the EIA discusses this assessment methodology in more detail. A link to the scope and methodology report can be found in the References section at the end of this paper.

5 Framework for the control of impacts

5.1 The EMRs are being developed in consultation with local authorities and other relevant stakeholders. Information Paper E1: Control of environmental impacts, provides further details. Two parts of the EMRs – the Heritage Memorandum and the Code of Construction Practice (CoCP) – are especially relevant to the archaeological works that will be required as part of the construction of the Proposed Scheme. A link to the EMRs can be found in the References section at the end of this paper.

5.2 The Heritage Memorandum sets out how the historic environment will be addressed during the design and construction of the Proposed Scheme. It provides a framework for the nominated undertaker, Historic England, Historic Environment Scotland, local authorities and other stakeholders to work together to ensure that the design and construction of the Proposed Scheme is carried out with proper regard for the historic environment.

- 5.3 The CoCP (notably the section entitled 'Historic environment') will require the nominated undertaker to ensure that the works are carried out in such a way as to ensure that disturbance to all heritage assets is managed in accordance with accepted industry practice and, where disturbance cannot reasonably be avoided, is controlled and limited as far as reasonably practicable.

6 Investigation and recording of archaeological assets

Sequence and programming of works

- 6.1 The nominated undertaker will develop an integrated investigation programme to deliver all archaeological works identified in the ES and as developed during the detailed design process. The programme will set out the key stages of investigation, for example:
- detailed desk-based assessment (where appropriate to inform location specific mitigation);
 - field evaluation (where appropriate to inform location specific investigation, recording and mitigation); and
 - location specific investigation, recording and mitigation (for example archaeological excavation).
- 6.2 The investigation programme will be developed in light of, and in conjunction with, the overall construction programme and will be reviewed and updated, as necessary. The programme will aim to undertake as much of the work as possible in advance of any construction activities. Where field evaluation works are deemed necessary, HS2 Ltd will continue to seek access to land by agreement with the landowners, or via powers to enter land under the Act.

Archaeological field investigation methods

- 6.3 Addressing the impact of the Proposed Scheme on archaeological remains is likely to involve a range of investigation methods and these are

summarised in Table 1 in Appendix A. Several different techniques may be used at the same location dependant on the nature of the archaeological remains.

Historic environment research and delivery strategy

- 6.4 To deliver the archaeological investigation works and as stated in the Heritage Memorandum, a route-wide historic environment research and delivery strategy (HERDS) has been prepared. This HERDS has been developed in consultation with Historic England, Historic Environment Scotland and the local authorities. It sets out the research framework and general principles for design, evaluation, investigation, analysis, reporting and archive deposition to be adopted for the design, development and construction of the Proposed Scheme. The HERDS is supported by strategies, technical standards and procedures that provide the detailed mechanisms of the delivery of the works.

Location-specific investigation

- 6.5 The principles set out in the HERDS will be applied in location-specific documents, which will be developed in consultation with Historic England, Historic Environment Scotland and the relevant local authority.
- 6.6 The outcomes of the desk-based assessments, non-intrusive surveys and any field monitoring works will be used to inform the development of location specific investigation and recording works. The location-specific documents, will describe:
- the local archaeological conditions;
 - the proposed construction works;
 - interfaces; and
 - the details of the evaluation and investigation measures required.
- 6.7 The location-specific documents will include individual project plans for specific activities and a programme for the archaeological works within the overall construction programme, including details of how each stage

of the archaeological programme interacts with other activities and the parties undertaking them.

6.8 Location-specific documents will address each work being carried out for the Proposed Scheme that impact heritage assets. Therefore, location-specific documents will cover the whole of the design and construction process and the subsequent post-excavation phase of analysis and reporting.

6.9 Taking account of accepted industry practice and national guidelines, location-specific documents will:

- set out the scope of archaeological work in sufficient detail for it to be quantified, implemented and monitored;
- define the specification for the archaeological work, the recording required, and the collection and selection strategy for artefacts;
- reflect the nature of archaeological remains that are likely to be found and the nature of the development impact, whilst allowing sufficient flexibility for variable site conditions; and
- comply with the controls set out in the EMRs, including the requirement on the nominated undertaker to use reasonable endeavours to adopt mitigation measures that will further reduce any adverse environmental impacts caused by the Proposed Scheme, insofar as these mitigation measures do not add unreasonable costs to the Proposed Scheme or unreasonable delays to the construction programme.

Analysis and reporting

6.10 Once archaeological investigations are complete, the records generated and the artefacts and samples collected will be analysed. The results of that work will be published via a range of media, for example online and in specialist journals, popular publications and academic books. Approaches to post-excavation works will be developed with Historic England, Historic Environment Scotland and the relevant local authority.

Archiving

- 6.11 The Promoter recognises the need to deposit the nominated undertaker's archaeological archive and will deposit it in an appropriate repository or repositories. The nominated undertaker is committed to working with Historic England, Historic Environment Scotland and local authorities to identify suitable repositories (such as a museum storage facilities) to enable the deposition of the artefacts and records generated by the Proposed Scheme's archaeological investigation works. The creation of HS2 Ltd's archaeological physical and digital archive is an integral part of the lasting legacy of the programme. Further information is set out in the HS2 Historic Environment Archive Strategy.

7 Unexpected discoveries of national importance

- 7.1 The approach to investigating archaeological remains that are affected by the construction of the Proposed Scheme has been designed to reduce the potential for making unexpected discoveries. However, such discoveries may be made.
- 7.2 In some cases, these discoveries may be of national importance (as defined by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport using criteria published in the Scheduled Monuments policy paper, or by the Scottish Ministers in the Designation Policy and Selection Guidance paper). The nominated undertaker will develop a procedure for unexpected discoveries of national importance. This will set out what will happen following such a discovery, and the roles and responsibilities for decision making and the implementation of archaeological investigation. The Heritage Memorandum provides further details on this.
- 7.3 Other discoveries during construction will be addressed via the methods set out in Table 1 in Appendix A.

Scheduled monuments

- 7.4 Schedule 19 of the Bill concerns changes to the legislation relating to ancient monuments, the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas

Act 1979 (nationally significant archaeological remains). The 1979 Act will be modified by the Bill to allow the construction of the Proposed Scheme. The Bill removes the restrictions on activities which may injure or disfigure the scheduled monument in question and allows powers of access to the monument to undertake construction works authorised by the Act. Instead of the usual requirement to seek Scheduled Monument Consent from the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport or the Scottish Ministers, an alternative regime will apply, because Parliament will have authorised the Proposed Scheme.

- 7.5 This alternative regime requires that a Heritage Agreement be entered into between the nominated undertaker and Historic England or Historic Environment Scotland. These agreements will provide a similar level of information as is required for Scheduled Monument Consent. They will set out what construction works are specifically required on or at the scheduled monument to construct the Proposed Scheme. It will detail the archaeological methods (for example, investigation and recording) that are required before and during construction, together with any necessary protection and monitoring measures. The nominated undertaker will engage closely with Historic England or Historic Environment Scotland during the preparation of the methodology for the works.

8 More information

- 8.1 More detail on the Bill and related documents can be found at www.gov.uk/hs2-phase2b-crewe-manchester.

Appendix A:

Table 1: Archaeological investigations methods

Method	Description
Non-intrusive investigation methods	
Topographic survey	Undertaken to record the surface topography and detail of any relevant features, including feature profiles and a photographic record where appropriate.
Walkover survey	Exploratory site reconnaissance to examine a location's configuration and its former or present uses. The aim is to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify opportunities for (and constraints on) fieldwork; • understand factors that affect archaeological preservation (e.g. developments, such as basements, that have truncated archaeological deposits); • identify any access constraints; and • create a photographic record.
Geophysical survey	A series of techniques such as magnetometer and resistance surveys and ground-penetrating radar. It is used to record the presence or absence of sub-surface archaeological features by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • scanning the ground surface; • identifying areas of local variation; and • interpreting anomalies and fluctuations that indicate archaeological features.
Metal-detector survey	A non-intrusive archaeological survey technique used to record the position and distribution of metal objects recovered from a rapid survey of the topsoil with a metal detector.
Preservation in situ	
Archaeological preservation in situ	In some cases, it may be appropriate to leave archaeological remains where they are in the ground. The decision depends on a range of factors - for example, the nature and significance of the remains, and the type of construction activity and its ability to cover the remains effectively.
Intrusive investigation methods	
Trial trench survey	A survey to expose and investigate buried remains to understand the extent and/or character of previously identified archaeological deposits or areas of potential remains. Often used to evaluate a location following non-intrusive survey.

Method	Description
Archaeological excavation	The process of exposure, investigation, recording and recovery of archaeological remains. This may be targeted at specific locations or a sample range of locations (e.g. specific investigation trenches).
Geo-archaeological investigation	A programme of sample recovery and analysis undertaken to investigate past environmental conditions and soil sediment development that may be relevant to the research of archaeological remains recovered nearby. It involves trial pit excavations or other methods of taking geotechnical soil samples.
Investigation within construction	
Construction integrated recording	A programme of observation, investigation and recording of archaeological remains undertaken during construction where appropriate. It is used where the likely extent of the remains has been demonstrated, but it is not practical or appropriate to investigate in detail before the main construction programme (e.g. due to safety or logistical considerations or environmental or engineering constraints). The contractor's preferred method of working would be controlled as necessary to allow archaeological recording to take place to the required standard.
Archaeological watching brief	A programme of observation, investigation and recording during construction. It is used where remains have not been identified by a detailed desk-based assessments or field evaluation, but where there is realistic potential for archaeological discoveries. The contractor's method of working would not be directly controlled for archaeological purposes, unless important archaeological discoveries are found (in which case the site method may change to construction integrated recording).

References

National Planning Policy Framework:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

Scottish Planning Policy:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-planning-policy/pages/7/>

Scheduled monuments policy statement (England):

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/scheduled-monuments-policy-statement>

Designation Policy and Selection Guidance (Scotland):

<https://www.historicenvironment.scot/archives-and-research/publications/publication/?publicationId=8d8bbaeb-ce5a-46c1-a558-aa2500ff7d3b>

Environmental Minimum Requirements:

www.gov.uk/hs2-phase2b-crewe-manchester