

HIGH SPEED TWO PHASE 2a INFORMATION PAPER

D7: HS2 PHASE 2a CONSTRUCTION TIMETABLE

This paper outlines the construction timetable for the Proposed Scheme, including an overview of the key stages and a timeline to the commencement of services.

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 paper outlines the construction timetable for the Proposed Scheme, including an overview of the key stages and a timeline to the commencement of services.
- 2.2. The construction and commissioning of the Proposed Scheme is expected to take place in stages between 2021 and the end of 2031. The programme and planning assumptions for the construction are set out in Section 2 of each Environmental Statement Community Area Report. The duration, intensity and scale of works along the route will vary over this period.

3. Timetable for construction of the Proposed Scheme

- 3.1. Following site clearance work, the main construction works for the Proposed Scheme will take approximately seven years, ending with completion of railway installation. This will be followed by a period of testing and commissioning before commencing services between 2029-2031 to align with Euston/Phase One.
- 3.2. Once the main engineering works have been completed, the installation of all equipment necessary to operate the railway will begin. The railway will then be handed over to the team responsible for operational testing and commissioning.
- 3.3. Indicative construction timetabling is available for each construction compound in the Community Area reports of the Environmental Statement.

4. Key stages in the construction of the Proposed Scheme

- 4.1. An overview of the key stages involved in the construction of the Proposed Scheme is set out below.

Environmental Mitigation

- 4.2. Prior to any major civil engineering works commencing, appropriate environmental mitigation works will have been undertaken. These will include species translocation where necessary, ground investigation surveys and archeological surveys.

Site clearance

- 4.3. During this stage, the nominated undertaker will take possession of the land required for construction purposes, set up construction compounds and clear the site ready for construction. Site clearance includes enabling works and activities such as utility diversions and demolition of buildings.

Earthworks

- 4.4. Once the site is prepared, the nominated undertaker will start earthworks. These will include excavating cuttings, building embankments and the start of tunnel construction.

Civil engineering works

- 4.5. With the general line of the railway established, the nominated undertaker will build the structures to support the railway. These will include bridges (over or under the railway), tunnels, viaducts and retaining walls.

Railway installation

- 4.6. Following completion of the track bed, the nominated undertaker will install the railway systems, including ballast, slab, tracks, signalling and the power supply.

5. System testing and commissioning

- 5.1. The railway will be fully tested to ensure it can operate safely and reliably. Testing and commissioning will allow operational procedures to be tested and refined alongside the training of staff.
- 5.2. Testing will start at the southern end of the Phase 2a route. This will allow the testing of train operating systems at the earliest opportunity. The period of testing and commissioning is expected to extend over two years, commencing in 2029 and completing in 2031.

6. Commencement of services

- 6.1. On current plans, passenger services for Phase 2a are expected to commence between 2029-2031 to align with Euston/Phase One.

7. More information

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