

Note of meeting: High Speed 2 – Environment Round Table

Date: 23rd June 2015 - 13:30 to 15:45

Location: Department for Transport

Attendees:

Name	Organisation
Malcolm Hackett (MH)	England's Community Forest
Paul Wilkinson (PW)	Wildlife Trusts in South East
Victoria Bankes Price (VBP)	Woodland Trust
Ralph Smyth (RS)	Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE)
Ingrid Samuel (IS)	National Trust
Eugene Suggett (ES)	The Ramblers
Peter Birch	Canal & River Trust
Oliver Savory (OS)	National Farmers Union (NFU)
Henry Russell (HR)	The Heritage Alliance
Cllr Stewart Stacey (SS)	Local Government Association (LGA)
Cllr Martin Tett (MT)	Local Government Association (LGA)
Tom Harlow	Country Land and Business Association (CLA)
James MacColl	Campaign for Better Transport (CBT)
Kate Russell (KR)	Central Association of Agricultural Valuers (CAAV)
Martin Capstick (MC)	DfT
Rachel Kelley (RK)	DfT
Helen Smart (HS)	DfT
Mairi Warrington	DfT
Amanda John	DfT
Kate Hall (KH)	HS2 Ltd
Sadie Morgan (SM)	Consultant (Design Panel Chair)
Mark Bailey (MB)	HS2 Ltd
Louise Portelly	HS2 Ltd
Tony Burton	Consultant
John Pounder (JP)	Consultant

Key Action Summary:

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

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

Action: 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).

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

Action: DfT to reflect on the possibility of an Independent Peer Review to consider the interface of various elements of Phase 2 of HS2, HS2 to Scotland and HS3

Action: DfT and HS2 Ltd to review Information Paper E5: Roads and Public Rights of Way so as to include cycle routes and facilities.

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

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

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

Martin Capstick (MC) chaired the meeting and welcomed the attendees.

Item 1: Review of Actions from Last Meeting

MC went through the actions from the last meeting. The group were still concerned that the user-friendliness of the U & As register was still in production, and that they still found it difficult to navigate around the GOV UK website in general. MC said that developments were ongoing, and that the HS2 material will be placed in a section on the website and a link will be provided shortly.

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

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

Agenda Items

MC continued with the following agenda items:

Item 2: Updates on the Tree Working Group, and establishment and terms of reference for an Ecological Review Group

Mark Bailey (MB) of HS2 Ltd first gave the following information on the Tree Working Group (TWG):

The last meeting of Tree Working Group took place on 30th April. Discussion was had at the meeting about the current industry capacity and whether or not the timeline is realistic and achievable.

A detailed planting schedule has now been produced but this is likely to be updated as more information becomes available.

A procurement event is to be held with interested parties (nurseries, growers and specialist organisations) and is taking place on 2nd July.

MB then moved on, to give the group the following information on the establishment and terms of reference for an Ecological Review Group. He said that we have responded to the requests of various nature conservation NGOs and local authorities by committing to the establishment of an Ecological Review Group (ERG).

The role of the ERG will be to review outputs from the ecology monitoring programme for an appropriate period of time to be agreed with Natural England.

The group will recommend reasonable remedial action where ecological mitigation measures are not meeting the project's objectives.

We envisage that the ERG will be set up once monitoring results start to become available, at some time as yet not specified after Royal Assent.

We are in the process of developing detailed Terms of Reference for this group, and we will share our draft Terms of Reference with prospective members prior to finalisation.

Victoria Bankes Price (VBP) confirmed that the industry could supply the trees required for Phase 1, but that it was vital that HS2 Ltd shared information about when trees would be required in order that the industry could meet this requirement.

Cllr Martin Tett (MT) questioned the focus of the TWG was supply of trees rather than how they would be used.

MC said that the benefit of the group will be to cover a wide range of issues.

Malcolm Hackett (MH) asked about whether discussions around planting and design were taking place.

MB said that tree planting related to HS2 was required to fulfil a range of requirements. As time goes by, discussions on these requirements will take place.

Cllr Stewart Stacey (SS) asked about the project's ability to provide the human resources required for the delivery of the railway.

MC referred to the HS2 Skills College and the part it would play in developing elite skills required for the railway.

Henry Russell (HR) echoed SS's concerns about provision of human resources, and questioned how the project would provide those skill sets that would not be developed in the Skills College (e.g. archaeologists). MC said that this will be looked into.

Action: 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).

Item 3: Update on integration of design into Phase 1

Kate Hall (KH) of HS2 Ltd provided the following information:

Design Update

The HS2 Design Vision was launched in March 2015 to provide a consistent design framework to underpin the development of the range of design projects at HS2 over the course of the programme. In the short term, the Design Vision will support the transition of HS2 from its Parliamentary Design phase into the Specification, Scheme and Detailed design phases. And in the long term it will uplift aspirations to deliver high quality design and wider outcomes.

Design Panel Pilot reviews

The purpose of the pilot projects is two-fold: (i) provide impartial design support to current HS2 design programmes through a multi-disciplinary panel of independent experts, and (ii) road test the design vision to ensure that it is fit for purpose and the design principles are applicable for the full range of design projects at HS2.

The pilots are make good progress and importantly having an impact in optimising current design decisions. Pilots completed include;

- Stations – common design approaches and functional requirements
- Off-site build solutions for family of structures

- Service and experience
- Landscape Design Requirements and Guidelines

The internal project leads have found the advice received from each panel review meeting has been constructive and has helped them further develop the work. The scope of the Pilots is being potentially widened.

Internal Communication

HS2 Ltd is running a programme of workshops and training to ensure that all staff at HS2 Ltd understand the Design Vision.

External Stakeholder Engagement

The purpose of this area of work is to raise awareness of the Design Vision and the wider development of design at HS2 with relevant audiences including the design sector. Activities include;

- Recruitment of the Design Panel & Design Panel Secretariat
- External Design Event – Thursday 23rd July 2015
- Engagement with Stakeholder groups

Item 4: HS2 Design Panel - Introducing the chair, Sadie Morgan (includes a Q & A session)

The group welcomed Sadie Morgan (SM). She said that she was passionate about design, and had some thoughts on how she would like the Design Panel to operate. She emphasised the importance of the ethos of the Panel, and confirmed that the Panel will consist of 20-25 experts.

There were several questions from the group about the design of new stations and how the Design Panel would ensure that these locations were passenger-friendly. SM said that it will be important to get stations and landscape design right early on.

SM said that she is looking forward to getting together with the NGO group, and will also be talking with local communities.

HR welcomed this approach. He asked what weight the Design Panel will have, and mentioned the terms of reference (ToR). KH/SM said that the role of the Panel will be advisory, and the ToR are under refinement currently.

Ralph Smyth (RS) noted the challenge of measuring what better is, and questioned how to value good design across a sixty year appraisal period.

SM agreed that this was difficult, and that early engagement was essential to this. Design doesn't have to be expensive – make sure things are integrated. She also highlighted the significance of early identification of potential risk, and reiterated the importance of early engagement in this process.

MC said that the panel will offer “a fresh pair of eyes”, and consider the wider benefits that the railway might achieve.

MT said that there is a worry that cost will trump design. He also referred to the benefits that would come from early engagement with local communities. He also mentioned the validity of verbal assurances on design of structures that were being given by HS2 Ltd. SM responded that the aim of the Panel will be to listen to the Local Authorities, and any assurances given will be part of the process.

KH said that part of the process will be to go through designs. MC said that having dialogue with a range of people is important. SM added that HS2 will manage stakeholder engagement, and that the Design Panel is independent and this will be critical.

Paul Wilkinson (PW) said that these strands are important. He mentioned technical breadth within the panel, and asked if there was going to be an equal representation across the panel. SM said that a wide range of experts will be recruited, and that this was currently in discussion.

SS asked about the challenge of HS2 using common language to refer to uncommon locations. KH mentioned signage as an example of common design elements, and said that passengers can relax because they will know where they are (common elements etc.). SM added that at present, common design approaches to stations were being looked at. MC said that the Design Panel will have quality people with the right background.

Ingrid Samuel (IS) said that a lot of this will have to take place at local level, and that it is so important it is delivered by staff. Embedding a full range of expertise across the organisation.

KH said that everyone will be keen to get their designs in, so it is important that they are right, and getting everyone at all levels involved in the design would be vital.

RS asked for two actions. The group would like to see the landscape design guidelines as soon as they are published, and would also like to see some examples of where the draft guidelines had changed outcomes so far, if possible. MC confirmed that, we will share what we can.

KH said that space was currently being made on the GOV UK website, so that in future those interested could go and view information on the Panel's progress and activity. The Design Vision has already been made electronically available to all.

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

Item 5: Update on timetable and programme for Phase Two

Helen Smart (HS) of DfT provided the following information:

Phase Two and Northern Powerhouse Rail

Phase Two – Consultation and Network Decision

The Secretary of state intends to announce the way forward on HS2 Phase Two later this year.

We received over 10,000 responses to the Phase Two consultation and we are in the process of considering them. No decisions have been made about Phase Two in relation to that consultation or in relation to Sir David Higgins's October 2014 report.

The Government remains fully committed to the Y network and have commissioned HS2 Ltd and Network Rail to make recommendations about how to integrate decision making on HS2 with classic rail investment in the North, before responding to the Phase Two consultation.

We are committed to getting HS2 to the North sooner and delivering benefits to businesses and individuals more quickly. Therefore, subject to further analysis and decisions on the preferred route for Phase Two, the Secretary of State has asked officials to prepare a dedicated hybrid Bill to bring HS2 to Crewe earlier than planned.

Leeds

Sir David described in his *Rebalancing Britain* report that by the time Phase Two is complete, the existing station at Leeds will need to be remodelled. Therefore there is a clear need for a fundamental review of the best solution for the city considering growth in existing rail services, and the introduction of HS2 and potential new East-West services.

A review is currently underway involving DfT, HS2 Ltd, Network Rail and Leeds City Council.

We are keen to find not just the right transport solution, but also one that goes with the grain of the City's vision for the future of Leeds.

David Higgins is to prepare an Interim Report on progress by the autumn of this year for the Government.

East Midlands

As part of his review on HS2 in October 2014, Sir David Higgins recommended that HS2Ltd reviews the proposed location of the HS2 hub station in the East Midlands in order to ensure our proposals deliver the best benefits of HS2 to the region as a whole.

HS2 Ltd will present updated advice to DfT following completion of that work. Both the company and DfT want to be sure that our final proposal for a station in the East Midlands is robust and stands up to scrutiny before Ministerial decisions are made.

Route to Crewe

In March 2015 the previous Government stated that it would deliver HS2 in the north sooner by preparing a dedicated hybrid Bill to lay during the next Parliament, with a view to bringing HS2 to Crewe sooner than planned, subject to further analysis and final decisions on a preferred route.

No decisions have yet been taken on the Phase Two route. If a decision is taken to route HS2 to Manchester via Crewe, we would want to progress work on accelerating this section so as to bring benefits to the North sooner.

Northern Powerhouse (Rail)

The aim of rebalancing the economy is for economic growth in the North to be at least as high as the rest of the country, to complement and act as a balance to the economic weight of London.

DfT is working with Transport for the North, HS2 Ltd and Network Rail to transform strategic rail links in the North. This work will examine the feasibility of:

- Using the HS2 line to deliver fast regional services;
- The case for accelerating construction of the Sheffield to Leeds part of the HS2 line;
- Options to upgrade the classic network or build new lines.

HS2 is only part of the story and this Government is keen to economically empower our Northern cities by providing the transport infrastructure and connectivity to attract wider investment.

That is why we are supporting the development of Transport for the North. We see Northern Powerhouse rail as part of the process of transforming rail transport in the North. We will be examining the scope for an improved east-west rail link as identified in the Higgins Report and how that can best be realized in the context of the Northern Transport Strategy published earlier this year.

Northern Powerhouse rail proposals could slash journey times between the major cities. Journey times between Liverpool and Manchester could be as low as 20 minutes; Manchester to Sheffield and Leeds could both be 30 minutes; Leeds to Hull could be just 45, and Sheffield to Hull could be 50 minutes. Journey times from Manchester to Newcastle could be cut by 25%.

We will work jointly with Transport for the North to develop and prioritise these options so that the first tranche is ready for consideration in the next rail investment period.

MT asked when the timetables for Phase 3 and Scotland would be available. HS said that there wasn't a fixed timetable for the Northern Powerhouse work, but that the Autumn Statement will provide more information. MC said that Ministers are anxious to get timetables in place, but that there are processes to go through first.

HS said that there was no announcement on Scotland. Decisions are yet to be taken, and Cabinet Ministers will be discussing this soon.

Kate Russell (KR) stressed the important of early notification and information sharing on Phase 2, and highlight the impact a lack of decision was having on people's businesses which are blighted as a consequence.

RS asked whether there was a possibility for an Independent Peer Review to consider the various elements of Phase 2, beyond to Scotland and HS3. He requested that this was considered further. MC said that the Government was still considering responses in a well-established process of consultation, and further steps following consultation would be announced in due course. DfT would reflect on the peer review suggestion in deciding the way forward.

Action: DfT to reflect on the possibility of an Independent Peer Review to consider the interface of various elements of Phase 2 of HS2, HS2 to Scotland and HS3.

Item 6: Integrating HS2 and other rail services – Network Rail's route study process

Rachel Kelley (RK) of DfT provided the following information:

Ultimately, HS2 and conventional rail will operate as a single rail network. DfT, as funder and specifier of wider rail, has a major role in ensuring that the new route integrates fully into the rest of the national network.

The Rail Industry had started work on the Capacity Plus route planning study, which would look at the capability of the future network. This work involves local authorities, service funders, and train operators including freight. This would be followed, at later stages by franchise consultation, which considered the right mix of service design for passengers.

SS questioned how HS2 would interact with the existing railway network. RK stressed the importance of systems being consistent with each other, whilst not having to be identical. The new railway and the conventional railway

would have to work together to ensure the best possible passenger experience, whether travelling on existing railways or HS2.

Item 7: Maximising the modal share of sustainable travel to HS2 stations

Helen Smart (HS) of DfT provided the following information:

As we extend Britain's high speed rail network we will work with local partners to make the stations accessible to passengers – with good connections to other transport modes, such as bus, rail or coach.

We consider it important for HS2 to be:

- Integrated with classic rail services
- Linked to local transport plans, including around better access to stations
- Developed alongside strategic road plans
- Inclusive of considerations of freight – in particular relating to major ports and airports

We continue to work with key partners to investigate how we can drive better connections at these key interchange points on HS2.

Use of Parking Charges

The statutory guidance issued by DfT makes clear that enforcement authorities should not view Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) as a way of raising revenue or as a local tax.

However the Government recognises that parking enforcement may result in surplus income. In such cases section 55 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 2004 allows local authorities to use such revenue to improve transport provision in the area so that road users benefit. This may include investment in public transport.

Station Travel Plans

Station Travel Plans are a means of engaging with station users and community organisations to facilitate improvements that will encourage them to change the way they travel to the station to more environmentally friendly means.

Evaluation of DfT's pilot programme shows that Station Travel Plans led to increased cycling and walking, significantly increased bus patronage and higher satisfaction with connections to public transport at some of the railway stations. That is why we continue to encourage the development of Station Travel Plans through franchise commitments that will deliver real and better connectivity at stations.

Phase Two – Station Working Groups

In developing the options for the proposed Phase two stations, HS2 Ltd worked closely with officers from relevant local authorities through confidential Station Working Groups, established to ensure that the proposals reflected local priorities and circumstances.

Since the announcement of the proposed route in January 2013, this work has continued through Station Connectivity Working Groups, involving the main regional transport stakeholders to develop a shared view of potential station connectivity.

Growth Strategies & Regeneration

Phase One

We are working with Phase One station city partners as they develop dedicated **HS2 Growth Strategies**.

Strategies aim to set out a programmes of local infrastructure improvements to create growth and regenerate areas around planned stations.

They also provide analysis of the transport networks required to ensure the HS2 stations are well connected within cities and to the wider region.

DfT is represented on local programme boards and will be a key partner for their Local Delivery Bodies as they are set up.

Phase Two

Phase Two places are keen to replicate the HS2 Growth strategies process, developed for the Phase One station cities, once the line of route is confirmed.

Initial Programme Boards have been set up in Manchester, Leeds, Sheffield, East Midlands & Crewe.

Planning

The Government's National Planning and Policy Framework (England) requires new developments including new stations to be aligned with local and regional transport plans. And to be designed where practical to maximise the walking and cycling catchment population for public transport services so as to promote sustainable transport choices.

For HS2 stations opportunities will be taken in the development phase to ensure effective interchange with buses, coaches, taxis and other transport

including cycle routes linked in to the local network with cycle parking spaces provided at the station.

HS2 Cycling Feasibility Study

As part of the government's wider commitments to boost cycling in the UK, in August 2013 the Government announced the commissioning of a feasibility study to explore how we might create a new cycleway that broadly follows the proposed HS2 corridor from London to Birmingham, Leeds and Manchester.

The cycleway could provide cycling and walking routes for the public to enjoy, linking local communities and stations to the countryside and tourist destinations along the way, benefitting tourists and those living along the HS2 route, who could also use the route to travel to their key destinations including employment, schools, public transport interchanges and town centres.

The study would look into how existing footpaths or cycle tracks could be joined up or upgraded to create a single route. This includes assessing the scope for new local and predominantly traffic free links to and from each new HS2 station.

MT raised the lack of further information on the HS2 cycle routes. MC said that DfT and Sustrans had been exploring options which would improve cycling links between communities in the vicinity of the HS2 route. The principal focus was not on a single cycle route from London to Birmingham, but on providing joined up local facilities around the HS2 corridor. The Government had shown previously its support for investment in encouraging cycling and this initiative was consistent with that approach. Oliver Savory (OS) asked that there be an action for the DfT to provide an update on this as soon as possible.

RS was concerned that insufficient consideration had been given to cycle-proofing stations, and referred to Birmingham as an example of this. MC said that this was being considered and that travel plans and development around the stations are part of the growth strategy going forward.

Eugene Suggett (ES) said that The Ramblers recognises the potential value of a trackside cycle-route/footpath, but sees its main value being in its provision of strategic links in the existing rights of way network rather than through its provision of one long walk or ride for great distances beside the railway.

Action: DfT and HS2 Ltd to review Information Paper E5: Roads and Public Rights of Way, so as to include cycle routes and facilities.

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

Item 8: Update on the Community and Environment Fund and the Business and Local Economy Fund (CEF & BLEF)

John Pounder (JP) thanked all of those who attended the workshops, and provided input. He confirmed that none of the funds would be spent on administration. He explained that further design of the funds was still subject to ministerial approval, but outlined what was envisaged for the governance and management of the funds. He gave the following information:

Governance and Management of the Fund

Since receiving NPC's recommendations on the funds, we have been working closely with Cabinet Office colleagues to consider these recommendations and develop proposals for the governance and management of the fund.

HS2 Ltd/DfT have also met with experienced grant administration bodies, and other government departments to support this development.

It is expected that the management of the funds will be outsourced to an existing grant-management body, which would be selected through a competitive process. It is proposed that this body will make decisions on grants under the threshold of £75,000.

For grants above the threshold of £75,000, it is anticipated that HS2 Ltd on behalf of the Government, will appoint a Panel of fully independent professional members to consider applications and make recommendations to the Secretary of State for Transport on whether bids should be accepted. An HS2 Ltd employee would also sit on the Panel.

It is envisaged that the final decision will be made by a senior civil servant with delegated authority from the Secretary of State. Should the senior civil servant disagree with the Panel's recommendation, then the case would be decided by a Minister.

We can confirm that the £30m fund will be ring-fenced for grant awards and that administration costs will be provided for separately.

It is planned that detailed eligibility criteria and guidance for applicants will be finalised by the organisation appointed to manage the grant-making process, however all applicants will be required to demonstrate temporary or permanent disturbance, arising from construction works.

MT stated that he felt that the £30m value of the fund was insufficient. MC noted the concerns.

AOB

RS mentioned that the AP2 amendments were quite complex, and asked if a user-friendly summary be produced and circulated to the group.

Action DfT & HS2 Ltd to produce a user-friendly summary for the AP2 amendments and circulate it to the group.

VBP asked about the timeframe for the supplementary ES. MC said that this would be at third reading, which would be about a month after the Bill gets through Select Committee – possibly end of the year.

MT asked when the East-West route will be integrated with HS2 and asked why HS2 Ltd and East-West rail were not undertaking dialogue on each other's proposals, MB confirmed that there has been ongoing dialogue with East-West Rail/Network Rail. MT asked that an answer be provided as soon as possible. MC said we will look into this.

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

Date of next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 15th September 2015 between 13.30hrs and 15.30hrs in Great Minster House.