

Note of meeting: High Speed 2 – Environment Round Table

Date: Wednesday 4th November 2015 - 13:30 to 15:00

Location: Department for Transport

Attendees:

Name	Organisation
Matt Jackson (MJ)	Berks, Bucks & Oxon Wildlife Trusts
Victoria Bankes Price (VBP)	Woodland Trust
Ralph Smyth (RS)	Campaign to Protect Rural England
Ben Middlemiss (BM)	National Trust
Oliver Savory (OS)	National Farmers Union
Henry Russell (HR)	The Heritage Alliance
Cllr Stewart Stacey (SS)	Local Government Association (LGA)
Cllr Martin Tett (MT)	Local Government Association (LGA)
Andrew Shirley (AS)	Country Land and Business Association
James MacColl	Campaign for Better Transport
Ian Fugler	Natural England
Michael Hurn (MH) (Chair)	DfT
Mark Norton (MN)	DfT
Joseph Odiari (JO)	DfT
Andrew Cooke (AC)	DfT
Colin Olsen	DfT
Amanda John	DfT
Fergus Horkan (FH)	DfT
Mark Bailey (MB)	HS2 Ltd
Davinder Hothi (DH)	HS2 Ltd
Tony Burton (TB)	HS2 Ltd
Apologies	
Kate Russell	Central Association of Agricultural Valuers
Peter Birch	Canal & River Trust
Eugene Suggett	Ramblers
Malcolm Hackett	England's Community Forest

Michael Hurn (MH) opened the meeting by introducing himself and welcomed the members of the Roundtable. He also welcomed Ian Fugler, a Director of Natural England, who came along as a guest.

Before the first agenda item, Fergus Horkan (FH) gave a brief update on APs 3 & 4.

He informed the group that a motion was passed in Parliament on 15th September, instructing the HS2 Select Committee to consider two separate sets of changes.

The first, AP3, sets out a revised scheme for Euston, which is delivered in stages. The first stage provides sufficient platform numbers by 2026 for Phase One of the HS2. The second stage provides sufficient platforms by 2033 for Phase Two.

The second, AP4, includes about 70 changes outside central London that the government wishes to make to the HS2 hybrid Bill. These changes are predominantly the direct result of discussions between HS2 Ltd and petitioners.

Notable amendments are:

- Extension of the Chiltern tunnel by 2.7km to reduce impacts on South Heath and Mantel's Wood.
- Relocation of the Island school in North Warwickshire.
- The relocation of a waste facility to a location on an industrial estate in Tyseley, Birmingham.

An Environmental Statement was published for each AP. In addition, changes to the scheme within land already identified, or arising from new environmental information, were published in Supplementary Environmental Statement (SES) alongside each ES.

AP3 attracted 144 petitions, and the petition period is now closed. The consultation on the ES / SES closes on 6 November. The petition period for AP4 runs until 13 November, and the consultation on its ES/SES runs until 27 November.

Ralph Smyth (RS) asked when CPRE were scheduled to appear. FH said that route-wide petitioners were likely to be heard in January 2016.

Cllr Martin Tett (MT) asked when the Select Committee will be providing their next report. FH said that date was not known at this time, but that it is likely that it will be in the New Year.

Agenda Item 1 – Actions from the meeting on 23rd June 2015

Action 1: HS2 Ltd to continue to consider ways to make the Register of Undertakers and Assurances as user-friendly as possible. HS2 Ltd to provide an update on this before the next meeting.

Update: HS2 Ltd are publishing the fifth version of the draft register of U&As before Select Committee rises for the Christmas break.

Since its first publication in December 2014, the register has only generated a handful of public enquiries, and the Department has responded to all of them.

RS said that they were still not “user friendly” and asked that HS2 Ltd address this, and report back asap. Mark Norton (MN) said that HS2 Ltd would contact the NGOs for ways to improve the register. **Action HS2 Ltd.**

Action 2: HS2 Ltd to continue to explore ways to make on-line material easier to find on the GOV.UK website.

Update: HS2 Ltd are limited to the amount of space they can have to display the work on HS2, but are working with the website owners to house everything in one section. A link to this will be cascaded as soon as possible. MT said that this would be very much welcomed as soon as possible. **Action HS2 Ltd and DfT.**

Action 3: DfT and HS2 Ltd to consider how the project would provide those skill sets that would not be developed in the Skills College (e.g. archaeologists).

Update: HS2 Ltd commissioned Mace to conduct an Environmental Skills review and report. This study considered all the routes into each of the environmental professions, including graduates, apprenticeships, career changers, and overseas recruitment. Recommendations were formulated, both overarching and topic specific, that may help HS2 build resources in the environmental professions. The recommendations may also help create efficiencies to reduce the demand for scarce skills, and ensure HS2 does not restrict its access to the skills needed.

The report identified the most likely areas of shortage that could impact HS2 include field archaeologists, ecologists, soil scientists, hydraulic modellers, transport planners, and community impact assessment specialists.

MH asked the members what they wanted from this. MT said that recruitment of those skill sets would be beneficial, if local people can benefit from this.

Victoria Bankes Price (VBP) asked how will this work with local planning authorities. MH said that it is not just for HS2 Ltd and applies to a much broader set of organisations who are involved in the project.

Action 4: HS2 Ltd to circulate landscape design guidelines when published, and share examples of outputs so far, if possible.

Update: Tony Burton of HS2 Ltd will provide an update at this meeting.

Action 5: DfT to reflect on the possibility of an Independent Peer Review to consider the various elements of Phase 2 of HS2.

Update: The work with Transport for the North is intended to ensure that HS2 and HS3 work effectively together.

In addition the Chancellor has announced the establishment of the National Infrastructure Commission (NIC). He has asked the NIC, as one of its very first tasks, to consider the needs for major new east-west links in the north of England. That will effectively provide an independent review of what is required.

Action 6: DfT and HS2 Ltd to review Information Paper E5: Roads and Public Rights of Way.

Update: HS2 Ltd are in the process of amending Information Paper E5 to include cycle routes. MN said that the paper will be amended shortly. MT asked if it included cycle routes along the HS2 line. MN said that we would check and report back.

Post meeting update: The amendment will include cycle routes along the HS2 line.

Action 7: DfT to update the group about the work they are doing with Sustrans to provide cycle routes along the HS2 route.

Update: Royal Dutch Haskoning are carrying out a study which was announced by the Prime Minister in August 2013. It is part of a vision to double cycling in England through provision of world class cycle infrastructure to broaden the appeal of cycling as a viable transport option for local journeys. The study will be completed shortly and Ministers will take a view on next steps by the end of the year.

The study is looking at the feasibility of a legacy cycle network linking communities within 3 miles each side of HS2. It is made up of local links between local conventional stations and new HS2 stations through settlements to high streets, schools, and existing and planned employment centres and new housing developments in the corridor. It is also considering how these local links can be joined by rural links to create a linear route, a possible north south national cycleway. Dialogue is taking place with local highway authorities and national bodies such as the National Trust, Canal and River Trust and Network rail.

MT requested some clarity as it sounded like there will be a new cycling infrastructure along the route. Mark Bailey (MB) confirmed that the cycle initiative is something that is being led by DfT rather than HS2 Ltd. It is not being sought under Bill powers. MH said that there should be an action to

have cycling as an agenda item at the next meeting. **Action DfT and HS2 Ltd** to provide updates on cycling at the next meeting.

Action 8: DfT and HS2 Ltd to produce a user-friendly guide for the AP2 amendments and circulate it to the group.

Update: AP2 factsheet was produced and emailed to NGOs for information after the meeting. **Action: Complete.**

Action 9: DfT and HS2 Ltd to provide an update on how the East-West Rail Project will be integrated with HS2.

Update: EWR and HS2 Ltd are working together to understand and manage the interfaces and interactions between the two projects. Further certainty on EWR scope and timings is expected as part of the Hendy review, which is expected to be published in the autumn.

MT said that this is about the physical interface of the two schemes – how they are being constructed, durations etc.

Agenda Item 2 – Update on the Design Vision

Tony Burton (TB) of HS2 Ltd said that there has been over 300 expressions of interests in the Design Panel and the membership would be announced very soon. He said that an independent secretariat would be provided by Frame, led by Deborah Denner. This will work with Design Panel chair Sadie Morgan. The common design approach on landscape prepared by Arup will be available soon. An interim panel is already at work looking at issues such as operator strategy, stations, bridges, procurement and the National College for High Speed Rail in Birmingham and Doncaster.

Ben Middlemiss (BM) asked about the Terms of Reference. TB said that they will be the same as those used to recruit the Panel. BM asked how active the Panel will be, and TB responded that once established the Panel expects a heavy workload.

Cllr Stewart Stacey (SS) asked about involvement of the Design Panel in the procurement process for the railway. TB said that it is an issue being considered by the interim Panel. MT asked how local communities can be involved, and TB said that this was an issue which the Panel may well wish to review. He also indicated Sadie Morgan's wish for the Panel to stay in touch with the Roundtable. Michael Hurn (MH) said that he would like a regular update on the work of the Design Panel.

The members reiterated that they would very much like to see the landscape design guidelines if possible, so that they could provide some input. **Action: HS2 Ltd** to provide these asap.

Robert Goodwill MP joined the meeting at this point and reflected on the progress with the hybrid Bill.

AGENDA ITEM 3 – Presentation from the Country Land and Business Association

Andrew Shirley (AS) gave a verbal presentation on the work of the organisation. He said that the CLA was supportive of HS2, but that it was important that engagement between the CLA, land owners and HS2 Ltd takes place as early as possible so that concerns can be addressed. It was also important to look at what is being lost; to look nearer to rectify things, and to also go wider than the current corridor.

MH said collaboration and engagement was key, and asked what more can we do going forward. AS said the CLA were happy to talk to HS2 Ltd about what more could be done on engagement. MB said that it is vital for farmers to engage with HS2 Ltd at an early stage of route development and EIA.

AGENDA ITEM No.4 – Update on Phase Two

Davinder Hothi (DH) of HS2 Ltd gave a presentation on Phase Two progress overall. He provided an update on the autumn announcement; on work to procure professional services consultants to help develop the Bill for the next stage, the broad approach and high level milestones for developing a Bill and next steps.

Ralph Smyth (RS) of CPRE asked 3 questions:

Q1. Is 50NB the new terminology for part of Phase Two? DH stated that as no decisions had been made on Phase Two, “50NB” is terminology published in documentation a while back to support the safeguarding consultation for Phase 2a.

Q2. When can they expect to see detailed design, would it be at the draft ES stage? DH clarified that the design would be of a level suitable for parliamentary and hybrid Bill purposes, and work on the next stage of design would commence following a route decision and would be part of the EIA and further details would be available for a draft ES. RS asked when this might be. DH said that the programme could not be fixed until a route decision was made. However, stakeholders should reflect on the broad timings experienced on Phase One to try and help them on indicative timings.

Q3. When will they see anything/will anything be said on Scotland? DH stated the work on Scotland was very high level and that it was for government to decide when to publicly discuss the work although there was nothing imminent. Joseph Odiari followed up by saying it was subject to agreement between the two Governments.

MH said that going forward, he wants to use the Group to focus more on Phase 2.

Agenda Item 5 - HS2's integration with Sub-national Transport Bodies

Andrew Cooke (AC) updated on Sub-national Transport Bodies and the work of Transport for the North that includes considering: major rail and road links, smart ticketing, the needs of freight, how best to maintain and improve international connections. This is a wide agenda and the Government is working collaboratively with TfN.

A key issue which is being considered by TfN and the Department is the creation of major new east-west rail links across the Pennines. That includes working with HS2 Ltd to establish the opportunities for synergy with the HS2 network.

The Government will announce the way forward for Phase Two of HS2 later this year, including how we plan to ensure effective co-ordination with the development of Northern Powerhouse Rail.

Cllr Martin Tett said that he would like a further discussion with DfT on this to see how we can work together.

AOB

There were no items.

Key Action Summary from 4th November:

Actions:

Action 1: HS2 Ltd to engage with the NGOs to obtain some input to help to improve the accessibility of the Register or Undertakings and Assurances.

Action 2: HS2 Ltd to provide a link to HS2 material on the GOV UK website as soon as possible.

Action 3: HS2 Ltd to circulate landscape design guidelines when published, and share examples of outputs so far, if possible.

Action 4: HS2 Ltd and DfT to provide updates on what they are doing for cycling at the meeting on 10th February 2016.

Date of next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 10th February 2016 between 13.30hrs and 15.15hrs in Great Minster House.