

Consultation on HS2 Phase 2a EQIA Update Report (February 2019) Summary Statement

1. Overview

On 8 February 2019, HS2 Ltd, the organisation responsible for the proposed High Speed Two railway (HS2), launched a public consultation on an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) Update Report for the Phase 2a section of the HS2 network. The EQIA update reflects changes to the Phase 2a section of the route which have been made since the hybrid Bill was deposited in Parliament in July 2017. These changes were reported in the Supplementary Environmental Statements (SEs) and Additional Provision Environmental Statements (AP Es) published in March 2018 and February 2019.

As a public organisation, HS2 Ltd has an obligation under the Equality Act 2010 to take account of the impact of its activities on groups with protected characteristics¹. The EQIA update contributes towards fulfilling that obligation and enables HS2 Ltd to identify where any reasonable adjustments may be required.

2. Context

High Speed Two 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 it 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.

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

An EQIA report for Phase 2a was published in July 2017, along with an EQIA summary report. That EQIA (2017) described the understanding at that time of the equality effects that were considered likely to arise from the proposed scheme, and also the measures to reduce or offset them. Since the deposit of the Bill, a number of scheme amendments (i.e. changes that require amendments to the Bill) have been promoted in Parliament through two additional

¹ The nine protected characteristics groups are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, ethnicity, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

provisions (APs): 'AP1' in March 2018 and 'AP2' in February 2019. Other changes that do not require an amendment to the Bill have been reported in the accompanying SESs.

The EQIA Update Report provides a route-wide update of the EQIA (2017), taking into account the changes and amendments to the proposed scheme. It also takes into account any further mitigation measures agreed by HS2 Ltd and of the undertakings and assurances made by the Secretary of State for Transport and published in December 2018.

The EQIA Update Report assesses the potential effects on groups of people with protected characteristics. It does not address potential effects on individuals or individual households.

3. The Consultation

The consultation was launched on 8 February 2019 and closed at 23:45 on 29 March 2019. The purpose of the consultation was to give members of the public and organisations, including public representatives, the opportunity to put forward their views and comments on the EQIA Update Report and its supporting appendices.

A 98-page Equality Impact Assessment Update Report was made available on the www.gov.uk website². This was supplemented by a 22-page summary version of the report³ and an Easy Read report⁴. They reported the equality impact assessment update at a route-wide level along the Phase 2a route. They also reported 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.

² High Speed Two Phase 2a (West Midlands - Crewe): Equality Impact Assessment Update Report
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/776339/J73_EQIA_Update_Report.pdf

³ High Speed Two Phase 2a (West Midlands - Crewe): Equality Impact Assessment Update Report – Summary document
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/776340/J74_EQIA_Update_report_summary.pdf

⁴ High Speed Two Phase 2a Equality Impact Assessment (Equality check) update – February 2019: West Midlands to Crewe – Easy Read
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/777372/hs2-equality-impact-easy-read.pdf

A literature review and baseline community profiles were included as appendices in the full version of the report.

The EQIA Update Report consultation was publicised alongside the consultation on the Supplementary Environmental Statement 2 and Additional Provision 2 Environmental Statement (SES2 and AP2 ES) using the following methods:

- a letter providing information about the consultation, the proposals and the information on how to access further information was sent to all **properties** in the vicinity of a change identified in the SES2 or AP2 ES;
- letters were also sent to **local authorities and parish councils** along the Phase 2a route, as well as to statutory organisations and other stakeholders, to inform them of the launch of the consultation;
- online on the HS2 Ltd and gov.uk **websites**; and
- alongside the SES2 and AP2 ES consultation documents at **deposit locations** along the Phase 2a route.

There was a number of ways via which respondents could make their views on the assessment known:

- by completing the **online response form** which could be accessed through the www.gov.uk website;
- by completing a **pdf version of the response form** that could be downloaded from the www.gov.uk website. This could be completed electronically and submitted via email, or it could be printed out and sent as a hard-copy response through the post. A freepost address (FREEPOST HS2 AP2 EQIA) was provided with response forms in order for members of the public and organisations to post their response;
- via a **written letter**. A freepost address was provided in the consultation document in order for members of the public and organisations to post their response; and
- by **email** via a dedicated consultation email address (HS2AP2EQIA@ipsos-mori.com).

These response channels were all managed by Ipsos MORI on behalf of HS2 Ltd.

4. Numbers of responses

A total of two responses were received to the EQIA consultation: one email and one online response. Neither addressed the subject of the EQIA Update Report. Instead, both made critical comments about the HS2 network as a whole.



As a result, there is no separate EQIA consultation summary report. HS2 Ltd will ensure that potential effects identified in the EQIA update are kept under review, and, where appropriate, further stakeholder engagement will be undertaken. Information gathered from engagement and the appraisal of potential effects will be used to inform future decisions.