



Department
for Transport

High Speed Two Phase 2a: West Midlands to Crewe Government Response to the Design Refinement Consultation

Moving Britain Ahead

June 2017



High Speed Two Phase 2a: West Midlands to Crewe Government Response to the Design Refinement Consultation

Presented to Parliament
by the Secretary of State for Transport
by Command of Her Majesty

July 2017



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1. Introduction

- 1.1 On 13 September 2016 the Secretary of State for Transport, announced the Design Refinement Consultation on the High Speed Two Phase 2a route: West Midlands to Crewe.
- 1.2 The consultation, which closed on 7 November 2016, included proposals for:
 - South of Crewe, extending the Crewe tunnel south and re-siting the tunnel portal south of the A500 and Weston Lane;
 - South of Crewe, moving the spur lines that connect High Speed Two (HS2) to the West Coast Main Line (WCML) further south and extending their length; and
 - Near Stone, building a temporary construction facility (railhead) in-between the proposed HS2 route and the M6, with the potential that its use could then be changed to become a permanent maintenance facility.
- 1.3 The Government has now introduced a hybrid Bill to Parliament for Phase 2a of HS2, this is entitled High Speed Rail (West Midlands - Crewe). This Bill seeks powers for the Phase 2a scheme, including the route refinements confirmed by the Secretary of State within this document. There is now an open consultation on the Environmental Statement that was presented alongside the Bill. You can find details of the consultation at www.gov.uk/hs2. People whose property or interests are directly and specially affected by the Phase 2a Bill will also have the opportunity to petition Parliament against the Bill after its Second Reading.
- 1.4 Later this year, the Secretary of State intends to issue new safeguarding directions to safeguard the land shown on the plans deposited with the Bill. New safeguarding directions will include the land required for the route refinements confirmed within this document. Safeguarding directions will be removed from land no longer required for the Phase 2a scheme. The application of HS2 property compensation and assistance schemes in relation to parts of the route which have been subject to route refinements will also be confirmed at that stage.

2. Summary of findings

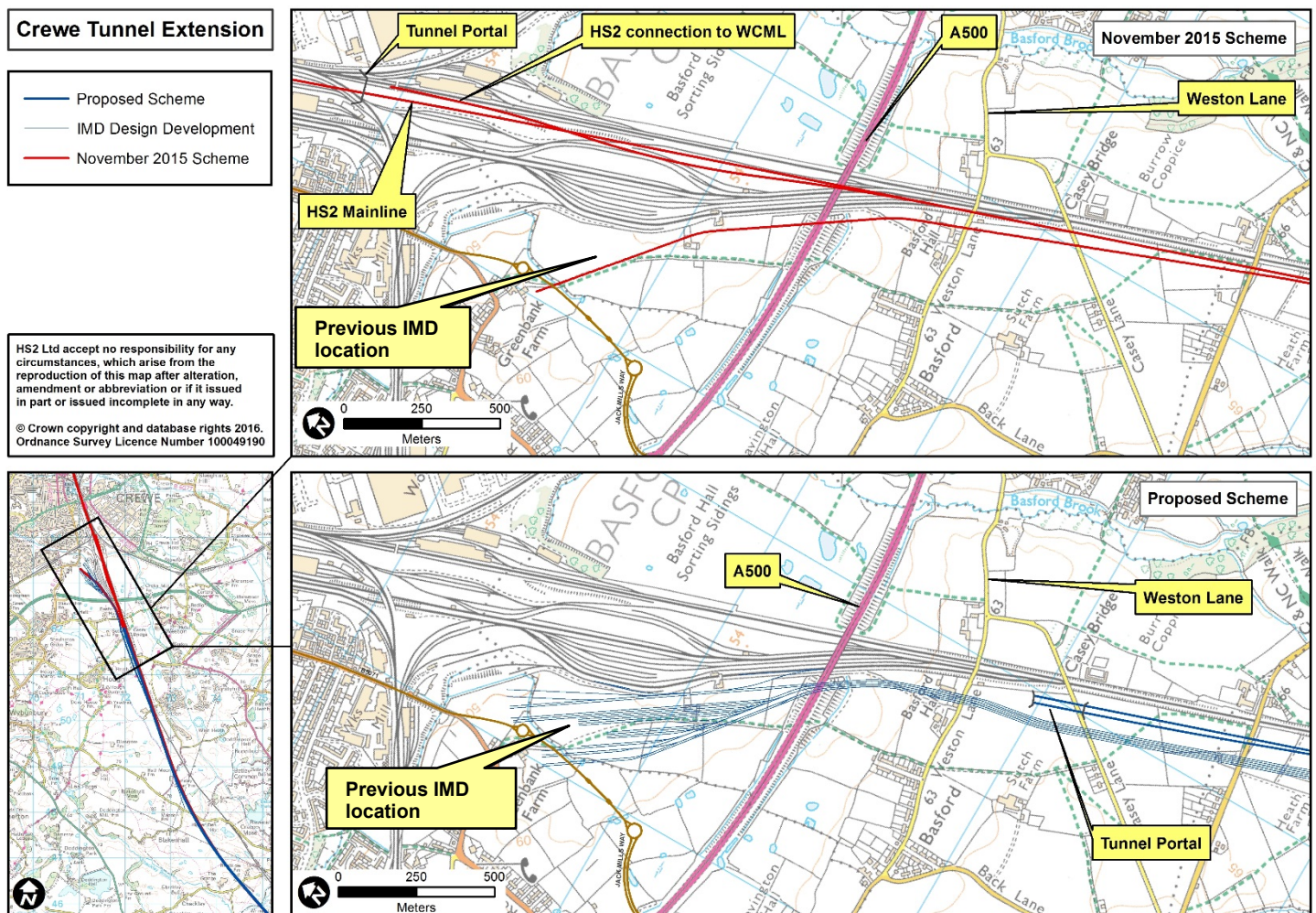
- 2.1 The consultation received 573 responses. Of these, 43 were from organisations and elected representatives and the remainder were submitted by members of the public. More detail on the responses can be found in the Summary of Consultation Responses report by Dialogue by Design, which can be found on the HS2 website.
- 2.2 The majority of responses on the proposed Crewe tunnel extension and spurs supported the changes with the most common reason being reduced impacts on local communities. The Secretary of State has now decided to confirm both these changes.
- 2.3 The proposal for the facility near Stone received the most responses and the majority of those opposed the proposal. The main reasons given were impacts on the local community and environment. The Secretary of State has carefully considered these responses. He has decided to confirm the proposal to build a temporary construction facility (railhead) between the M6 motorway and the route of the Phase 2a railway near Stone and then to change its use to become a permanent infrastructure maintenance facility, the Stone Infrastructure Maintenance Base – Rail (IMB-R), once the construction of the railway has been completed. This refinement to the route will deliver significant programme, operation and construction benefits as well as reducing the cost and environmental impacts of providing these facilities separately. To address some of the concerns raised, the Secretary of State can now confirm that, apart from a very short period to connect to the new alignment¹, Yarnfield Lane will remain open throughout construction.

¹ Based on current plans, connecting Yarnfield Lane to the new alignment will require two weekend closures over a three month period.

3. Crewe tunnel extension

- 3.1 The design presented in November 2015 for Phase Two of HS2 showed the HS2 lines approaching Crewe above ground before going into a tunnel to pass under Crewe. The Crewe tunnel southern entrance (portal), was located on Network Rail land in the Basford Hall area, in-between the West Coast Main Line (WCML) and the freight sidings near Basford.
- 3.2 The HS2 lines approaching this tunnel portal from the south were shown on a viaduct crossing over the entrance to the existing freight depot before passing through further freight sidings and into a deep cutting. The design showed the A500 dual carriageway and Weston Lane bridges demolished and rebuilt on a new alignment and at an increased height to accommodate the HS2 route.
- 3.3 The change proposed in the consultation involved extending the Crewe tunnel south by 2100m and re-siting the tunnel portal south of the A500 and Weston Lane.

Figure 3.1: Crewe approaches, revised tunnel extension



- 3.4 This section sets out the Government's decision following consideration of responses to the question:

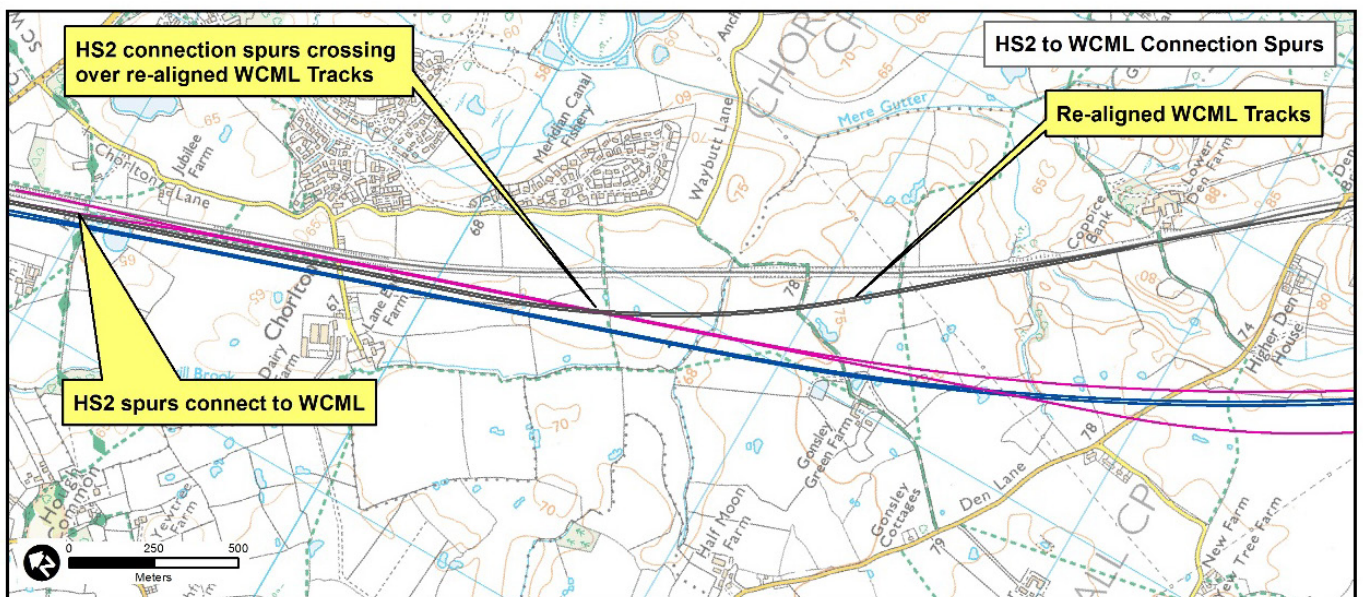
"This proposed change consists of extending the Crewe Tunnel south by approximately 2100m and re-siting the tunnel portal south of the A500 and Weston Lane. Please give your views on this proposal, indicating whether or not you support the proposal together with your reasons."

- 3.5 114 responses were received to this question. Around half of those respondents expressed a position on the proposed extension of the Crewe tunnel. Of those who expressed a position, 43 were in favour (though 8 supported it with caveats), and 12 did not support the proposal.
- 3.6 Reasons given in support of the proposal include the potential for reducing impacts on existing rail services, reducing noise impacts on local communities and reducing visual impacts from lowering the height of the line.
- 3.7 The key reason given for not supporting the proposal involved concerns around noise and vibration, with several respondents expressing concern about impact on local farming communities.
- 3.8 In addition, some respondents commented that the tunnel extension must be considered alongside the other design refinements, arguing that if the Infrastructure Maintenance Depot (IMD) is relocated near to Stone, no substantial alterations to the A500 and Weston Lane bridges would be needed.
- 3.9 Having carefully considered the consultation responses received, the Secretary of State has decided to confirm the proposed change to extend the Crewe tunnel south and re-site the tunnel portal south of the A500 and Weston Lane. This refinement will result in significantly reduced disruption to the local community and existing railway.

4. HS2 to West Coast Mainline (WCML) spurs south of Crewe

- 4.1 In the November 2015 design, the route connected to the WCML via two spurs: a 'northbound spur' that connected trains travelling towards Crewe and a 'southbound spur' that connected trains travelling towards London. Heading north, the northbound spur diverged from the HS2 mainline near Weston Lane to the south of Crewe, before passing over or through some of the existing Basford Hall sidings, over the top of the HS2 main lines and joining to the WCML just south of Crewe South Junction. Heading south, the southbound spur diverged from the WCML near Weston Lane, before passing over a realigned line of the WCML on a viaduct near Newcastle Road and connecting to the HS2 mainlines near Chorlton and Lane End Farm. Both spurs were approximately 3km in length.
- 4.2 The proposed change to this design would move the spur lines further south and extend their length.

Figure 4.1: HS2 to WCML revised connection spurs south of Crewe.



- 4.3 This section sets out the Government's decision following consideration of responses to the question:

"This proposed change consists of moving the spur lines that connect HS2 to the WCML south of Crewe, further south and extending their length. Please give your views on this proposal, indicating whether or not you support the proposal together with your reasons."

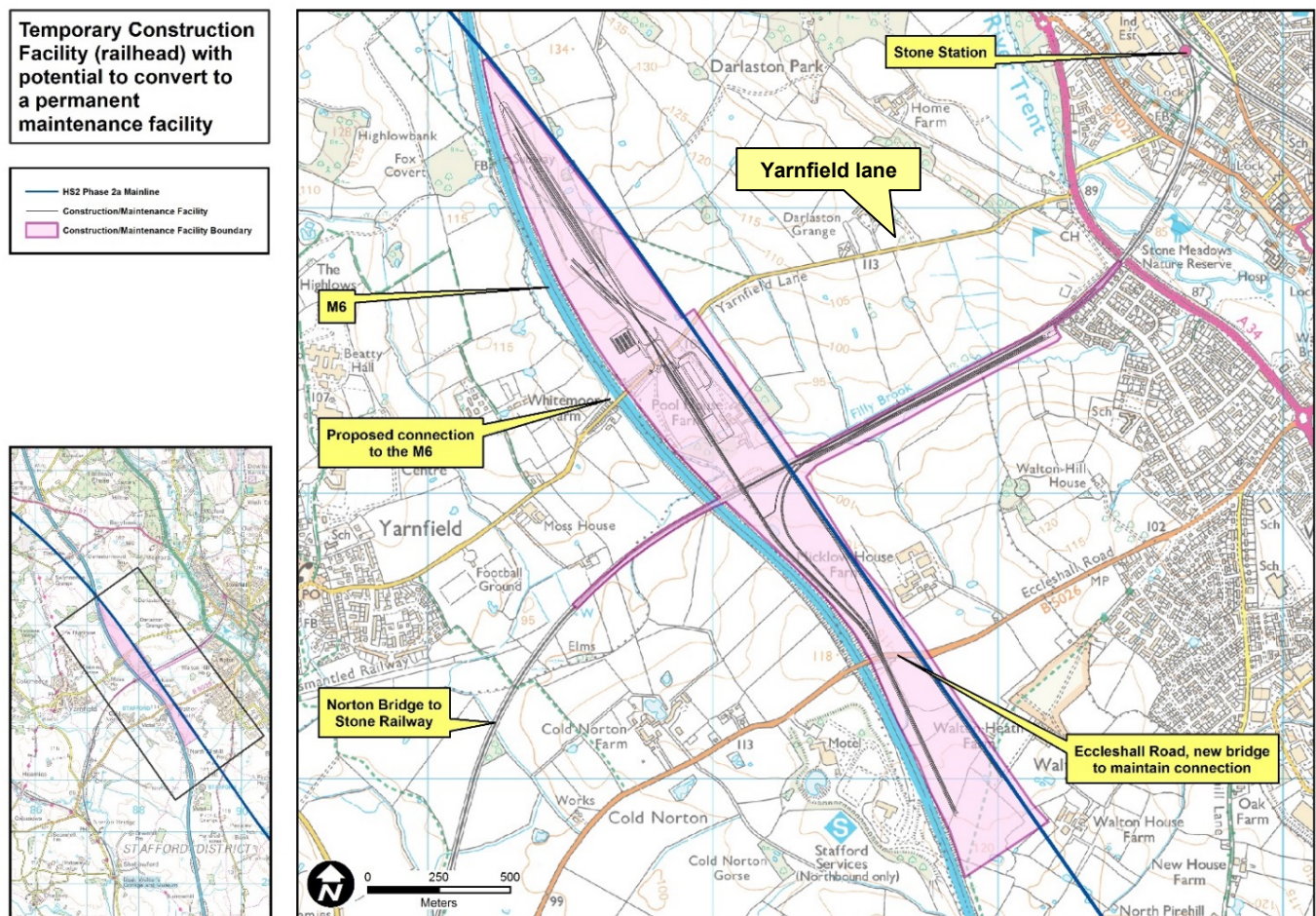
- 4.4 112 responses were received to this question. Around half of those respondents expressed a position on the proposed changes to the spur lines. Of those who express a position, 37 were in favour of the proposal (although 10 supported it with caveats), and 22 did not support the proposal.
- 4.5 The most prominent reason given in support of the design refinement is the potential reduced impact on the local landscape, visual environment and noise in local communities. Some respondents also commented on the benefits of improved links with the WCML.
- 4.6 The key reason given for not supporting the proposal surrounds noise and vibration; some respondents expressed concern about the potential noise during construction, from compounds and traffic, as well as during operation. Several respondents related their position, both in support and opposition, on this design refinement to the proposal for the Infrastructure Maintenance Depot (IMD).
- 4.7 Having carefully considered the responses received, the Secretary of State has decided to confirm the proposed change to move the spur lines that connect HS2 to the WCML south of Crewe, further south and extend their length. This will result in the spurs achieving the necessary length to transfer trains from HS2 systems to conventional rail systems, and the movement south will cause less disruption during construction and less visual and noise impact to residents of Chorlton.

5. Temporary construction facility (railhead), with the potential to convert to a permanent maintenance facility near Stone

- 5.1 The route for HS2 announced in November 2015 included a permanent Infrastructure Maintenance Depot (IMD) south of Crewe in the west Basford area. It was considered that this area would also be suitable for a temporary construction railhead, which would serve as the main compound for all railway systems installation works for the Proposed Scheme. Facilities at the railhead would include offices, storage, a rail marshalling yard, a pre-assembly depot, and railway reception lines to manage trains arriving from the conventional railway. Sidings with storage and construction facilities for the track and overhead line equipment would be provided. The IMD and railhead facilities would share both land footprint and infrastructure including buildings, utilities connections, rail sidings, connections to the conventional railway and environmental mitigation. Sharing of these elements would avoid the cost and environmental impact of providing these facilities separately.
- 5.2 The proposed change to this design consisted of building a temporary construction facility (railhead) in-between the proposed HS2 route and the M6 near Stone, with the potential that its use could then be changed to become a permanent maintenance facility.
- 5.3 This section sets out the Government's decision following consideration of responses to the question:

"This proposed change consists of building a temporary construction facility (railhead) in-between the proposed HS2 route and the M6, with the potential that its use could then be changed to become a permanent maintenance facility. Based on the limited information available, please give your views on the potential change of use of the site to a permanent maintenance facility, as well as the railhead, indicating whether or not you support the proposal together with your reasons."

Figure 5.1: Relocated infrastructure maintenance facility near Stone



- 5.4 From the responses received, 278 opposed the proposal, 137 supported the proposal and 18 supported the proposal with caveats. In addition, many respondents expressed concern about the proposals without explicitly stating their opposition to them.
- 5.5 Two of the most prominent reasons for supporting the proposal relate to traffic and transport: the proximity of the proposed site to the M6 motorway and its position midway between Crewe and the West Midlands. Respondents commented that both of these could save time, costs and reduce impacts on the local road network.
- 5.6 Conversely, many respondents gave reasons for opposing the proposal such as: potential impacts on local wildlife; 24/7 light and air pollution from the facility; visual impact of the facility; potential disruption to local communities and facilities including schools; increased congestion on the local road network, as well as the impact this could have on emergency vehicle access.
- 5.7 In particular, many respondents raised concerns that access to Yarnfield village would be significantly affected, with Yarnfield Lane being described as a "vital lifeline" used by Yarnfield and some other rural areas to access services in Stone. The Secretary of State recognises the strong feeling on this issue, in the local area and can now confirm that, apart from a very short period to connect to the new alignment, Yarnfield Lane will remain open throughout construction².
- 5.8 Since this consultation, having carefully considered the consultation responses received and the mitigation measures proposed by HS2 Ltd, the Secretary of State

² Based on current plans, connecting Yarnfield Lane to the new alignment will require two weekend closures over a three month period.

has decided to confirm the proposal to build a temporary construction facility (railhead) in-between the proposed HS2 route and the M6 near Stone and then to change its use to become a permanent maintenance facility, the Stone Infrastructure Maintenance Base – Rail (IMB-R), following completion of construction of the railway.

- 5.9 It will no longer be necessary to provide an IMD just south of Crewe.
- 5.10 A temporary construction facility (railhead) is considered necessary in order to achieve significant programme and construction benefits for the Phase 2a route. The site near Stone is located on land between the route of the Phase 2a railway and the M6, north of the Norton Bridge to Stone railway. The Phase 2a scheme will provide a new connection within the site to the Norton Bridge to Stone railway and new slip roads onto the M6. The site is best placed to enable construction of the Phase 2a scheme to be rail served and to help reduce the volume of construction traffic on the local highway network. Moving the permanent infrastructure maintenance facility to this location will minimise the cost and environmental impacts of providing these facilities separately, and remove the risks and complexities associated with the location previously identified at Crewe.
- 5.11 The Secretary of State recognises that the impacts of the permanent maintenance facility were not assessed in the working draft Environmental Impact Assessment report (although the impacts of the temporary construction railhead were assessed). The Secretary of State will ensure that Yarnfield Lane remains open for public use throughout construction of the railway, apart from a very short period to connect to the new alignment³. The likely significant environmental effects of moving the permanent maintenance facility near to Stone are reported in the Environmental Statement, which was deposited alongside the hybrid Bill. There is an open public consultation on the Environmental Statement (ES) which is being held under Parliamentary procedures.

³ Based on current plans, connecting Yarnfield Lane to the new alignment will require two weekend closures over a three month period.

6. Safeguarding and property

Safeguarding

- 6.1 Safeguarding directions for the Phase 2a route were first issued by the Secretary of State on 30 November 2015. Safeguarding is kept under review so that plans can be amended and new safeguarding directions issued when reasonable to do so to ensure the availability of the land that will be required for construction and operation of the Phase 2a scheme.
- 6.2 The Secretary of State intends to amend the current safeguarding directions later this year to update safeguarding/safeguard the land shown on the plans deposited with the Bill. New safeguarding directions will include the land required for the route refinements detailed in this document. It will not be possible to serve an effective blight notice on the Secretary of State to buy a property newly affected by the route refinements detailed in this document until new safeguarding directions are issued.
- 6.3 Any person trying to sell a property which they believe has been impacted by the announcement of the Phase 2a route refinements should first discuss their situation with HS2 Ltd via the helpdesk. HS2 Ltd will treat properties impacted by these route refinements under atypical arrangements.
- 6.4 For further information on our approach to atypical circumstances across the HS2 route, please see Section 9 of the April 2014 decision document on HS2 property schemes:
http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20150207082621/https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/301522/cm_8833.pdf
- 6.5 Where a property is removed from safeguarding, other than in cases mentioned in 6.6 below, a qualifying owner-occupier will continue to be able to apply under the Express Purchase scheme for a period of five years from the date the property ceases to be affected by safeguarding directions, under the Extended Homeowner Protection Zone (EHPZ) scheme. The EHPZ scheme gives such owner-occupiers sufficient time to consider their options, and to adjust or carry out any long-term plans they may have made based on an expectation of statutory compensation.
- 6.6 The EHPZ will not apply to those affected by the re-siting of the facility from Crewe to near Stone. This is because the following changes are excluded from the EHPZ scheme
 - Significant line of route changes, or
 - Route alignment changes from surface track into a deep tunnel, or
 - Proposed depots, or other HS2 related compounds move location
- 6.7 From this point forward and until new safeguarding directions are formally issued, HS2 Ltd will consider planning applications referred to it by local planning authorities

with reference to the route refinements explained within this document. Proposed developments which no longer interfere with the Phase 2a scheme will not be subject to directions or restrictions by HS2 Ltd. This will be the case for a number of properties in the west Basford area now that the IMD is no longer to be constructed at that location.

- 6.8 Applicants or prospective applicants for planning permission on land that is subject to the route refinements detailed in this document are advised to contact HS2 Ltd.

Access to property compensation and assistance schemes

- 6.9 We are committed to providing fair and appropriate access to compensation and appropriate support and assistance to those directly affected by HS2. Property schemes for this part of the route were first confirmed on 26 May 2016 following consultation and are summarised at: <https://www.gov.uk/claim-compensation-if-affected-by-hs2>
- 6.10 Updated maps for HS2 Phase 2a property schemes will be published alongside revised safeguarding directions. Updates will take into account any revision to the line of route as well as existing provisions for how property schemes are applied. For example, the extension to the Crewe tunnel will mean that the rural/urban boundary south of Crewe will move from the south side of the A500 to the portal of the Crewe tunnel south of Weston Lane. This will mean that some properties may no longer be eligible for Rural Support Zone schemes, and some properties which would have been eligible for Homeowner Payments in the future will no longer be eligible.
- 6.11 For the Need to Sell scheme, in relation to criterion 2 - location of property - applicants will be able to ask HS2 Ltd to consider their application against the previous route until three months following publication of this document. After this date, applications will be assessed against the new route only.

HS2 helpdesk contact details

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Email: HS2enquiries@hs2.org.uk

Telephone: 08081 434 434.

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7. Next steps

- 7.1 The Secretary of State has published decisions on these design refinements alongside introduction of the hybrid Bill for the Phase 2a scheme into Parliament.
- 7.2 An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) has been carried out to assess the likely significant effects of the Proposed Scheme, as detailed in the Bill, on the environment. The findings of this are reported in the Phase 2a Environmental Statement (ES) which was published alongside the Phase 2a hybrid Bill. As this document is around 14,500 pages long, a Non-Technical Summary (NTS) has also been prepared for ease of reference.
- 7.3 From 13 September to 7 November 2016, public consultation took place on the working draft EIA Report. HS2 Ltd has considered the consultation responses and these have informed the design and environmental assessment of the Proposed Scheme reported in the ES, as well as the draft Code of Construction Practice which was published with the ES. A working draft EIA Report Consultation Summary Report has also been published as part of the ES.
- 7.4 As per Parliamentary procedure, there is now a consultation on the ES which will run for ten weeks. A summary of comments on the ES will then be prepared by the independent assessor appointed by Parliament to inform the Second Reading of the Bill.
- 7.5 HS2 Ltd will continue to engage with local communities and their representatives to discuss any concerns raised by these publications.
- 7.6 People whose property or interests are specially and directly affected by the Phase 2a Bill will have the opportunity to petition against the Bill after its Second Reading.

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