

# The High Speed Rail (London – West Midlands) (Greatmoor Railway Sidings Etc.) Order

## Draft Order and associated documents

### 3. Statement of Aims

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# 1 Introduction

1.1.1 The FCC Waste Services (UK) Ltd waste transfer facility and associated railway sidings (the FCC sidings) are located close to the village of Calvert.

1.1.2 The FCC sidings are used to transfer waste from the Aylesbury Link railway line<sup>1</sup> to:

- an adjacent landfill site (Calvert Landfill), and
- a nearby Energy from Waste facility (Greatmoor EfW facility) also operated by FCC.

The existing waste transfer facility and sidings are situated immediately south-east of the village on the west side of the Aylesbury Link railway line. The Greatmoor EfW facility is situated approximately 2km from the village, also to the west of the Aylesbury Link railway line.

1.1.3 The impact of the proposed HS2 Phase One scheme (HS2 scheme) to be implemented under the High Speed Rail (London to West Midlands) Bill (the Bill) will result in the need to relocate FCC's waste transfer facility and sidings (the FCC sidings) to the eastern side of the Aylesbury Link railway line, and slightly further to the north of their current position. A 'green' accommodation overbridge would be built over the HS2 and Aylesbury Link railways to provide vehicular access between the sidings, the landfill and the Greatmoor EfW facility.

1.1.4 The configuration of the sidings was amended by the Secretary of State through the introduction of Additional Provision 4 (AP4) to the Bill in October 2015. The sidings were extended to the north and a separate accommodation overbridge introduced nearer to the village.

1.1.5 The HS2 scheme for the FCC sidings gave rise to environmental concerns from local residents, FCC and others, who petitioned against the Bill and AP4 on this matter. FCC also petitioned against potential physical and operational constraints it associated with the HS2 design at the proposed northern sidings.

1.1.6 The High Speed Rail (London to West Midlands) Bill House of Commons Select Committee were sympathetic to these considerations. As a result, HS2 Ltd has agreed to promote a Transport and Works Act Order (TWAO), under the Transport and Works Act 1992. This will re-provide the sidings to the south of Sheephouse Wood at Greatmoor (approximately 1.8 km from Calvert) and opposite the Greatmoor EfW facility.

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<sup>1</sup> Also known as the Marylebone to Claydon Junction Line (MCJ).

## 2 Background

- 2.1.1 Local residents of Calvert and Calvert Green, Buckinghamshire County Council, Aylesbury Vale District Council, Calvert Green Parish Council, FCC Waste Services (UK) Ltd and John Bercow MP were among those who petitioned against the HS2 scheme contained in the Bill to relocate the FCC sidings at Calvert.
- 2.1.2 In its petition against the Bill and against AP<sub>4</sub>, Buckinghamshire County Council petitioned for the relocation of the replacement sidings to the southern location at Greatmoor which is the subject of this application for a TWAO. In its original petition (0520), Buckinghamshire County Council stated:
- ‘Your Petitioners are greatly concerned about the potential community impacts within Calvert. These concerns would be mitigated to some degree by the relocation of the proposed rail sidings serving the energy from waste plant to the south of Sheeppouse Wood, and your Petitioners ask your honourable House to amend the Bill so as to make provision for that, taking into account the ecological mitigation that will be provided for the bat population and not compromising the functionality of other proposed mitigation measures proposed by your Petitioners’.
- 2.1.3 In its AP<sub>4</sub> Petition (0262), Buckinghamshire reiterated its concern that the AP<sub>4</sub> northern sidings would ‘detrimentally impact the community of Calvert’, as well as having environmental effects. As the petition states:
- ‘Your Petitioner, supported by Parish Councils in the area and the District Council asks that the Promoter relocates the sidings to the south of Sheeppouse Wood on land owned by FCC and located closer to the company’s waste management facilities. This site would alleviate the impact on the community which is set to be badly affected by the proposed scheme’.
- 2.1.4 In seeking to relocate to the sidings to the south of Sheeppouse Wood, the petitioners pressed for a solution which would alleviate the concerns of the Calvert residents regarding noise and other effects of the HS2 scheme for the FCC sidings.
- 2.1.5 A primary consideration would be to ensure environmental protections could be accommodated at the alternative site, especially in relation to protected bat species (Bechstein’s and other bat populations) resident in the surrounding woodland.
- 2.1.6 On 28 October 2015 and 25 November 2015, FCC appeared before the House of Commons Select Committee to present its petition to the Committee, requesting that the proposed sidings be relocated to the south and not constructed as proposed pursuant to AP<sub>4</sub>. On 09 December the Promoter offered assurances to FCC, confirming that the Secretary of State would require the nominated undertaker to secure a TWAO to authorise the construction of replacement sidings to the south of Calvert at Greatmoor in place of the scheme proposed under AP<sub>4</sub>.
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- 2.1.7 HS2 Ltd is promoting an application for a TWAO to construct the replacement sidings. If the Order is made by the Secretary of State for Transport, this will result in the removal of the provisions contained within the Bill which sought to authorise the northern sidings under AP<sub>4</sub>. In doing so, HS2 Ltd recognises the benefits of the TWAO scheme over the AP<sub>4</sub> scheme in addressing the petitioners' concerns. The Select Committee expressed a strong preference for the southern site to be the location for the relocated sidings. HS2 Ltd considers that the proposed TWAO will deliver the outcome requested by the Select Committee, addressing the concerns set out in paragraphs 2.1.1 to 2.1.4 above.
- 2.1.8 If consented by the Secretary of State, the proposed TWAO scheme will only be progressed as part of the construction of the HS2 scheme, and not as a stand-alone scheme.

## 2.2 Select Committee Report

- 2.2.1 In its report on the House of Commons phase of the High Speed Rail (London to West Midlands) Bill,<sup>2</sup> the Select Committee endorsed the Promoter's suggestion of a relocation to the south through a TWAO as follows:

'We said that we wanted to see the alternative, southern site, brought to fruition if possible. We wanted the Promoter to concentrate its mind on how to accommodate the protected bat species through alternative planting, connectivity and other mitigation.

The Promoter suggested promotion of a Transport and Works Act Order (or appropriate planning permissions) to seek to accomplish the same outcome, subject to environmental consent being forthcoming. It has agreed to fund that promotion, subject to internal departmental review.

There are clear advantages to local residents and to FCC for the sidings to be located at the identified southern site, without difficulty for the rail project per se. We recognise the contributions made on all sides in achieving agreements and assurances that have come close to resolving all issues or to agreeing how remaining points or future problems will be decided.

We are grateful to the petitioners and to the promoters for their clear response to the request we made for more to be agreed. They have made sensible suggestions on how this report could deal with remaining points. We conclude that their cooperation in discussions on specific problems are likely to make further or complete progress before consideration in the Lords. While restating our strong preference for the southern site, we do not try to impose, or to anticipate what the parties can best design together. Reasonable requests by

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<sup>2</sup> The House of Commons Select Committee on the High Speed Rail (London to West Midlands Bill), *Second Special Report of Session, 2015-16* (22 February 2016), pp.34—35, paragraphs 98-101.

FCC should be compatible with the Promoter's proportionate concern for the public purse. We emphasise that the potential benefits of the southern location to the people of Calvert should be fully taken into account. The Claydon Estate owns other land in this area of the line. It sought reductions in land take and greater connectivity of woodland. We hope these can be achieved'.

## 2.3 The Promoter's Response to the House of Commons Select Committee Report

- 2.3.1 The Promoter responded to the Report acknowledging the view of the Select Committee and the concerns of FCC Waste (UK) Ltd, local residents, Buckinghamshire County Council and Aylesbury Vale District Council regarding the AP<sub>4</sub> proposals, and the Promoter has accordingly developed a TWAO scheme for the southern sidings.
- 2.3.2 The Promoter has worked closely with, and has taken into account, FCC's views of the sidings design. The views of the people of Calvert have also been taken into consideration. Furthermore, the specific ecological issues raised regarding bat populations are being taken on board through proposals for ways of working (avoidance of operations during bat flight times) which take bat activity into account, and which are being agreed in consultation with Natural England.
- 2.3.3 FCC has accepted that operational arrangements at the southern sidings will need to avoid impacts on bats. An operational timetable has been developed in discussion with Natural England which restricts operational activities during the times of the year when bats are active. This will include unloading and loading of trains and associated vehicle movements.
- 2.3.4 The Promoter's response to the Select Committee's Second Special Report of Session 2015-16 also set out that, 'in designing the sidings, the Promoter will seek to introduce further connectivity of woodland and, where reasonably practicable, reduction in land acquisition'.<sup>3</sup>

## 3 Project description

- 3.1.1 The proposed Greatmoor Railway Sidings will be located on land predominantly owned by FCC, to the east of the existing Aylesbury Link railway line to the south of Sheephouse Wood, opposite the Greatmoor EfW facility.
- 3.1.2 The proposed sidings have been designed in consultation with FCC to ensure they will have an equivalent operational capability to the existing sidings (modified to suit the new geography and operating requirements). Network Rail, Buckinghamshire County

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<sup>3</sup> Department for Transport, *House of Commons High Speed Rail (London-West Midlands) Bill Select Committee - Promoter's Response to the Select Committee's Second Special Report of Session 2015-16* (March, 2016), page 8, paragraph 21.

Council, Aylesbury Vale District Council, local residents and others have also been consulted.

- 3.1.3 The sidings will comprise two reception sidings, each with 440m stabling lengths, and two pairs of operational sidings, each with 440m stabling lengths and with their own 35m head shunt to provide locomotive run-around. One pair will be dedicated to unloading and loading waste containers (with a rail mounted gantry crane) and the other pair dedicated to offloading spoil wagons (serviced by two mobile grabs). The sidings will be connected to the mainline (Network Rail's Aylesbury Link Railway line) at either end of the reception sidings. The Proposed Scheme is also designed to accommodate the proposed East-West Rail scheme, which is set to upgrade both the Aylesbury Link Line and the Bicester to Bletchley line to facilitate passenger and freight services.
- 3.1.4 A 'green' accommodation overbridge, proposed as part of the HS2 scheme, will be widened to include a roadway to provide vehicular access between the sidings and the Calvert Landfill and Greatmoor EfW facility on the opposite side of the railway. The span of this 'green' overbridge and one located further to the south will also need to be increased to clear the additional track associated with the sidings.
- 3.1.5 The operational sidings will be serviced via a concrete service road, comprising one storage lane and five vehicular access lanes.

## 3.2 Woodland Connectivity

- 3.2.1 Extensive mitigation planting will be provided as part of the TWAO scheme, connecting several areas of ancient woodland to the north and south of the Greatmoor Railway Sidings. Two 'green' accommodation overbridges are proposed as part of the ecological mitigation for the HS2 scheme. These overbridges are designed to preserve bat flight paths and to provide safe passage of other wildlife and habitat linkages.

## 4 Scheme benefits

- 4.1.1 In summary, the Greatmoor Railway Sidings will provide replacement sidings for FCC Waste Services (UK) Ltd in a way which mitigates their impact on:
- **FCC Waste Services (UK) Ltd's operations** - in respect of removing the operational constraints FCC had associated with the HS2 scheme at the northern sidings;
  - **Residents of Calvert and Calvert Green** - (some of whom were concerned about increased noise and visual effects from the relocated sidings as proposed under the Bill);

- **Bechstein's and other bat populations** - which occupy the area in and around the proposed Greatmoor Railway Sidings due to the mitigation provided and restricted hours of operation that will minimise disturbance to bats during periods of activity;
- **Mitigation planting** – woodland planting will provide immediate and longer term benefits through provision of improved connectivity of ancient woodland and 'green' overbridges across the proposed HS2 and Aylesbury Link railway lines which preserve existing bat flight paths;
- **East West Rail Phase 2 (EWR2)** - there will be less interaction between EWR2 passenger services as FCC freight trains arriving from the Aylesbury direction will be able to run-around within the sidings without needing to access the Claydon Freight Loop on the Bicester to Bletchley railway line;
- **Road transport** - locating the sidings close to the Greatmoor EfW facility will provide future operational benefits should it become viable to deliver more waste to the facility by rail (currently much of the waste comes in by road). FCC has a requirement to seek opportunity to increase the proportion of waste inputs delivered by rail.