

HIGH SPEED TWO PHASE 2a INFORMATION PAPER

F1: CREWE

This paper outlines the proposed changes around Crewe Station included in the Phase 2a hybrid Bill and information on the Government's current consultation on the concept of a Crewe Hub.

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 (West Midlands-Crewe) Bill which is now enacted. It was finalised at Royal Assent and no further changes will be made.

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 proposal for a new, high speed north-south railway. The proposal is being taken forward in phases: Phase One will connect London with Birmingham and the West Midlands. Phase 2a will extend the route to Crewe. Phase 2b will extend the route to Manchester, Leeds and beyond. The construction and operation of Phase One of HS2 is authorised by the High Speed Rail (London – West Midlands) Act 2017.
- 1.2. HS2 Ltd is the non-departmental public body responsible for developing and promoting these proposals. The company works to a Development Agreement made with the Secretary of State for Transport.
- 1.3. In July 2017, the Government introduced a hybrid Bill¹ to Parliament to seek powers for the construction and operation of Phase 2a of HS2 (the Proposed Scheme). The Proposed Scheme is a railway starting at Fradley at its southern end. At the northern end it connects with the West Coast Main Line (WCML) south of Crewe to allow HS2 services to join the WCML and call at Crewe Station. North of this junction with the WCML, the Proposed Scheme continues to a tunnel portal south of Crewe.
- 1.4. The work to produce the Bill includes 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)², which set out the environmental and sustainability commitments that will be observed in the construction of the Proposed Scheme.
- 1.5. 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'. The nominated undertaker will be bound by the obligations contained in the Bill and the policies established in the EMRs. There may be more than one nominated undertaker.
- 1.6. 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.

¹ The High Speed Rail (West Midlands – Crewe) Bill, hereafter 'the Bill'.

² For more information on the EMRs, please see Information Paper E1: Control of Environmental Impacts.

2. Overview

- 2.1. This information paper outlines the proposed changes to rail infrastructure at and around Crewe Station required for the Proposed Scheme and included in the Bill. It also provides information on the public consultation launched in July 2017 by the Department for Transport (DfT) on the concept of a Crewe Hub.

3. Bill proposals

- 3.1. At Bill deposit, the Phase 2a high speed line connected to the slow lines at the West Coast Main Line (WCML) south of Crewe via two spur lines. The Proposed Scheme includes the work required to the existing railway infrastructure in the Crewe area in order to run the proposed Phase 2a train service in 2027.
- 3.2. For that purpose, the Bill proposed the following interventions:
 - junction enhancement south of Crewe, to allow HS2 services to cross from slow to fast lines at higher speed, in both directions simultaneously (in parallel);
 - a new platform at Crewe station on the 'Manchester independent' lines, currently used for freight. This will allow passenger services, such as the Cardiff-Manchester service, to approach from the west of Crewe and leave to the east, without needing to cross all of the four existing lines at grade (which is one of the main ways capacity is 'lost' with the current layout at Crewe station); and
 - junction enhancement at Sandbach and Maw Green to allow HS2 trains to pass slower trains.
- 3.3. However, following work undertaken by HS2 Ltd, Network Rail and the Department for Transport, HS2 Ltd has further developed plans at Crewe to optimise the design, and to enable the Crewe Hub proposals that Network Rail is developing. These include, along with the main connection to the south of Crewe:
 - a new platform at Crewe station on the 'Manchester independent' lines, currently used for freight. This has been varied from an island platform on the independents to that of a single facing platform on the Manchester Independents with bi-directional track to allow passenger services, such as the Cardiff-Manchester service, to approach from the west of Crewe and leave to the east.
 - An extension of the platform (Platform 5) at Crewe to allow for HS2 Ltd to stop and split / join longer trains at the station. This allows for operational flexibility at the station, and allows for longer trains to operate to Crewe thus freeing up capacity south of Birmingham, to enable HS2 to include one train service from London to Macclesfield (via Stafford and Stoke-on-Trent) to operate an hour.

4. Consultation on concept of a Crewe Hub

- 4.1. Crewe is already a key hub station on the current rail network, allowing interchange between services to London, Manchester and Scotland; Chester and Liverpool; Stoke-on-Trent, Stafford and Derby; Shrewsbury and South Wales; and North Wales. It also serves a critically important role for national rail freight operations, with much of the freight traffic on the WCML routed through Basford Hall Yard, immediately south of Crewe. Crewe yard is a critical location for Network Rail track renewal trains which occupy most of the freight yards. These trains are vital for maintaining track standards throughout north-west England.
- 4.2. Network Rail is the owner of Crewe Station. The operator for the Inter-City West Coast Franchise is the station facility owner.
- 4.3. In his reports HS2 Plus³ (March 2014) and Rebalancing Britain: From HS2 towards a national transport strategy⁴ (October 2016), Sir David Higgins, Chairman of HS2 Ltd, recommended a North West hub station should be considered at Crewe, bringing together a better HS2 service with the existing rail network.
- 4.4. The Government, in its 2015 and 2016 Command Papers⁵, supported the vision for a Crewe Hub station and asked Network Rail and HS2 Ltd to work up proposals for the investment that might be required at the existing station to:
 - address key constraints on the rail network at Crewe today, in order to facilitate future conventional and HS2 services from 2027;
 - allow for more HS2 services to stop at Crewe, including services between Manchester and Birmingham, to provide Crewe with both northbound and southbound high speed connectivity;
 - accommodate splitting and joining of 400m HS2 trains at Crewe, to serve additional destinations on the existing network; and
 - construct a connection back from the WCML onto the HS2 network north of Crewe, to enable northbound high speed connectivity from Crewe.
- 4.5. The Department for Transport consulted on its vision for Crewe, and released its response to this consultation in March 2018. This set out what it wanted HS2 Ltd to progress and include within its design. The changes desposited, and set out

³ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/374695/HS2_Plus_-_A_report_by_David_Higgins.pdf

⁴ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/374709/Rebalancing_Britain_-_From_HS2_towards_a_national_transport_strategy.pdf

⁵ High Speed Two: East and West: The next steps to Crewe and beyond (2015)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hs2-phase-two-east-and-west-the-next-steps-to-crewe-and-beyond> and High Speed Two: From Crewe to Manchester, the West Midlands to Leeds and beyond Moving Britain Ahead (2016) https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/568208/high-speed-two-crewe-manchester-west-midlands-leeds-web-version.pdf

within this Information Paper, align with the outcome of this consultation response.

5. More information

- 5.1. More detail on the Bill and related documents can be found at: www.gov.uk/HS2