

Note of meeting: High Speed 2 – Ministerial Environment Round Table

Date: Tuesday 12th July 2016 - 13:30 to 15:00

Location: Department for Transport

Attendees:

Name	Organisation
Katherine Hawkins	Wildlife Trusts
Victoria Bankes Price	Woodland Trust
Ralph Smyth	Campaign to Protect Rural England
Ben Middlemiss	National Trust
Louise Staples	National Farmers Union
Henry Russell	The Heritage Alliance
Tav Kazmi	Canal & River Trust
Cllr Nick Rose	Local Government Association (LGA)
Lianna Etkind	CBT
Jonathan Baker	Country Land & Business Association
Malcolm Hackett	England's Community Forests
Cllr Stewart Stacey	Local Government Association (LGA)
Janet Davis	Ramblers
Dave Buttery (Chair)	DfT
Satish Luhar	DfT
Claire Gregory	DfT
Sarah Tyler	DEFRA (Observer)
Mark Bailey	HS2 Ltd
Melanie Stevenson	HS2 Ltd
Davinder Hothi	HS2 Ltd
Caroline Richards	HS2 Ltd
Louise Portelly	HS2 Ltd
Cathy Elliott	Independent Consultant

Dave BATTERY (DB) opened the meeting by introducing himself, and welcomed the members of the Roundtable.

Agenda Item 1 – Review of actions from the meeting on 10th February 2016

The actions from the previous meeting were noted.

Agenda Item 2 – Ecology Review Group

Melanie Stevenson (HS2 Ltd) gave an update on the background to the establishment of the Ecology Review Group and its Terms of Reference.

During the Select Committee process in the House of Commons, a number of assurances were offered to petitioners, notably Warwickshire County Council, regarding the establishment of an Ecology Review Group.

The Ecology Review Group will enable HS2 Ltd, relevant authorities and NGOs to periodically review the efficacy of the measures that will be implemented for the mitigation and compensation of the biodiversity effects of the proposed scheme.

Petitioners have also asked that the scope of the Group is extended to include a provision to address the biodiversity deficit identified through the “no net loss” calculation and consideration of reasonable measures to address the deficit.

The Terms of Reference are currently with potential members for review.

The Terms of Reference, when finalised, will supersede any Undertakings and Assurances which have already been given relating to the Ecology Review Group. HS2 Ltd are currently collating comments from potential members and will finalise an overview response as soon as reasonably practicable.

The Ecological Review Group will now be set up prior to Royal Assent.

Action - Members of the Forum expressed an interest in becoming members of the Group- to discuss with this further contact Melanie Stevenson Melanie.Stevenson@hs2.org.uk.

Action - Discussions need to be had between Local Authorities and HS2 Ltd to decide on the mechanism for Local Authority representation. Up to this point, all County Councils have been engaged as well as Metropolitan Borough Councils and London Borough Councils.

Agenda Item 3 – Community & Environment Fund and the Business & Local Economy Fund (CEF & BLEF)

Cathy Elliott, independent Panel Chair for the funds, described the background to the funds and gave an update on progress since the last meeting of the Forum in February.

In response to the Select Committee's recommendation in their Second special report, published on 22nd February 2016, HS2 Ltd and DfT have committed to an additional £10 million of funding, making the total £40 million available.

The Select Committee also requested that some spatial allocation of the funds should be made. In response, HS2 Ltd and DfT are currently working with Cathy Elliott on this; no formal decisions have yet been made.

At the last meeting members asked that they were given more opportunity to input the progress of the funds, to respond to this HS2 Ltd will be sending out a survey within the next few weeks to test the emerging developments of the funds. (Action)

Emphasis was given to how important it is that communities are ready to bid when the funds are opened at Royal Assent. Much of this will be down to good communication and dissemination of information on the funds. HS2 Ltd and DfT ask that members use their contact base to assist with this.

Any information which can be shared from members about good practice of existing funds, ideas to inform criteria or projects which could be funded are all welcomed.

It was suggested that HS2 think about creating a communications video like that of the Rail Link Countryside Initiative. It was also suggested that there may be some existing project ideas in Neighborhood Plans which could be appropriate to bid for the Funds.

Link to the CEF and BLEF Information Paper:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/517721/C12 -
_The Community and Environment Fund and Business and Local Economy v1.5.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/517721/C12_-_The_Community_and_Environment_Fund_and_Business_and_Local_Economy_v1.5.pdf)

Agenda Item 4 - HS2 Landscape Design Approach

Mark Bailey (HS2 Ltd) provided an update on the Landscape Design Approach.

HS2 Ltd has progressed its approach to landscape design and has prepared the 'HS2 Landscape Design Approach' (LDA) document. This has been made available to members of the group and will now be shared with the Planning

Forum and then released publically. The document provides a more representative picture of the outcome of the design in different scenarios along the line of the route.

The LDA is supported by the Design Panel and meets the Design Vision which sets out HS2 Ltd.'s aspiration for designing the UK's national high-speed rail network.

The publication of the LDA responds to the call for such an approach from this group of NGOs.

Mark explained that the LDA will inform the requirements within the main works contracts and the contractors will be held to account for the delivery of its objectives.

Action - HS2 Ltd to inform the Group of how Design Panel advice is to be shared publically.

Action - The Forum members asked for more information on how Communities are to be involved with Design and at what stage.

The Forum were pleased to see the release and content of this document but are keen that HS2 now publish it to the wider public.

The Forum asked that for communications to be more locally specific so that people know what it means to them personally.

The Forum also asked that landowners are also considered when thinking about design, and that HS2 look beyond the rural versus urban design and think about the overall historic landscape character, among other common themes.

Members expressed that they would be happy to input where appropriate. A suggestion was made that when communicating more detailed design, tools such as 3D visualisations are used to bring designs to life.

Learning from other projects, the forum encouraged HS2 that where there are temporary design features, such as temporary Public Realm during construction, the full life cycle of the feature is emphasised at the outset, so local communities understand when such features will be ceased.

Action - Sadie Morgan to attend next meeting to give update on the work of the Design Panel.

Agenda Item 5 - HS2 Farm Packs

Mark Bailey (HS2 Ltd) provided an update on HS2's Farm pack.

HS2 Ltd has prepared and published its Guide for Farmers and Growers to assist farmers' engagement with the project to mutual benefit. It has been

developed collaboratively with the National Farmers Union, Country Land and Business Association and the Central Association of Agricultural Valuers, who are represented at this meeting.

Mark highlighted that this document is also very relevant to engagement with landowners on Phase 2. He also expressed that Part 3 is a very important component as it will be where all information relevant to individual landowners will be held and maintained.

If any other members would like to input their comments on the content of the Farm Pack, please contact Mark Bailey at Mark.Bailey@hs2.org.uk

Agenda Item 7- AOB

Members were then asked at this point of the meeting if they had any specific questions for the Minister, as the Minister had to leave the meeting at 2:30.

Members asked if the review of the costs and benefits associated with the National Audit Office report would prompt a reduction in environmental controls to reduce costs.

Confirmation was given that our environmental commitments are now set, permission will only be granted for construction if these are met. Plans must be within the boundaries set within the Bill, the Environmental Statement and the Environmental Minimum Requirements.

Agenda Item 6 - HS2 Phase 2a and b

Davinder Hothi gave an overall update for Phase 2.

The latest report from David Higgins on Sheffield and South Yorkshire was published on 7th July. It was emphasised that the report is in the form of advice, there will be a route announcement from the Secretary of State in the autumn.

Action- DfT to email the Group a link to the report and details of the 9 information events which are taking place. [*Post-meeting note, action completed.*]

The report explores how HS2 can best serve the needs of South Yorkshire.

Following the final route announcement, a consultation would be launched on any significant changes to the route.

In relation to the proposed new route through South Yorkshire as proposed in the Higgins report, a summary high level technical document outlining the differing environmental impacts between the original route and the newly proposed route has been produced, and these assessments continue to be refined.

Members flagged that they were not given early notification that the David Higgins report would be published on 7th July. Early notification of other reports has been given in the past and is welcomed.

Action - HS2 Ltd to release the data associated with the maps within the Higgins report in-line with the time scales set out in HS2 Ltd.'s Open Data Policy.

Members expressed their concern about the potential for a Parkway station and suggested that this should be included in the consultation. HS2 Ltd confirmed that if a station was proposed this would be the case.

Phase 2a

Caroline Richards (HS2 Ltd) gave an update specifically on Phase 2a. The consultation has closed on the draft Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and Equalities Impact Assessment (EQIA) Scope and Methodology Reports (SMRs). The responses are being collated and analysed, and a consultation response document will be produced. The SMRs will be updated as required in-line with comments received, as will the Technical Notes which underpin the SMRs.

The updated SMRs and consultation response documents will be published alongside the working draft EIA and EQIA. Consultation on the working draft EIA and EQIA, expected this autumn, is being carried out early in the development of the Phase 2a proposals to allow for early engagement with those potentially affected by the Proposed Scheme and to help inform the scheme design and assessment. As it is a working draft it will present preliminary environmental information in the form of baseline data gathered to date; likely impacts (and, where practicable, significant environmental effects); and the proposed mitigation measures that have been identified to avoid, reduce or manage the likely significant effects, based on the current level of design. Where information is not available at this time, professional judgement and reasonable assumptions will be used to provide an indication of likely impact to inform consultation and engagement.

It is expected that the hybrid Bill for Phase 2a will be deposited by the end of 2017.

Agenda item 7 – AOB (cont.)

The group asked for an update on the Phase 1 Bill. The target date for Royal Assent for the Phase 1 Bill remains the end of 2016. The National Farmers Union were the first petitioner to be heard in the HoL on 5 July. Petitioners will be heard in general by geographical area from North to South as in the House of Commons.

It cannot yet be confirmed whether or not the House of Lords Committee will decide to release Special Reports.

Key Action Summary:

- 1) Members of the Forum expressed an interest in becoming members of the Ecology Review Group- to progress with this further contact Melanie Stevenson Melanie.Stevenson@hs2.org.uk
- 2) Discussions need to be had between Local Authorities and HS2 Ltd to decide on the mechanism for Local Authority representation on the Ecology Review Group.
- 3) HS2 Ltd to send out a survey within the next few weeks to test the emerging developments of the CEF and BLEF funds.
- 4) HS2 Ltd to inform the Group of how the Design Panel advice is to be shared publically.
- 5) Sadie Morgan to attend the next meeting to provide an update.
- 6) HS2 Ltd to provide Forum with information on how Communities are to be involved with Design and at what stage.
- 7) DfT to email the Group a link to the latest David Higgins' report and details of the 9 information events which are taking place.[Action completed]
- 8) HS2 Ltd to release the data associated with the maps within the Higgins report in-line with the time scales set out in HS2 Ltd.'s Open Data Policy.

Post meeting update:

HS2 Ltd, in accordance to its Open Date Policy, has already published Government agreed data relating to Phase Two (both a and b) on data.gov.uk. HS2 Ltd.'s policy is to publish data at key business milestones, the next key business milestone for Phase 2b would be a decision in the Autumn on its preferred route option. If such a decision is taken, HS2 Ltd will release relevant GIS data updates in accordance with its policy.

Date of next Meeting

Wednesday 16th November 2016 at 1.30pm