



Birmingham and Fazeley Canal Viaduct, HS2 Ltd

## Birmingham and Fazeley Canal Viaduct

In September, the Design Panel met to discuss Balfour Beatty Vinci's proposals for Birmingham and Fazeley Canal Viaduct on the Phase One HS2 route – in particular, the location and design of the piers and their relationship with the canal.

The panel thanked the team for the opportunity to take a deeper look at the complex design choices that have been made during the design development of Birmingham and Fazeley Canal Viaduct. It is reassured that a strong approach has been developed, and is confident that the team is considering the correct areas to allow the design to be refined further.

The panel encourages the team to focus on confidently expressing the viaduct as it crosses the Birmingham and Fazeley Canal, and on celebrating its unique qualities. For example, the difference in height of piers and the contrast between the canal and the high-speed railway could become part of its particular and special character.

The panel also supports the emerging proposals to provide access below the viaduct through a new water-led landscape, and the removal of a canal-side fence. This is a welcome example of a community influencing HS2's design to provide a long-term benefit for the area, and could also contribute to developing a sense of community ownership.

The panel looks forward to seeing the final scheme at Schedule 17 stage.

## Design Panel activities August and September 2021

# 3

### Phase Two meetings

- Phase 2a Design Overview
- Phase 2b Design Overview
- Canal and River Trust Design Principles document

# 2

### Chair's Review meetings

- HS2 Communication Strategy for Design
- HS2 Ltd response to DK&A report

# 3

### Workshop meetings

- Birmingham and Fazeley Canal Viaduct
- HS2 Fencing Design Approach document
- DfT Design Leadership

# 4

### Governance meetings

- September monthly team meeting attended by the Design Panel chair, vice chair, secretariat and HS2 Ltd
- HS2 Independent Design Panel refresh - deputy chair
- HS2 Identity meeting with DfT, HS2 Ltd and West Coast Partnership Development
- Euston Partnership Board

## HS2 fencing and boundaries

Fencing has been a common topic discussed at Design Panel meetings, and the panel has highlighted its importance to the ultimate success of HS2. The approach to fencing on HS2 will be a good test of the HS2 Design Vision statement that: “No project is too small. Everything we create is designed” (HS2 Design Vision, 2017).

HS2 Ltd is developing guidance and design principles to support the HS2 supply chain in successfully integrating fencing within the broader design for HS2.

At a meeting in September, the panel welcomed the work done to date by the team. It stressed that this work offers an opportunity to celebrate fencing and to make a step change in the industry. The way the project addresses fencing can support the aspirations of the HS2 Design Vision, as well as those for HS2’s Sustainability Approach and Landscape Design Approach. The panel highlighted the need for the work done to date to form part of a process that should focus on influencing conversations and decision making across HS2.

The panel, while applauding the consideration given to technical information, encouraged the team to focus on the clarity of its messages. The supply chain should have no doubt what is expected of them, including HS2 Ltd’s aspirations for fencing and boundary treatments, and what should drive decisions on fencing. For example, soft landscape solutions should be promoted in all situations where security is not an issue, to help maximise net biodiversity gain.



Chiltern Tunnel south portal, HS2 Ltd



## People's stories

Inez is an architect with over seven years’ experience. She has focussed on transport and infrastructure since 2018, when she joined Weston Williamson + Partners to work on HS2.

“I am very pleased to be helping HS2 Ltd to develop guidance and design principles for fencing. This work will support design teams in delivering creative and integrated designs able to meet functional requirements and be responsive to context and place, including integrating with other designed HS2 elements. It can also help ensure design teams consider aspects such as the whole life carbon footprint of fencing.

The panel have been a helpful critical friend, allowing us to draw on their experience, including from the project to date, to inform our thinking and ultimately support HS2 designers to develop high quality, sustainable and efficient solutions.”

## Phase 2a

In September the panel met with HS2 Ltd to discuss Phase 2a. It was very encouraged by the proposed delivery model, particularly as it addresses issues often raised at HS2 Phase One Design Panel meetings. The panel was particularly pleased to see that context integration studies and locations for art and culture area being addressed early in the process. It highlighted the need for the delivery approach to be embraced across HS2 Ltd, to help raise expectations on design. The panel looks forward to working with HS2 Ltd on Phase 2a as the programme progresses.



Frame Projects  
Secretariat to the  
HS2 Independent  
Design Panel

**HS2 INDEPENDENT  
DESIGN PANEL**