

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

**Date:** Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> September 2017 - 12noon

**Location:** Department for Transport, Great Minster House, London

**Attendees:**

| <b>Name</b>           |     | <b>Organisation</b>  |
|-----------------------|-----|--|
| Paul Maynard MP       |     | Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Rail, Accessibility and HS2                             |
| Katherine Hawkins     | KH  | Wildlife Trusts  |
| Victoria Bankes Price | VBP | Woodland Trust   |
| Daniel Carey-Dawes    | DCD | Campaign to Protect Rural England  |
| Kate Russell          | KR  | Central Association of Agricultural Valuers  |
| Adam Simmons (Chair)  | AS  | DfT  |
| Claire Gregory        | CG  | DfT  |
| Lee Bowerman          | LB  | DfT  |
| Helen Smart           | HS  | DfT  |
| Peter Miller          | PM  | HS2 Ltd  |
| Christian Bonard      | CB  | HS2 Ltd  |
| Davinder Hothi        | DH  | HS2 Ltd  |
| Caroline Richards     | CR  | HS2 Ltd  |
| Louise Portelly       | LP  | HS2 Ltd Observer   |
| Cathy Elliot          | CE  | Independent Chair, Community and Environment Fund (CEF) and Business and Local Economy Fund (BLEF) |
|                       |     |  |
| Tim Deverell          |     | DfT Observer   |
| Greg Ward             |     | DfT Observer   |
| Atsushi Okamoto       |     | DfT Observer   |
|                       |     |  |
| <b>Apologies</b>      |     |  |
| Cllr Martin Tett      |     | Local Government Association   |
| Cllr Stewart Stacey   |     | Local Government Association   |
| Jonathan Baker        |     | Country Land & Business Association  |
| Stephen Joseph        |     | Campaign for Better Transport  |
| Malcolm Hackett       |     | England's Community Forests  |
| Eugene Suggett        |     | Ramblers   |
| Louise Staples        |     | National Farmers Union   |
| Stephen Field         |     | National Trust   |
|                       |     |  |

Adam Simmons (AS) opened the meeting, introducing himself. All present introduced themselves.

## **1 – Greeting and introduction from Paul Maynard MP**

The Minister outlined his role within the Ministerial team, covering all rail including HS2. He was in listening mode at this meeting. The Minister set out his perspective: he is passionate about the need for HS2 but acutely conscious of the need to minimise its impact on the landscape and people.

The Minister asked Roundtable members to give him any examples they come across where things are not working well, as the more examples he has, the better he can constructively challenge HS2 as a critical friend.

The Minister highlighted his aspiration that the project does more than just mitigate for its impacts; he wants to leave something better as a result of HS2.

Kate Russell (KR) raised her concern that insufficient engagement was taking place with those on the ground locally. The presumption for habitat loss mitigation was always as close as possible to the lost habitat, when a more imaginative answer in some cases might be to enhance existing habitats even if they are further away.

The Minister suggested that HS2 needed to consider more, different ways of communicating, not just experts producing detailed technical reports.

## **2 – HS2 Phase One Progress Report**

Christian Bonard (CB) gave an update on progress for Phase One since the last meeting. His slides were circulated to members and the content is not replicated here.

He highlighted that the contractors recognise the challenges but also the opportunities to deliver on the minimum environmental standards.

Stage 1 design has been extended to 16 months, to give ‘time to design’, that is to ensure sufficient time to optimise design. Enabling works are underway and a lot of the environmental works are up front including, for example, work on historic environmental sites starting along the line of route.

VBP noted that HS2 Ltd was making contact with LAs regarding planning consents and that while some of these were engaging well, they varied significantly and some were not consulting the NGOs.

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| <p>CB offered to provide a regularly updated forward plan of submissions for planning consents to help them know what are coming up.</p> <p>CB also noted that there is the Phase One Planning Forum and they have agreed consistent submissions.</p> <p>PM committed to taking an item to the Planning Forum to talk about getting consistency in engaging with interested bodies.</p> <p>The Minister emphasised that all the contractors work to the same standards and commitments and this includes being required to work collaboratively.</p> <p>KR encouraged HS2 Ltd to keep a firm grasp on contractors to ensure they comply with their commitments. PM confirmed that HS2 Ltd is working to ensure that is the case. He urged members to encourage their membership to engage with HS2 Ltd and contractors.</p> <p><b>3 – HS2 Phase 2a Progress Report</b></p> <p>Caroline Richards (CR) gave an update on progress for Phase 2a since the last meeting. Her slides were circulated and the content is not replicated here.</p> <p>In particular she highlighted the planned use of borrow pits, as these, were not included in the hybrid Bill design for Phase One. VBP asked if that was still the case for Phase One, CB committed to checking this.</p> <p>KR asked if the land for borrow pits was required on a permanent basis. Following the meeting CR confirmed that the borrow pits were in Schedule 6 to the Bill (acquisition of land for particular purposes) and would be permanent acquisition.</p> <p>AS explained that the timing of petitioning will depend on when Second Reading of the Bill is scheduled, but the absolute earliest will be end November with Select Committee in March 2018. Petitioning starts just before Select Committee.</p> <p>The Minister left the meeting at this point and encouraged members to contact him directly with their views on how useful they find this Roundtable.</p> <p><b>4 – HS2 Phase 2b Progress Report</b></p> <p>Davinder Hothi (DH) gave an update on progress for Phase 2b since the last meeting. His slides were circulated and the content is</p> | <p><b>ACTION</b></p> <p><b>ACTION</b></p> <p><b>ACTION</b></p> |
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not replicated here.

The consultants working to deliver the Phase 2b Bill are now on board. There are six area environmental teams in HS2 each liaising with the area consultants.

The consultation on the draft Scope and Methodology Reports for the environmental and equality impact assessments finishes on 29<sup>th</sup> September. HS2 Ltd offered Roundtable members the opportunity to have bilateral meetings either during or after the consultation period to discuss any issues particular to them.

AS asked members whether they had seen evidence of lessons learnt from previous Phases and of improvement.

VPB commented that they had seen definite improvement in engagement, so providing early knowledge to them.

PM highlighted that it is important to HS2 Ltd to be able to get access to land as and when they can, the land assessment can be better informed. The aim is always to avoid an adversarial relationship and to have a dialogue with land owners.

KR agreed, noting that this needed to have the right people from HS2 Ltd available for that dialogue, not just the technical assessor on the ground.

PM accepted this and noted that this is an area HS2 Ltd are working to get right. DH added that HS2 Ltd is building their agricultural liaison function to be able to do this better. He offered to set up a three-way engagement meeting with NFU, CLA and CAAV.

#### **5 – Review of actions from last meeting**

All actions had been completed.

#### **6 – Community & Environment Fund and Business & Local Economy Fund (CEF & BLEF) Update**

Cathy Elliott (CE), the Independent Chair of CEF and BLEF outlined the aims of CEF and BLEF, which are administered independently of HS2 Ltd by Groundwork UK. They have now been running for six months. Groundwork have been proactive in engagement.

CE made the offer to Roundtable members that they could have sessions for their areas of interest. If they are interested they could contact Groundwork and they will organise something for the area or the sector.

Groundwork are also tracking applications and noting the ‘cold

**ACTION**

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| <p>spots' where additional engagement may be needed. There are no deadlines for applications, though for higher levels of funding there are panel dates and these are available. CE encouraged members to get in touch with Groundwork UK.</p>  |                      |
| <p>CE outlined that they hope to make an announcement on the first successful applications in the autumn.</p>   |                      |
| <p><b>7 - The results of Roundtable Members Survey</b></p>  |                      |
| <p>Claire Gregory (CG) reminded the roundtable that there had been a survey of members asking them for their thoughts on these meetings and how we might make them as useful as possible.</p>   |                      |
| <p>It was agreed that having a theme to discuss for each meeting would be interesting and CG asked for suggestions from those present. It was agreed that this request would be circulated to the membership and a theme agreed from those suggested prior to the next meeting.</p>   | <p><b>ACTION</b></p> |
| <p>CG also asked members for their input into how to make the meetings as interactive as possible.</p>  |                      |
| <p>VBP asked for an update from the Planning Forum. It was agreed that this would be arranged.</p>  | <p><b>ACTION</b></p> |
| <p>KH reflected that all those present were route-wide bodies and questioned whether more local representation was needed.</p>  |                      |
| <p>KH also suggested that, because of the real difference in the stages of the Phases, should meetings focus on a particular phase? It was agreed that the agenda should be weighted to do this.</p>  | <p><b>ACTION</b></p> |
| <p>AS suggested that a topic could be addressed more interactively by posing a question for debate for each meeting. It was agreed that, a request for the next question for debate would be an AOB at each meeting.</p>  | <p><b>ACTION</b></p> |
| <p><b>8 - Membership review and possible new members</b></p>  |                      |
| <p>Helen Smart (HS) explained that the British Horse Society had asked to be involved in one of the HS2 stakeholder groups. Would members here agree that they be invited to join this Roundtable? This was agreed.</p>   | <p><b>ACTION</b></p> |
| <p>HS asked about those on the Roundtable invitation list who did not attend meetings. Should they continue to be invited? It was agreed that they should be asked if they wanted to remain on the list and should stay on if they replied positively. If they wished to be removed, or didn't respond, they should not be invited in future.</p> | <p><b>ACTION</b></p> |

## 9 - AOB

Meetings dates will be booked for the next 12 months, to give members advanced warning.

**ACTION**

Members asked for a list of other HS2 stakeholder panels and the membership of them. This will be circulated.

**ACTION**

A design workshop with the design panel and the main works civils contractors was requested. It was agreed that HS2 Ltd would arrange this.

**ACTION**

### Key Action Summary:

- 1) HS2 Ltd committed to taking an item to the Planning Forum to talk about getting consistency in engaging with interested bodies. **Action: HS2 Ltd**
- 2) HS2 Ltd committed to checking that use of borrow pits is not needed for Phase One. **Action: HS2 Ltd**
- 3) HS2 Ltd will confirm whether land taken for borrow pits was required on a permanent basis. **Action: HS2 Ltd (completed)**
- 4) HS2 Ltd will set up a three-way engagement meeting with NFU, CLA and CAAV. **Action: HS2 Ltd (arranged: 12-10-17)**
- 5) Members will be asked for suggestions for themes on which to focus future meetings. **Action: DfT**
- 6) HS2 Ltd will arrange for an update from the Planning Forum. **Action: HS2 Ltd**
- 7) Future meetings agendas will include a focus on one Phase and have shorter updates from the other two at the end of the meetings. **Action: DfT**
- 8) Future agendas will include an AOB asking for a question for debate for the following meeting. **Action: DfT**
- 9) The British Horse Society will be invited to join the Roundtable and be invited to the next meeting. **Action: DfT**
- 10) Non-attending invitees to the Roundtable will be asked if they wish to remain on the mailing list. **Action: DfT**
- 11) Dates of meetings for the coming 12 months will be circulated. **Action: DfT**

12) HS2 Ltd will provide a list of other stakeholder engagement panels and their attendees. **Action: HS2 Ltd**

13) A design workshop with the design panel and the main works civils contractors will be arranged. **Action: HS2 Ltd**

**Date of next meeting**

Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> November 10.30am