

**Draft Note of meeting:** High Speed 2 – Environment Round Table

**Date:** 12 November 2012 - 09:30 – 11:00

**Location:** Department for Transport

**Attendees:**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organisation</b>
Stephen Joseph	Campaign for Better Transport
Ralph Smyth	CPRE
Richard Clarke	National Association of AONBs
Ian Wilson	National Trust
Eugene Suggett	Ramblers Association
David Heath	Heritage Alliance
Chris Crean	Friends of the Earth
Ian Hepburn	The Wildlife Trusts
Victoria Bankes-Price	Woodland Trust
Rt Hon Simon Burns MP	DfT
Steve Gooding	DfT
Martin Capstick	DfT
Peter Miller	HS2 Ltd
Adam McIntee	DfT
Steve Gooding	DfT
Lee Bowerman	DfT

**Key Action Summary:**

- NGOs to submit suggestions (if they wish) on how a community fund might be funded and operated. **Action: NGOs**
- Charitable/Endowment Fund to be discussed at HS2 Ltd/NGO Forum on 6 December. **Action: Peter Miller**
- DfT and HS2 Ltd to examine Charitable/Endowment Fund proposal with input from NGOs and community groups and put a paper to the Minister for decision. DfT/HS2 to set out successes and problems with similar funding for HS1. **Action: Adam McIntee / Peter Miller**
- HS2 Ltd and DfT to discuss report 'The Carbon Impacts of HS2' in more detail with authors and see if it could contribute to the carbon assessment of HS2. **Action: Peter Miller**
- DfT officials to provide advice to Simon Burns MP on whether NGOs could have an early briefing on the Phase 2 route. **Action: Cathy Jenkins**
- To circulate draft minutes of this meeting for comment by attendees. **Action: Adam McIntee**
- To arrange the date for the next meeting. **Action: Adam McIntee**

## Meeting Minutes

- **Steve Gooding (SG)** opened the meeting and thanked the attendees for coming. He said that the discussions in these meetings so far had been productive and it is good to see that environmental groups, HS2 Ltd and DfT are keen to make this engagement a success. He reiterated that it was important for us all to keep working together if the best possible design for the scheme is to be reached.
- SG asked if anyone wanted to discuss any action points from the last meeting.
- Ralph Smyth from the CPRE asked what progress had been made regarding the development of an Endowment Fund on HS2. He explained that this could cover two slightly different aspects. First, funding necessary to maintain mitigation measures for the lifetime of the project, for example if some new disease affected trees planted along the route. Second, community level compensation, such as undergrounding pylons or providing new community facilities, greenspace etc.
- Peter Miller from HS2 Ltd said that these discussions were on-going and that the initial reaction from both DfT and HS2 Ltd had been positive. PM said that there was work to do to determine how such a scheme would be funded and the mechanism for delivering it. Adam McIntee added that this idea could be developed further and it could be discussed at the next HS2 Ltd NGO Forum and asked for suggestions from the group to feed into our emerging thinking.
- Ian Hepburn from the Woodland Trust said that sustainability would be key for the community fund. He said we need to make sure that whatever measures are taken are done with a long term vision in mind and management schemes are put in place to protect them.
- Ian Wilson from the National Trust said that they had had some good discussions with local groups who would be interested in the long term care of land and green space provided there was some funding to support their work. He said that organisations like the Land Trust could add value. He added that these schemes were important to ensure that local people could start to see positives in HS2 not just negatives.
- Stephen Joseph said there were some good thoughts here and suggested that it might be worth each group who wished to write in to the Department and set out their views in detail. Steve Gooding agreed and Peter Miller said it would be useful to have these notes before the next HS2 Ltd/NGO meeting on the 6 December. Ralph Smyth restated the request from NGOs for DfT/HS2 Ltd to produce a report setting out what did and did not work well in relation to similar funding and measures for HS1.

**Action:** NGOs to submit suggestions (if they wish) on how a Charitable/Endowment Fund might be funded and operated.

**Action:** DfT/HS2 to set out successes and problems with similar funding for HS1.

**Action: Charitable/Endowment Fund** to be discussed at HS2 Ltd/NGO Forum on 5 December.

Note: Simon Burns MP, Minister of State at the Department for Transport takes over the Chair at this point.

- Steve Gooding welcomes the Minister and asks each group to introduce themselves.
- All of the groups briefly set out the areas that concerned them particularly and many of them expressed a wish to work positively with the Department and HS2 Ltd to ensure that HS2 was designed in the most environmentally responsible way possible.
- Stephen Joseph said that HS2 so far had not had wholesale opposition from environmental groups in a way that expansion of roads and runways likely would. He said that there had been good dialogue with DfT Civil Servants and HS2 Ltd and there was a general consensus that HS2 has potential to be environmentally sustainable provided it was designed well. He made the point that the frequent change of Ministers at the Department had sometimes made it difficult to demonstrate real progress.
- Simon Burns MP (SB) introduced himself and said that he was pleased to learn that such a meeting was already operating effectively when he took up his post. He was pleased that mature discussions were taking place and that everybody around the table was committed to getting the best possible design for HS2. He said that this does not guarantee that everyone will get everything that they want, but he hoped that good dialogue would continue so that the best outcomes could be reached.
- SB said that he had now driven the route to develop his understanding of the full effects of HS2. He was pleased that the DfT and HS2 Ltd who went with him were clearly committed to getting a quality, sustainable design and were not focused entirely on the financial aspects of the scheme.
- SB explained that since the change in Ministers, himself and the Secretary of State have both taken responsibility for HS2 in order to accommodate the large volumes of work that will be required as the Phase 1 HS2 Bill approaches Parliament towards the end of 2013.
- The Minister reinforced his commitment to HS2 and said that the cross-party support that HS2 enjoys was important for its long term planning.
- SB said that he was determined to do what he could to ensure a good design for the scheme. As part of that, he said he hoped they would be pleased that he had approved the concept of a Design Panel to look at key

structures on HS2 as had been discussed with the NGOs previously. He said the Secretary of State would mention this in his speech to the CPRE tomorrow.

- Ian Wilson said it was refreshing to have good dialogue with people in the Department and HS2 Ltd and that it was starting to yield results although there was still a lot of work to do.
- Steve Gooding raised the Charitable/Endowment Fund idea, explaining that this had been touched on before the Minister arrived. He asked the NGOs for their views.
- Ian Wilson said that it was a good idea in principle but there would not be a one size fits all solution. He said that it might be that there are a variety of appropriate methods for delivering the funding depending on the local circumstances.
- Steve Gooding said that one of the benefits of this form of mitigation is that relatively small sums of money can make a big difference at a local level. Ian Hepburn from the Wildlife Trusts said that there was some good examples of these sorts of schemes on HS1 that could be learned from.
- Simon Burns said that the idea was interesting and he would look forward to receiving a paper on the matter in due course.

**Action:** DfT and HS2 Ltd to examine Charitable/Endowment Fund proposal with input from NGOs and community groups and put a paper to the Minister for decision.

- Steve Gooding invited Ralph Smyth from the CPRE to present the report on the potential of HS2 to reduce carbon. Ralph Smyth presented as per his slides.
- The Minister welcomed the report and thanked the CPRE, CBT and RSPB for their work. He suggested that HS2 Ltd worked with the reports authors to see how this work could contribute to their own assessment of the carbon potential of HS2.

**Action:** HS2 Ltd and DfT to discuss report in more detail with authors and see if it could contribute to the carbon assessment of HS2.

- Steve Gooding asked Lee Bowerman to give an update on Phase 2.
- Lee Bowerman said that new Ministers have taken time to familiarise themselves with Phase 2 but we are still planning to make an announcement on an initial preferred route before the end of the year.

- LB said that although it was not possible to share route options at this stage, he was examining with new Ministers whether we could give NGOs an early briefing on the route shortly before an announcement.
- Ian Wilson acknowledged that there were difficulties in this for both DfT and environmental groups. He said that he thought NGOs had a lot of expert knowledge to offer and that could be helpful to the project.
- Ralph Smyth said that some NGOs would be willing to sign non-disclosure agreements and would be content to see options rather than final routes.
- Ian Hepburn from the Wildlife Trust said that it gives some comfort to them if they know that their views were at least known to the decision maker. Their local groups become very unhappy if they feel that they were not consulted at all.
- Simon Burns said that he could see both the attractions and risks in this idea. He said that the concerns raised about leaks would have to be considered as well as following the proper Parliamentary process and ensuring that Parliament gets the announcement first. However, he would like DfT officials to explore whether this is possible and provide advice to him for consideration.

**Action:** DfT officials to provide advice to Simon Burns MP on whether NGOs could have an early briefing on the Phase 2 route.

- <Meeting closed.>