

Sir Mark Worthington

Independent HS2 Construction Commissioner

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23 April 2019

Dear Sir Mark,

Thank you for your first report as the HS2 Construction Commissioner and for your work, advice and guidance since taking up the position in October on how we manage and respond to construction complaints.

As you know, we have published our second public report on our progress delivering our 10 community commitments, which covers the six month period July to December 2018. How well we handle enquires and complaints is a key element of how we aspire to be a good neighbour. Last year we introduced a new HS2 complaints process to provide an improved service to individuals contacting us. As the public report has set out, we received 447 complaints in 2018, compared to 118 in 2017. This was a significant but expected increase as the impacts of the project become more apparent for people living along the line of route. Over 90% of the complaints received in 2018 were concluded at the first stage of the new complaints process.

As you highlight in your report, 2019 will see the implementation of our new HS2 Helpdesk team, focused on improving the customer service experience that we offer. The team will be based at our Headquarters in Birmingham and will work closely with our Engagement Managers based in communities. We'll also be raising awareness of our Helpdesk team to ensure that communities understand what the service offers and how to contact us.

In your report you have raised an observation regarding the provision of noise insulation in the Euston area. I know you have recently received an update on this issue from HS2 and our enabling works contractor in this area. As you will be aware, progress is being made, most recently with regard to the process for installing noise insulation in listed buildings. We continue to work with community representatives and the Local Authority to raise ongoing concerns and discuss mitigation. We remain fully committed to installing noise insulation

prior to the commencement of those HS2 construction works that trigger the need for noise insulation and would be happy to keep you updated on this programme of work.

You also raise an observation regarding our local engagement in Hillingdon. As we set out in our community engagement strategy, we want to work with local communities and build respectful long-term relationships. I appreciate this will take time; we will need to demonstrate we are listening to and acting on their concerns. We hold regular events in Hillingdon including information events, residents' association meetings and monthly drop-in sessions at three local libraries. We also have a local community website dedicated to HS2 in Hillingdon which since launch it has received over 16,000 visits and over 600 subscribers, this allows us to keep local residents updated on works in their area. We agree with you on the importance of ongoing communications with residents that are clear, timely and two-way.

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss the issues you have raised further, along with any issues previously raised by the Interim Construction Commissioner.

I want to thank you once again for sharing your observations and look forward to continuing to work with you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'J Crawford', written in a cursive style.

Jim Crawford
Managing Director, Phase One
HS2 Ltd