Ipsos MORI
Social Research Institute

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HS2 Phase 2a (West Midlands – Crewe), Equality Impact Assessment Report

A Summary of Consultation Responses

Produced by Ipsos MORI for HS2 Ltd

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Overview of the consultation

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Background to Equality Impact Assessment

High Speed Two (HS2) is a new high speed railway proposed by the Government to connect major cities in Great Britain. It will be built in phases. Phase One of the HS2 network will run from London to the West Midlands, with a connection to the West Coast Main Line (WCML) near Lichfield, and is planned to become operational in 2026. Phase Two will extend HS2 to the north of England with trains running to Manchester via Crewe, and to Leeds via the East Midlands and South Yorkshire. Connections to the East Coast and West Coast main lines will enable HS2 services to travel onwards on the existing rail network.

HS2 Ltd is the organisation responsible for developing and delivering the HS2 project. HS2 Ltd is owned by the Department for Transport (DfT).

Phase 2a (the subject of this consultation) is the western section of Phase Two between the West Midlands and Crewe (also referred to as the 'Proposed Scheme'). Construction of the Proposed Scheme is scheduled to commence in 2020, ahead of the rest of Phase Two, with operation planned to start in 2027. Phase 2b comprises the remainder of Phase Two, between Crewe (where it would connect with the Proposed Scheme) and Manchester, and between the West Midlands and Leeds. Phase 2b will be the subject of a separate hybrid Bill with construction expected to commence in 2023 and operation planned to start by 2033.

As a public organisation, HS2 Ltd has obligations under the Equality Act 2010 to take account of the impact of its activities on groups with protected characteristics[1]. To contribute towards both enabling and documenting HS2 Ltd's active compliance with its legal duties, HS2 Ltd has undertaken an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) for the Phase 2a scheme.

The EQIA is a predictive assessment, which considers the potential impacts that could arise from the construction and operation of the route, and the potential effects of these for protected characteristic groups. The EQIA will inform design, mitigation and other relevant decisions connected with the project.

More particularly, the objectives underpinning the EQIA are to:

- identify the presence of protected characteristic groups along the route of the Proposed Scheme, in particular where such groups are disproportionately represented amongst those most likely to be affected by the Proposed Scheme;
- draw on engagement with stakeholders and literature review to inform the understanding of likely needs of those groups, relevant to identified potential effects;
- assess the potential effects of the Proposed Scheme's construction and operation for protected characteristic groups, including how the Proposed Scheme could affect relations between groups;
- identify measures, including reasonable adjustments, to avoid, minimise, and/or mitigate potential negative equality effects on protected characteristic groups; and

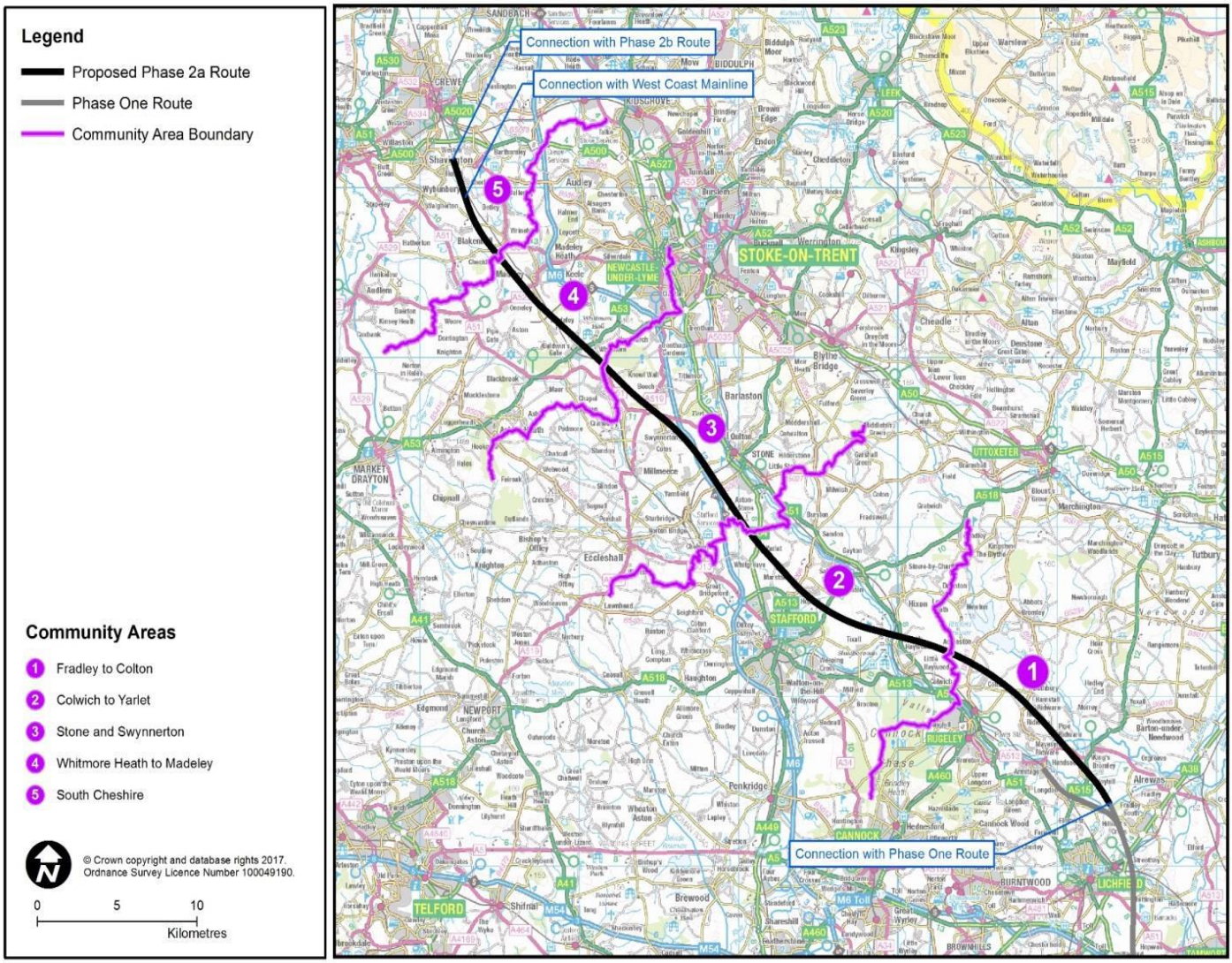
[1] A detailed explanation of what is meant by protected characteristics can be found on page 8 of the High Speed Two Phase 2a Equality Impact Assessment report: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/628583/E179_Equality_Impact_Assessment_report_WEB.pdf

- identify relevant measures, which as part of the Proposed Scheme design or mitigation, can further enhance equality, address existing disadvantage or support good relations between protected characteristic groups and other people.

The EQIA report prepared by HS2 Ltd looked at potential equality effects route-wide along the Phase 2a route. It also looked at issues at a more local level, splitting the assessment into the following five community areas:

- Community Area 1: Fradley to Colton;
- Community Area 2: Colwich to Yarlet;
- Community Area 3: Stone and Swynnerton;
- Community Area 4: Whitmore Heath to Madeley; and
- Community Area 5: South Cheshire.

Figure 1.1: Community Areas along the Phase 2a route



HS2 Ltd undertook a public consultation on the EQIA Report between 17 July and 30 September 2017, which invited members of the public and organisations to review the published report and its appendices and to provide comments on the assessment and supporting information.

Responses submitted as part of the consultation are summarised in this report.

Summary of responses to the consultation

A total of 220 responses were submitted to the consultation (202 from individual members of the public and 18 from organisations).

Although the 220 responses received were addressed to the HS2 Phase 2a EQIA consultation (either by letter, email or on the response form), not all of the responses received related to EQIA issues. A separate consultation was run in parallel on the Phase 2a Environmental Statement, with some of the consultees to the EQIA consultation frequently referencing the Environmental Statement consultation documents, and making comments with regard to environmental issues. These comments are, however, included in this summary report for completeness. Furthermore, it is important to note that this report is a summary of the views of respondees about HS2 Ltd's proposals. Respondees' comments about or interpretations of these proposals may be inaccurate or open to question. Verbatim quotes are used to illustrate some of the points made by respondees and this report does not seek to judge the accuracy of them.

Responses were most likely to address specific community areas. The most common theme across these responses was concern about the impact of Phase 2a on local life from increasing traffic associated with the construction of the route. The anticipated impacts were: greater difficulty reaching local amenities such as local shops; increased noise and air pollution; greater dangers to pedestrians from heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) on village roads, and the loss of open countryside. Children, the elderly and those with disabilities were expected to be most affected by the proposals. For example, access to schools was expected to become more difficult and dangerous with more traffic on the roads. It was thought by some that increased volumes of traffic would make it harder for emergency services on callout, as well as negatively affect air quality, which could exacerbate health conditions for older people and the disabled.

The village of Woore (Community Area 4) featured heavily in the responses received. This was as a result of an organised campaign, with respondees using at least one of a set of consistently-phrased sentences to comment on the effect of the proposals. Campaign and non-campaign responses from the Woore area focused on the loss of parking facilities in the village; this was thought to be a particular problem for older residents who are more likely to park there when they use the village shop. In addition, access to Woore Primary and Nursery School was expected to be more difficult for children. However, similar comments were also made about other locations such as Yarnfield (Community Area 3) and Wybunbury (Community Area 5). The additional concern for respondees in Woore was that they did not feel they had been kept well informed about the impact of HS2, with many saying that they only found out in July 2017 that Phase 2a would affect them.

Responses from organisations varied in content. For example, Woore Primary and Nursery School, Little Ingestre Care Limited, the Kings Bromley & District Horticultural Society and the Parochial Church Council for St Mary the Virgin (Ingestre) all expressed serious concern about the effect of Phase 2a on their facilities and set out how they wanted HS2 Ltd to address their concerns. Whereas Cheshire East Council and various parish councils took a more general view of the effects on their areas, and also put forward several measures to mitigate effects. Network Rail and Highways England took a neutral view, but put forward their own suggestions for how best to work with HS2 Ltd to ensure objectives are to be met.

The Consultation Process

The Consultation Process

Taking part in the consultation

The consultation on the Phase 2a EQIA report began on Monday 17 July 2017. The purpose of the consultation was to give both individuals and organisations the chance to put forward their views and comments on the EQIA report and supporting appendices.

The consultation was launched on the HS2 pages of the gov.uk website, with links on the webpage to the full assessment report, as well as to shorter summaries of it and to a larger appendices document including a literature review and community profile. The webpage also provided links to an online version of the consultation response form and to a pdf copy of the response form that could be downloaded, printed and mailed to the designated Freepost address.

Respondees were also able to submit responses through other channels, for example by sending emails to the consultation email address (HS2Phase2aEQIA@ipsos-mori.com) or by sending written material to the designated postal address (FREEPOST HS2 PHASE 2A EQIA).

Timing of the consultation

The consultation ran from Monday 17 July to 11.45pm on Saturday 30 September 2017. All responses dated and received within the consultation period were analysed and are summarised in this report. In addition, to make allowance for any potential delays with the post or misdirection of emails, paper responses, letters and emails were reviewed up until 4 October 2017 to check the date and time at which they were sent. If they were sent before the closing deadline they were accepted. All responses with a postmark on or before 30 September 2017, or other verifiable proof of postage before the deadline, were included in the analysis. No late responses, that is, those sent after the close of the consultation were received.

Responses to the consultation

Responses to the consultation

Number of responses

In total, 220 responses were received within the consultation period (17 July to 30 September 2017). Responses were received via a number of different response channels, the breakdown of which is set out in Table 3.1. A breakdown of consultees by key demographic group is provided in a table in Appendix D.

Table 1.1: Response type

	All	Individuals	Organisations
Online response form			
Responses completed through the response form on the consultation website	70	66	4
Hard copy response form			
Responses completed through a hard copy response form that was scanned or emailed	122	116	6
Letters and emails sent to the consultation response address			
Responses submitted by post/email not using the response form structure (letters, emails, postcards, reports)	28	20	8
Total	220	202	18

Organisational responses were taken to be all of those not from individual members of the public; this included individuals who were responding in an official capacity, such as local councillors. The range of organisations that responded to the consultation was varied and included some with a national remit (e.g. Highways England), local government bodies (e.g. Cheshire East Council) and local organisations or service providers (e.g. Kings Bromley & District Horticultural Society, Woore Primary and Nursery School). A full list of organisations that responded is included in Appendix A.

Campaign responses

It is common in high profile public consultations for interest or campaigning groups to ask their members, supporters and others to submit responses conveying the same specific views. Where identically worded responses have been received (either as letters, postcards or emails), these have been treated as campaign responses.

A total of 71 responses were received that used some standardised sentences or phrases as part of the submissions sent in by individual members of the public. This suggested that those who submitted these responses had agreed on a particular form of words, and therefore these responses were considered to be part of an organised campaign. The campaign received as part of this consultation focussed on the impact of the Phase 2a route on the village of Woore in Community Area 4. The text of the standard campaign responses to Q1-Q4 is set out in Appendix B.

Comments received in response to the EQIA Consultation

Comments received in response to the EQIA Consultation

This chapter summarises the responses to the consultation, looking in turn at the responses about route-wide impacts, the specific community areas, the appendices and literature review of the EQIA report and any other comments that respondees had.

Route-wide impact of Phase 2a

Question 1 wording

Q. Please let us know your comments on the Phase 2a route-wide impact assessment, set out in section 5 of the EQIA report.

This section examines comments that related to section 5 of the full-length EQIA report whether they were written in response to Question 1 specifically or in response to one of the other questions. Section 5 summarises the potential route-wide equality effects of the Proposed Scheme during construction and operation. It also sets out both committed and proposed mitigation measures to reduce adverse equality effects or enhance potential beneficial effects.

Summary of consultation responses

Across all four consultation questions, there were 101 responses with comments about the route-wide impact assessment or the EQIA report as a whole. The most common of these comments were that the impact assessment or the EQIA report as a whole did not have enough detail (65 comments), that it did not give enough advanced notification for people to respond (43 comments), and that it either failed to consider local people's opinions or gave them insufficient time to respond (35 comments).

In addition to the responses summarised above, specific points related to a perceived lack of detail in the report about the effect of the proposals on such factors as traffic levels and air pollution were received.

> *"There is a considerable lack of detail in the document about the far-reaching impact of the construction and running of HS2 and the surrounding areas."*
>
> *Member of the public*

> *"It is not possible to determine. There is insufficient information; it's not been established at this stage. [There is] differential / disproportionate effects - these are all telling phrases repeated throughout. I think the negative effects will be huge and are underestimated in this section."*
>
> *Member of the public*

"I have concerns about the effect of air pollution as an old person in the community. I have not seen any detail of the research into this problem."

Member of the public

Other criticisms were about a perceived lack of notice given for the consultation (43 comments) and that it failed to consider the opinions of local people or engage with them (35 comments). Those who made these comments frequently said this made it harder for people to come up with a response.

"There has been little information forwarded and very little time for comprehensive details and responses to be formed."

Member of the public

" We haven't had much time to think what would be best. No proper information was sent to each house."

Member of the public

Closely linked to this were the 37 responses to Question 1 that used the text of the Woore Campaign. These responses criticised what was perceived as a lack of reference to Woore in Section 5 and an insufficient assessment of the impact of air pollution on residents, particularly those with protected characteristics.

"There is very little reference to Woore and an overall lack of detail in the document however, from section 5, and additional information obtained from HS2. I have the following concerns; elderly residents, the very young and those with existing lung complaints will be severely impacted by the additional air pollution caused by the HGVs. There is no survey information available from HS2 to demonstrate that any assessment of this has been carried out."

Member of the public

Most organisational responses concentrated on the specific effects on their locality, with only a few that made comments about the overall route-wide impact. Network Rail submitted a broad ranging response that addressed the general issue of access and stressed the importance of public transport being inclusive for all people, especially disabled people, the elderly, families with young children and children themselves. It noted that the EQIA report did not provide diversity impact assessments of the identified areas. It accepted this might not be possible at this stage, but hoped that these would be done for all works on or near the existing rail network in the future.

Ingestre with Tixall Parish Council emphasised the importance of quality control for ensuring mitigation measures were put into effect consistently.

"Mitigation measures listed here (noise, vibration, traffic flows, air quality etc.) will be dependent on very careful monitoring, to ensure that the Codes of Construction Practice are adhered to. How will this be ensured when there will be many sub-contractors?"

Ingestre with Tixall Parish Council

Cheshire East Council gave a generally positive view of the report when answering Question 1. The response said the route-wide assessment seemed to be a thorough consideration of potential impacts and overall route-wide effects and it was keen for the EQIA to be regularly reviewed. The Council was encouraged by the amount of engagement undertaken by HS2 Ltd, particularly with parish councils south of Crewe. It was keen to continue to work with HS2 Ltd and ensure this level of engagement continued to secure the best possible outcome for Cheshire East. However, it did have comments on two specific paragraphs:

- Paragraph 5.2.19: The Council wanted initiatives with schools to start before onsite work begins and to continue throughout the construction period as different cohorts of children joined the schools over the extended construction period. The Council suggested that local social media networks might be an effective way to engage with children and young people.
- Paragraph 5.3.12 – 5.3.14: The Council was very supportive of the commitment to take measures to employ individuals underrepresented in the construction industry and to recruit local people.

Community area assessments

Question 2 wording

Q. Please let us know your comments on the Community Area (CA) assessments, set out in sections 6-10 of the EQIA Report.

You are welcome to comment on one or more of the CAs listed below.

If making comments on more than one CA, please indicate clearly in your response which CA each comment relates to.

This section examines responses that mentioned specific community areas, whether directly in response to Question 2 or to other questions.

Summary of consultation responses

Across all four consultation questions, there were 164 responses with comments about the community area assessments in the EQIA report, or with comments related to a community area in some way. Most of these responses had comments on CA4 (120 responses). This was followed by responses with comments on CA3 (29 responses), CA5 (20 responses), CA1 (8 responses) and CA2 (5 responses).

The comments were generally negative and expressed concerns about the impact of the proposals on local communities in terms of air pollution, traffic and reduced access to amenities. These adverse effects were thought to have a particular impact on groups that have protected characteristics: the young, the elderly and people with disabilities.

Community Area 1: Fradley to Colton

There were eight responses that covered Community Area 1. All of them had comments that were critical about the proposals in some way. These responses mainly covered concerns about the impact on local communities and traffic, for example in the Common Lane area.

> *"The closure of Common Lane has not been fully considered in the light of village life and in particular the village school. All heavy goods vehicles would be forced to use the only remaining route past the school."*
>
> *Member of the public*

There were also concerns about the impact on access to local amenities and facilities, such as schools.

> *"My daughter goes to nursery in Lichfield and our journey, her experiences (and that of her peers) and our commuting time plus ability to use Lichfield's amenities will be negatively affected, particularly during construction which will have a large impact around Cappers Lane."*
>
> *Member of the public*

> *"How are residents living alongside the B5014 expected to cope with this [increased HGV traffic] together with the regular and seasonal farm traffic through the village? Clearly HS2 Ltd owes the residents of this village more consideration and every endeavour should be made, therefore, towards examining the possibility of providing an alternative HGV haulage route alongside the track!"*
>
> *Member of the public*

Kings Bromley & District Horticultural Society was particularly concerned about the impact of the construction work on access to the Showground/Football Ground property it owns, sited on Crawley Lane. It was concerned that the closure of Common Lane would force all the traffic onto Crawley Lane as it headed towards the A515, causing congestion outside the Showground and ultimately forcing the Kings Bromley Show to stop running. The society proposed to avoid this by building a new access road from the proposed road island at the end of Bromley Lane to Crawley Lane. It believed this would divert traffic away from Showground/ Football Ground. It also believed this would benefit cyclists, pedestrians, school children and parents, who would contend with less traffic if this new access road was built.

Armitage with Handsacre Parish Council was also very concerned about the effect of the proposals on its locality. It was against the closure of Shaw Lane because of the disruption it anticipated. It expected the construction and operation of Phase 2a to have a negative effect on the landscape, rural economy, public rights of way and ecology of the local area. In particular, it criticised the fact that the proposed spur link would rise to a height of at least six metres above the surrounding landscape near to Ashton Hayes Farm; this was thought to be intrusive and a likely source of noise. However, it should be acknowledged in this report that the spur link is associated with the Phase 1 scheme not the Phase 2a scheme.

> *"Your Petitioner considers that inadequate provision is proposed to avoid adverse impacts upon the Parish, and that further mitigation is undoubtedly required to ameliorate the inevitable disruption which will become a regular feature of residents' lives in and around Armitage with Handsacre."*
>
> *Armitage with Handsacre Parish Council*

Community Area 2: Colwich to Yarlet

There were just five responses with comments that addressed the impact on Community Area 2. Of the responses received, these contained concerns about the impact on the countryside, the local wildlife and on local homes, all of which were thought to come under threat from the proposals.

> *"This is an outstanding area of beautiful countryside, many homes, golf courses and people's lives will be destroyed, not to mention woodlands, wildlife and anything in its path with what advantage to Staffordshire residents?"*
>
> *Member of the public*

The Little Ingestre House Care Home was very concerned about the impact of the route of Phase 2a on its vulnerable residents as a result of noise from trains and construction work. It also expressed serious concerns about how the proposals would affect the ability of its staff to travel to and from the home.

> *"The residents, relatives and Staff at Little Ingestre Care Home are already extremely concerned and distressed by HS2 plans. The staff and owners of the care home have received insufficient information and reassurances from HS2 about how the effects of the construction of the line with be mitigated from affecting the residents. The noise of construction process and operation will have a major impact on the welfare and mental health of these residents in this quiet picturesque rural setting, who cannot adjust to change."*
>
> *The Little Ingestre House Care Home*

The Parochial Church Council for St Mary the Virgin (Ingestre), was concerned about the effect of the Phase 2a construction work on access to the church, the fabric of the building and the impact of noise pollution on activities within the church.

> *"HS2 already affects the population of Ingestre as residents are moving away, due to developing health problems and stress related illnesses, so are selling their homes under Need to Sell arrangements. They are not being replaced, thus altering the nature of the parish, congregation and village, and affecting our ability to finance and maintain this historic building for the nation."*
>
> *Parochial Church Council for St Mary the Virgin (Ingestre)*

Ingestre with Tixall Parish Council had a wide range of concerns about the effect of the proposals on its locality. It was anxious about increased HGV traffic around Tixall because of the narrowness of the road through the village; it was particularly concerned about how children, elderly people and the disabled would be affected as pedestrians. The Parish Council referred to other negative effects on groups with protected characteristics. These included: more difficulties for parents driving children to and from school; longer journey times for staff driving to and from The Little Ingestre House Care Home; a potential impact on the bus service in Tixall that is used by many elderly residents, and more difficult access for the emergency services if called out. It wanted more attention to be given by HS2 Ltd to the cumulative effect on groups with protected characteristics in this area, and in particular, to certain important local amenities.

> *"We are very concerned that (except in the appendices) no mention is made of the particularly vulnerable protected characteristic groups at Little Ingestre Care Home, Ingestre Church and the Ingestre Stables (Riding for the Disabled) and students from Sandwell MBC attending Ingestre Hall or Weston Road Academy. Protected characteristic groups are higher than average in these villages, because so many residents are LGBT, elderly, disabled, and vulnerable."*
>
> *Ingestre with Tixall Parish Council*

Community Area 3: Stone and Swynnerton

There were 29 responses that specifically mentioned the impact on Community Area 3, and almost all of these (27) contained critical comments. Most often, these highlighted concerns about the site of the Infrastructure Maintenance Base – Rail (IMB-R). Also prominent were concerns about increased traffic, especially HGVs in and around Yarnfield and Stone. It was felt that the increased congestion could impose delays across a wider area.

"The A34 through Stone is a main route for M6 traffic, if there are issues on the motorway between Junction 14 and 16, and on a number of occasions in the last 12 months' delays through Stone have already been exceeding an hour when motorway traffic has been diverted. Should this happen whilst additional construction traffic is using the roads it would lead to further delays."

Member of the public

"Yarnfield Lane is already incredibly busy with a constant flow of cars and buses. The lane is very narrow, cyclists and walkers are common. Construction traffic will simply struggle to get through and the lane will regularly block which then in turn would block the A34."

Member of the public

There were several statements of concern about the effect of the increased traffic on local schools, such as reduced access to school buildings, greater danger on the roads around these schools and potential for negative health effects on pupils in proximity to construction work.

"At Walton, there are three schools situated close together, Manor Hill and Pirehill First Schools as well as Walton Priory Middle School, all of which will suffer because of traffic congestion. Many children walk to school in this area so there is the added danger of crossing the road as well as breathing in the dust."

Member of the public

"Yarnfield is a commuter village and there will problems getting to work with much longer journey times. School buses, twice a day, would be subject to delays and considerably longer journeys."

Member of the public

Adverse health effects from the Phase 2a proposals were also mentioned by several respondees, along with reduced access to health and emergency services and reduced public transport. The potential effects on elderly residents, more in need of these services, was particularly noted:

"I have to use public transport to be able to attend my appointments at the hospital, my bus services several of the local villages around Stone. This service is a lifeline for many elderly residents who rely on this service, if this project goes ahead, bus routes would be axed, services and local residents being trapped in their own villages. Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service have built their new fire station on the A34 just outside Stone town centre; this is in a critical position."

Member of the public

"The traffic congestion along Yarnfield Lane with the proposed Railhead will affect how emergency services can reach us. As someone who has been in an ambulance, I know first-hand how important this is."

Member of the public

There were 12 responses that suggested Aldersey's Rough as an alternative location for the IMB-R. This was thought to have a number of advantages, such as better connection to the major road network and reduced impact on roads traffic around Yarnfield.

> *"I believe the alternative suggestion to build the railhead at Aldersey's Rough makes much more sense. The impact to the local area will be minimal, it provides the same if not better access for construction."*
>
> *Member of the public*

Swynnerton Parish Council was critical about the amount of detail in the report on the management of traffic and noise pollution. It was also concerned about the effect of increased traffic on the use of Yarnfield Park and Wellbeing Park, with consequences for local businesses and employment. It did express hope that local firms would be used in the construction work. In addition, the Parish Council was keen to see good traffic management for access to Springfields First School in Yarnfield from the A34. The Parish Council also expressed general concerns about the effect of air pollution and on ease of travel for emergency services around the area.

> *"During the construction phase, airborne pollution will have an adverse effect on schools and the population, those living closest to the route being most affected. In addition, we are extremely concerned about the accessibility for emergency services to and from the villages."*
>
> *Swynnerton Parish Council*

Highways England said it was particularly pleased that there had been resolution to the issues of community severance caused by the long-term closure of the Yarnfield Lane overbridge. It also expected there to be travel plans put in place for future staff at the Stone IMB-R. It said the aim should be for the 100 or so employees to use sustainable modes of transport to and from this site to lessen the effect on local residents and businesses. Highways England also said that access from the local road network should not reduce employment opportunities for people with protected characteristics.

Community Area 4: Whitmore Heath to Madeley

There were 120 responses that specifically mentioned impacts on Community Area 4, more than for any other community area primarily as a result of the organised campaign as described earlier. The most frequent comment (72) was that the EQIA report failed to address the impact on life in and around Woore.

> *"Woore is markedly absent in this Volume. Similarly, Woore was not involved in the consultation process and given no opportunity to comment during the planning phases and evolution of the plans. Woore had sight of HS2's plans only when the Proposed Scheme was put before Parliament in July."*
>
> *Member of the public*

There were concerns about the ability of local roads to cope with increased traffic, especially from HGVs (53 comments). Gridlock and dangerous encroachment onto pavements were seen as likely outcomes of the construction work.

"This village already struggles to cope with the existing number of lorries and agricultural vehicles at certain times. If you are ever in the village when there is a backlog of larger vehicles it is a real problem. You will see vehicles having to reverse, park up, drive onto edges and pavements. The roads are not built for this volume of larger vehicles. The whole area will come to a standstill."

Member of the public

"Noise levels will significantly increase, particularly on the return journeys when the lorries will be rattling and empty. Pavements cannot be removed or narrowed without danger to life in and around our village. Lorries already splash on a wet day and 'blow' the young and elderly, those frail and tentative."

Member of the public

Many of the comments were about potential adverse effects on people with protected characteristics, almost always children, the elderly and those with disabilities. Impacts on school children included the effect of increased traffic on road safety near schools, and the mental and physical effect of pollution on pupils. The likely effects of pollution on elderly people were also noted.

"I do not believe the people running this project have a detailed knowledge of the area and how damaging this project will be. From an equality point of view the following people will be most affected: those living in the centre of the village: schoolchildren, the elderly, those with health issues, particularly lung and breathing problems. Noise levels will significantly increase and air quality will become an issue."

Member of the public

"Elderly residents, the very young and those with lung complaints will be severely impacted by the additional air pollution caused by the HGVs during the construction phase. There is no survey information available from HS2 to demonstrate that any impact assessment of this has been carried out."

Member of the public

Reduced access to other local amenities and facilities was also widely considered to be a problem in Woore (37 campaign responses, and 28 additional non-campaign comments). These amenities included the village shop, the Post Office and the local pub. The loss of parking outside the village shop and Post Office was noted, and with the assumption that this would affect customer numbers at these amenities, the future of these amenities was thought to be in doubt.

"If Woore is affected then the congestion on the A51 will split the village and have deleterious effects on the village shop, school, village hall, church, chapel, bakery, post office, public houses and their access by residents. All the village amenities lie on the A51."

Member of the public

"Woore Village Shop, Porch Gift Shop, The Falcon Inn and other local businesses could be adversely affected by the large increase in HGV traffic as pedestrians will find walking in Woore too dangerous due to the removal of pavements."

Member of the public

It was thought by some respondees that the potential impact on the village shop and the Post Office would be felt particularly by the elderly residents who were more likely to use these facilities.

"I understand the car park will be taken away and this will really make it impossible to use the shop as it has always been used for the convenience of the older population in the villages."

Member of the public

The anticipated effect on Woore was also thought to come through reduced property prices as construction work and increased traffic would make it a less desirable location.

"Many villagers are also becoming concerned that, with Woore becoming a route for these vehicles, potential property buyers will be put off and house prices will drop"

Woore Action Group

Across organisational responses, Woore Parish Council criticised the EQIA report for its perceived failure to include Woore within the community areas and thereby to assess the impact on protected groups within its population.

"In our Parish, for example, one such protected group, the young (who attend Woore Primary School), will be affected by the noise and decline in air quality caused by construction traffic. The elderly in our parish will be affected by air quality and accessibility issues. However, the EQIA does not address the effect of the Proposed Scheme on the young and elderly of our parish because our parish is not in a community area. This seems illogical and unfair."

Woore Parish Council

Anxieties about the effect of traffic were voiced by Woore Primary and Nursery School. It was concerned that increased traffic would affect pupils, parents and staff during arrivals at around 8am and departures at around 4pm, as well as during activities that pupils do outside of school in the village.

"We have narrow pavements. Increased HGVs and fumes impact on the safety of pupils and their carers. Pupils regularly have walks to the church and within the village as part of school actives e.g. pedestrian training, cycle training, celebrations at church, use of village hall for events. Access of emergency vehicles to the school is paramount at all times with a large number of pupils and staff on site."

Woore Primary and Nursery School

The school was also worried about the cumulative effect on it if access became more difficult and potentially dangerous. Reduced parking spaces in the village were thought to make it harder for parents to drop off and pick up their children, and they might be put off using the school altogether.

"Prospective and future parents and children of the school will be put off by the roads/safety and congestion. Pupil numbers will decrease, staff will be at risk/redundancies made."

Woore Primary and Nursery School

In turn, Madeley Independent Residents HS2 Action Group was also concerned about the proposed balancing pond (referred to in the response as a 'water pit') to be located above Madeley. Road access would have to be along the Bowers End Lane, which is narrow and has no passing places; increased traffic was thought to pose a risk to pedestrians and cyclists here. The group was particularly concerned about the effect of the balancing pond on child safety.

"We believe that children will be directly adversely affected by this element of the HS2 proposal. Children naturally gravitate towards water…will be unsupervised and unmonitored in any form suitable for child safety."

Madeley Independent Residents HS2 Action Group

In addition, the action group expressed concern about increased traffic in the Madeley and Woore areas. They wanted to know if additional costs for the HS2 project would be incurred if homes and back gardens had to be demolished. It expected there to be reduced air quality, with negative consequences for children, the elderly and the disabled; it therefore wanted to know what measures would be taken to mitigate these effects.

"There have only been predictions of noise impact. This means that there has been NO testing of hypothesis on the site itself at Madeley using simulated noise at the decibels of a train entering a tunnel."

Madeley Independent Residents HS2 Action Group

Community Area 5: South Cheshire

There were 20 responses that mentioned impacts on Community Area 5. These comments were mainly to do with concerns about increased traffic on local roads, adverse impacts on local communities and reduced access to local amenities and facilities. Comments most often related to the Wybunbury area.

"I think the plans to send construction traffic through Wybunbury are very dangerous. Wybunbury is a small village with narrow roads. The construction traffic would damage the roads and bridges they would pass over… I strongly think the construction traffic should stick to major roads and not ruin the countryside and surrounding villages."

Member of the public

Several respondees commented on incidents where vehicles had struck properties along the narrow local roads, as well as the road safety problems associated with the A51/B5071 junction near the Boar's Head. The addition of more HGVs onto the roads was, therefore, assumed to make a difficult situation even more hazardous, especially for school children at the Wybunbury Delves School.

"No construction traffic should go through Wybunbury. It would severely damage the village and be a major road safety concern given the narrow lanes and busy school."

Member of the public

> *"The junction at the Boar's Head is a narrow 90 degree turn into Wybunbury Road which is at best able to take passing of a lorry and car but not lorries travelling in opposite directions. How are parents going to safely drop their children off at school when even at present there is limited drop off area and the whole of Bridge street is blocked by on street parking at the beginning and end of the school day."*
>
> *Member of the public*

Other adverse effects identified in responses included the impact on the local environment and local wildlife through building on open countryside in South Cheshire.

> *"Damaging impact of this on the environment and local ecosystems far outweighs any potential benefit with slightly quicker access to London. Not to mention the impact on houses and communities in South Cheshire."*
>
> *Member of the public*

Cllr Janet Clowes (Wybunbury Ward, Cheshire East Council), asked for more effort to contact older people in the areas of Blakenhall, Den Lane and Chorlton Lane about the compensation and relocation guidelines. She felt these residents were less likely to use digital information sources and might, therefore, know less about HS2 Ltd and the Phase 2a proposals.

She also expressed concern about certain aspects of the construction work. In particular, she noted that construction and engineering work on Den Lane would impede access for residents in locations such as Den Lane and Mill Lane. The lack of public transport in this area meant that older residents there were in danger of being cut off. Cllr Clowes felt that directing construction traffic through Wybunbury village itself and along Chorlton Lane would make these problems worse. She also described as 'ill-conceived' the proposal to route construction traffic off the A51 at the Boar's Head onto Wybunbury Road, Bridge Street, Wrinehill Road and onto Den Lane. This was because the roads all have 7.5-ton weight limit as they are of a single lane in some stretches and there are two weak bridges.

In addition to these points, Cllr Clowes expressed concern that increased traffic along these routes would affect the safety and wellbeing of children at the Wybunbury Delves School.

> *"Whilst it is proposed to cut eight additional parking spaces into the verge adjacent to the school, this fails to address the very real problems related to safe access to the school [Wybunbury Delves Primary School]…The Boar's Head Junction is a notorious accident 'black spot' with two fatalities."*
>
> *Cllr Janet Clowes, Wybunbury Ward, Cheshire East Council*

The Cheshire East Local Access Forum was concerned to mitigate the effect of the Phase 2a route on local public rights of way. It wanted a general principle of avoiding the stopping up of these rights of way, with the solution either being the use of grade-separated crossings or a diversion. If a stopping-up or diversion were necessary, the Forum wanted the rationale to be made clear. Furthermore, if a right of way was diverted onto the local highway network, the Forum wanted it to have non-motorised user facilities appropriate to the status of that right of way (i.e. a footpath would require a footway alongside the highway).

"HS2 should be seeking not only to minimise and mitigate the impact on the PROW network, but seek to make improvements to access opportunities, for example through the upgrading of footpaths to bridleways, and through the creation of additional links and routes."

Cheshire East Local Access Forum

Comments on appendices to EQIA Report

Question 3 wording

Q. Please let us know your comments on appendices to the EQIA Report (Appendix A Literature Review and Appendix B Community Profile). Please indicate in your response which appendix your comments apply to.

This chapter examines comments made on the appendices to the EQIA Report. These appendices set out key research evidence used to produce the EQIA Report such as national and regional evidence reviews, research findings and policy documents. These were reviewed to inform understanding of the sensitivity of protected characteristic groups (defined by the Equality Act 2010) to potential effects of the Phase 2a part of the route, and their specific needs in relation to potential effects. They also include the community profile baseline information.

Summary of consultation responses

There were 64 campaign responses that addressed Question 3 about the appendices. In addition to that the campaign responses, there were only 6 responses made directly about Appendix A (the Literature Review) and only 5 responses that mentioned Appendix B (Community Profile).

By far the most comments on the appendices from individual members of the public came through the Woore Campaign (64 responses). These responses criticised a lack of reference to Woore in the report and asked whether a local neighbourhood plan from March 2017 had formed part of HS2 Ltd's considerations.

Most of the substantial comments made on the appendices came from organisations. Swynnerton Parish Council was critical of the appendices and said the community profile was not adequate or sufficiently relevant.

"The Community Profile lacks detail and depth; it has been insufficiently researched, and is based on inaccurate and out of date information. The needs of groups such as the aged, the disabled, and children, have not been properly addressed. The Appendices contain a great deal of information which, although very detailed, contains much that is not relevant to the construction of HS2 and its operation."

Swynnerton Parish Council

Cllr Clowes of Wybunbury Ward, Cheshire East Council, was also critical of the appendices. For the Literature Review in Appendix A, she noted that the review was extensive but said there was little information about how the data was selected, the sources used for it and how any potential researcher bias was addressed. She said there was little comparative analysis or robust literature critique and that this undermined confidence in the validity of the findings.

For Appendix B, Cllr Clowes said the Community Profile was a reasonable first attempt at classifying the wards in the South Cheshire Area, but that this was difficult when there was statistical reliance on the 2011 Census. She said age demographics for Wybunbury had to be viewed by location within the ward rather than as an aggregated whole. The more rural parishes, further away from village centres, were said to have an older population than the centre of Wybunbury Village or Hough. She said this was particularly relevant for HS2 Phase 2a and its route near Blakenhall, Lea and Checkley.

Cllr Clowes also said there were important gaps in the Community Profile data for the Wybunbury Ward; there are actually two local primary schools (Wybunbury Delves and Bridgemere). A further two community halls at Blakenhall and Wybunbury and several churches (St Chad's, Wybunbury, St John's at Doddington, and the chapels at Hatherton, Hough and Chorlton).

Cheshire East Council responded by saying that Appendix A was missing several elements from its methodology. This included a full literature search strategy, such as which research databases were used and the earliest date from which studies were sought in these databases.

The Council wanted to know several other pieces of information about the method used. This included:

- How data sources were selected, analysed and their information presented.
- How the risk of bias in the data sources and in the reporting was handled.
- How the results were presented and summarised for each characteristic.
- How the results were presented to help the reader determine the quality of the evidence and findings.

The Council said this information, if included, would help the reader to judge the review, to consider if the data fairly reflected the evidence, and to understand the approach taken by the review team. These were seen to be important in assessing the overall validity of the review and would help the reader judge the full impact of the scheme.

Ingestre with Tixall Parish Council was positive about the appendices and said these set out extensive, essential information. It hoped that HS2 Ltd would 'respect the sensitivity of all the people affected'.

There were also several responses from individual members of the public. One response that related to Yarnfield commented on Appendix A to say the construction would severely affect life in the area for people with protected characteristics. For example, the respondee expected children's access to recreational facilities (paragraph 3.2.1) and their educational attainment (3.2.3) to be severely affected by the construction work. The respondee also expected older people to lose a lot of their freedom through reduced access to amenities (3.3.1) and that disabled people would feel increased levels of uncertainty and delay on local road systems (3.4.1).

Another respondee reviewed Appendix A with regards to Woore. The respondee was critical about the effect on Woore and used the paragraphs of the literature review to make these points. For example, the respondee stated that the proposals would impede social networks and community cohesion (paragraph 3.1.1), that the increased traffic would impede children's access to recreational facilities (3.2.1) and a major increase in traffic would lower the quality of life for local people (6.1.1), particularly for those with protected characteristics.

General comments on the EQIA Report

Question 4 wording

Q. Are there any further comments you would like to make about the EQIA Report?

This chapter examines general comments made on the EQIA report. Almost all responses from members of the public addressed the route-wide impact or specific community areas, and have already been covered. However, 49 responses to Question 4 used the Woore Campaign text to criticise what was felt to be short notice given to residents in the village about how they would be affected.

Several organisations took the opportunity to make general points about the consultation and the report. Woore Parish Council said an EQIA should have been carried out on the Woore area, and that it also supported the views expressed by the Woore Action Group. It found it 'particularly disappointing' that the first-time residents knew about the proposal to route construction traffic through Woore was in July 2017. This was said to have given them only three months to find out further information and respond to the consultation. Woore Primary and Nursery School made a very similar response to Woore Parish Council, and added that the school had never been contacted or consulted by HS2 Ltd representatives. The Madeley Independent Residents HS2 Action Group said HS2 Ltd had breached human rights law.

Other organisations made general comments on the consultation or the report. For example, Ingestre with Tixall Parish Council (Community Area 2) was very critical.

> *"HS2 documents are far too extensive, repetitive and not easy to 'navigate' to find relevant issues. We remain extremely concerned that HS2 is being considered at all, and note that our many previous responses, suggestions and corrections have been ignored."*
>
> *Ingestre with Tixall Parish Council*

With regard to Community Area 5, Cheshire East Council said the EQIA contributed towards HS2 Ltd's compliance with legal duties and showed the likely impact on equality as a result of HS2. It also wanted HS2 Ltd to use the HS2 infrastructure to help local people.

> *"The Council would encourage HS2 Ltd to consider the use of HS2 infrastructure to reach out to rural communities that are currently cut-off from some essential services, for example broadband internet. Also, any opportunities to use this infrastructure to link in to the Smart Cities agenda, particularly around the proposed HS2 Hub at Crewe, should be explored."*
>
> *Cheshire East Council*

Cheshire East Council also noted that some landowners had agreed with HS2 Ltd that it would pay their land agency or agents fees. However, the Council said these landowners were now being asked to pay for and claim these fees back. In some cases, it was reported to be unaffordable for landowners or residents to pay for these fees upfront. The Council requested that HS2 Ltd reconsider this apparent change in policy. It also urged HS2 Ltd to consider a community fund along the route. This fund would enable local communities that were affected by the Phase 2a route to bid for funding for local community projects.

Suggestions

There were 17 responses that included a suggestion of some kind. Most often, it was that the existing rail infrastructure should be modernised (5 responses) and that there should be more investment in local broadband infrastructure (3).

> *"The very small patches of countryside left in the Midlands should be preserved and protected. The existing rail network should be modernised and autonomous small cabs introduced to allow continuous flow of traffic. If we had a road that allowed one vehicle every five minutes it would not be considered as overloaded. More effort needs to be made in existing tracks."*
>
> *Member of the public*

Additional comments

In addition to comments made directly to the consultation, there were also 63 responses that included a comment that was deemed out of scope, in that these were about the value of HS2 as a whole. The most common of these comments were that HS2 was a waste of money (28), that it was unnecessary and unwanted (21) and would not give any benefits (13).

Glossary and abbreviations

Glossary and abbreviations

CA	Community Area: defined areas along the proposed HS2 Phase 2a route (e.g. South Cheshire community area). They are used as a geographical basis for reporting local community and environmental impacts and effects in the environmental statement.
HS2	Proposed high speed rail line between London and the West Midlands (Phase One) and on to Manchester and Leeds (Phase Two). Phase 2a is the section between the West Midlands and Crewe
HS2 Ltd	The company set up by the Government to develop proposals for a new high speed railway line between London and the West Midlands and to consider the case for new high speed rail services linking London, northern England and Scotland.
EQIA	Equality Impact Assessment: an assessment of the impact of a plan, policy, program, or actual projects on population groups with protected characteristics (under the Equality Act 2010) before the decision to move forward with the proposed action.
HGV	Heavy Goods Vehicle.
IMB-R	Infrastructure Maintenance Base – Rail: a permanent maintenance facility near Stone, in the Stone and Swynnerton community area, at the site of the Stone railhead main compound. It will provide a central base to carry out maintenance activities on the route of the Proposed Scheme and will maintain Phase 2a infrastructure, as well as the full western section of Phase Two once operational.

Appendices

Appendices

Appendix A: Organisations, groups and elected representatives taking part

As well as responses from individuals, we received responses from organisations and groups. Below we outline the names of the organisations, groups and elected representatives who took part in the consultation, organised by category. Organisations which requested confidentiality are not listed here.

Businesses and property interests

- Little Ingestre Care Limited

Campaign and representative groups

- Woore Action Group
- The Madeley Independent Residents HS2 Action Group

Environment, heritage, amenity or community interest group

- Kings Bromley & District Horticultural Society
- Woore Primary and Nursery School
- Parochial Church Council for St Mary the Virgin (Ingestre)

Local authorities, town councils and councillors

- Cheshire East Council
- Cllr Janet Clowes, Wybunbury Ward, Cheshire East Council

Parish councils

- Armitage with Handsacre Parish Council
- Hatherton and Walgherton Parish Council
- Ingestre with Tixall Parish Council
- Swynnerton Parish Council
- Woore Parish Council

Public and statutory bodies

- Network Rail
- Highways England

Residents' associations

- Cheshire East Local Access Forum

Appendix B: Details of campaign responses

A total of 71 responses were received that contained enough standardised text for them to be considered part of an organised campaign. All the responses related to the impact on the village of Woore in Community Area 4. The campaign was critical of the impact of Phase 2a route proposals on Woore. The standard text was as follows for each question.

In response to Question 1:

> *"There is very little reference to Woore and an overall lack of detail in the document however, from section 5, and additional information obtained from HS2, I have the following concerns; Elderly residents, the very young and those with existing lung complaints will be severely impacted by the additional air pollution caused by the HGVs. There is no survey information available from HS2 to demonstrate that any assessment of this has been carried out. Noise levels will significantly increase, particularly on the return journey when the waggons will be empty. We have high levels of traffic coming through Woore already, approx 3,200 per day. The proposal will increase this by 17% at peak times. This will severely impact access to schools, businesses and health care and therefore in turn, community connectivity and cohesion as well as risking health and safety particularly in relation to emergency vehicles reaching residents."*

In response to Question 2:

> *"The viability of the village shop is also a concern as the parking facilities will be removed and it will be difficult for pedestrians to get to it. Many villagers are also now concerned that, with Woore becoming a route for these vehicles, potential buyers will be put off and house prices will drop"*

In response to Question 3:

> *"Again, there is a lack of detail regarding the impact on Woore, but I would like to know if the responses provided to our local plan in March of this year have been considered when HS2 compiled this report?"*

In response to Question 4

> *"I find it particularly disappointing that the first our residents knew of HS2's plans for Woore was in July 2017. This has only given us 3 months to find out further information and respond to your reports. The consultation process has been inadequate with regard to Woore and its surrounding communities."*

Appendix C: Coding and reporting of responses

Analysis of the responses required coding of the data. Coding is the process by which responses are matched against standard codes Ipsos MORI has compiled, so that their content can be classified and tabulated. Each of these codes represents a discrete issue or viewpoint raised by a number of respondees in their verbatim responses. The codeframe was structured thematically, with geographical locations given in the text of code if a particular place was indicated.

We have provided overall numbers of comments about the Equality Impact Assessment Report, as well as alternative suggestions and more general comments made. It should be noted that our analysis is qualitative in nature as the consultation questions were open, free-text response questions. As this is a qualitative thematic analysis, numbers (where reported on) can never be treated as the complete picture of the views expressed.

As our analysis is qualitative, exploring the themes that have emerged from what respondees wrote in response to the consultation, these numbers need to be treated with caution. Some respondees have not made positive or negative comments on the contents of the report. Where this is the case, it is not possible to infer how they view the report. It is also possible and valid for the same respondent to provide positive, negative and neutral comments within a single response.

Verbatim quotes are used to illustrate some of the points made by respondees. These verbatims have been selected to provide a mix of positive and negative comments and to represent the views of both members of the public and stakeholders.

It is important to note that this report is a summary of the views of respondees about HS2 Ltd's proposals. Respondees' comments about or interpretations of these proposals may be inaccurate or open to question.

Finally, it is important to bear in mind that this report can only document the responses given to the consultation and cannot be extrapolated to measure how widely particular views and opinions are held. The consultation does not comprise the responses of representative samples of the general public, businesses, or indeed other interested parties. There can be a tendency for responses to come from those more likely to consider themselves affected and more motivated to express their views. It may also be the case that respondees to the consultation are more likely to have read the consultation document, and therefore, to be better informed about the proposals, than a sample of the general public.

It must be understood, therefore, that the consultation as reflected through the report can only hope to catalogue the various opinions of the members of the public and organisations who have chosen to respond to the proposals. It cannot measure in fine detail the exact strength of particular views or concerns amongst the general public, nor may the responses have fully explained the views of those responding on every relevant matter. It cannot, therefore, be taken as a comprehensive statement of public and business opinion.

HS2 Ltd held this consultation to seek the views of interested individuals and organisations on the Equality Impact Assessment Report for Phase 2a of the HS2 route. The feedback from responses to the consultation is being used to inform decision-making in relation to this.

Appendix D: Breakdown of responses by protected characteristics

Respondees were invited to complete a separate equalities monitoring form, which was separate to responses to the main questions in the response form. Table D1 provides a breakdown by key demographic group for those who completed an equalities monitoring form. The total number of consultees answering each question may differ because in some cases some consultees provided more than one answer, and as consultees could skip any question they did not wish to answer.

Table D1: breakdown of responses by protected characteristic

National Identity	Number of consultees
- British	101
- English	48
- Scottish	1
- Welsh	1
- Other	2
- Prefer not to say	11
Ethnicity	**Number of consultees**
- White	136
- Mixed	3
- Asian	1
- Black	2
- Prefer not to say	12
Disability	**Number of consultees**
- Yes – disabled	13
- No – not disabled	122
- Prefer not to say	20
Gender	**Number of consultees**
- Male	63
- Female	85
- Prefer not to say	13
Religion or belief	**Number of consultees**
- Christian	93
- Jewish	1
- Muslim	1
- Other	3
- No religion or belief	28
- Prefer not to say	21
Married or in civil partnership	**Number of consultees**
- Yes	108
- No	22
- Prefer not to say	22

Age	Number of consultees
- 16-34	13
- 35-54	46
- 55-64	30
- 65+	61
- Prefer not to say	19
Sexual orientation	**Number of consultees**
- Bisexual	1
- Gay man	3
- Gay woman	1
- Heterosexual/straight	113
- Prefer not to say	27