



Phase 2b Western Leg Information Paper

H2: Skills and employment

This paper outlines the arrangements proposed for skills and employment in the relation to the construction and operation of 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 outlines the proposed arrangements for skills and employment during the construction and operation of HS2.

3 Approach to Skills and Employment

3.1 The design, planning, construction, operation and maintenance of HS2 will create a significant number of employment opportunities. HS2 is forecast to support at its peak a labour demand of over 34,000 in construction and rail engineering activities. (HS2 Labour and Skills Forecasting, August 2021). This growth comes at a time when other large infrastructure projects will also create demand for construction and engineering skills. The sector faces a number of employment challenges: an ageing workforce; a need to upskill the current workforce; and a shortfall in the number of people entering the highly skilled jobs needed to deliver the planned infrastructure projects.

- 3.2 To support the forecast employment growth and the challenges outlined above, HS2 Ltd is working to attract the individuals it needs to fill the new jobs and roles which will be created. HS2 Ltd and its supply chain will seek out new ways to diversify the talent it brings into the sector.
- 3.3 HS2 Ltd or the nominated undertaker will require the supply chain to create appropriate apprenticeship and employment opportunities for local, disadvantaged and under-represented groups in order to promote fair and equal access to the employment opportunities generated by HS2.
- 3.4 The construction and operation of depots and stations across all phases of HS2 will generate a significant number of accessible employment opportunities. Communities with unemployment rates considerably above the national average particularly stand to benefit from the creation of these jobs.
- 3.5 Working closely with local and national stakeholder groups, the project's skills, employment and education achievements will leave a lasting legacy of jobs, expertise and exportable innovations and labour.
- 3.6 During the construction phase of Phase 2b of HS2, the Proposed Scheme, and any future phases, the nominated undertaker will have to comply with UK equality legislation, including the Equality Act 2010. Contractors will be obliged to select labour exclusively on merit.
- 3.7 The nominated undertaker shall, insofar as it is lawful to do so, ensure equality of opportunity in order to encourage the recruitment of local, disadvantaged or under-represented groups. This is in accordance with the HS2 Ltd Sustainability Policy, which commits to "providing rewarding jobs and careers that are open to all in society, setting new standards for equality, diversity and inclusion and providing a legacy of skills, learning, expertise and experience". This commitment is explained in greater detail in HS2's Skills, Employment and Education Strategy. The strategy sets out four key objectives:

- Ensure we have the skills to deliver the HS2 Programme and leave a skills legacy for the transport infrastructure sector and the wider UK economy;
- Create sustainable skills, employment and education opportunities in HS2 Ltd's supply chain through the use of procurement levers;
- Stimulate interest in STEM subjects (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) to encourage more young people into transport infrastructure careers; and
- Work in partnership with stakeholders and industry as they maximise the economic and regeneration benefits of the HS2 programme locally along the line of the route and across the UK.

3.8 During the procurement of any relevant contract, HS2 Ltd or the nominated undertaker will seek to evaluate contractors' responses against a number of skills and employment criteria. The 'default' HS2 Ltd position requires that clauses specifying skills and employment requirements be routinely considered for their relevance to all stages of the procurement process and for each procurement exercise. Exclusion of skills and employment clauses are by exception. The procurement process will look to assess:

- at pre-qualification stage - the tenderers' track record of delivering apprenticeships and employment interventions relevant to the requirement being procured; and
- at Invitation to Tender Stage - the tenderers' proposed method of meeting reasonable, proportionate and achievable apprenticeship and employment requirements stated by HS2 Ltd. Examples of the areas covered by these will include numbers of apprenticeships, unemployed job starts, and work experience placements.

3.9 The tenderers' responses on all the above will be objectively evaluated against published criteria supplied to tenderers in advance.

- 3.10 This evaluation process will support HS2 Ltd or the nominated undertaker in appointing contractors that are suitably qualified and experienced to meet HS2 Ltd's skills and employment objectives.
- 3.11 Contractors will be required to employ apprentices in the delivery of the works. This can be achieved through a mixture of both new apprentices being recruited as well as apprenticeship opportunities being offered to the contractors' current workforce.
- 3.12 Contractors will be required to help local, disadvantaged and under-represented groups to access the apprenticeship and employment opportunities generated by HS2 by:
- placing all job vacancies with Jobcentre Plus and any other job brokerage mechanisms that may be nominated by the nominated undertaker. In January 2021, HS2 Ltd launched a HS2 Jobs Brokerage service, which contractors will be required to be part of. Vacancies are advertised through a jobs board, hosted on the HS2 website. Contractors work with designated Job Brokerage Partners who will support those people looking for work;
 - participating in relevant recruitment and skills events and communicating and publicising employment opportunities;
 - nominating a suitably qualified member of staff to act as a Skills Employment and Education (SEE) Co-ordinator, with responsibility for delivering their skills, employment and education contractual requirements working with its supply chain, and skills and employment stakeholders; and
 - performance managing, monitoring and reporting progress on the achievement of skills, employment and education outputs to HS2 Ltd or the nominated undertaker.
- 3.13 In situations where agencies are used to source labour, contractors will set out proposals to ensure that those agencies, including those of its subcontractors, directly support the delivery of the aims and objectives of

the HS2 Sustainability Policy (summarised at 3.7) and HS2 Skills, Employment and Education Strategy (2018).

4 More information

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

References

Equality Act 2010:

https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/pdfs/ukpga_20100015_en.pdf

HS2 Sustainability Policy:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hs2-sustainability-policy>

HS2 Skills, Education and Employment Strategy:

<https://assets.hs2.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/26114402/CS962-HS2-Skills-Education-Employment-Strategy-210x2101.pdf>