


INDEPENDENT Phase 2a Planning FORUM FOR HS2

Title:	Independent Phase 2a Planning Forum for HS2	
Date & Time	Wednesday 21st July 2021 10:30 – 12:30 Microsoft Teams (virtual meeting)	
Chair	[REDACTED]	Independent Chair
HS2 Ltd Attendees:	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

Local Authority Attendees:	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Promoter Attendee:	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Apologies:	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

Item		Action Owner
	Introductions The Chair welcomed all and invited new attendees to introduce themselves.	
1	Review of notes & actions from last meeting The previous minutes were agreed and will be uploaded to GOV.UK. There were two outstanding actions, namely the ongoing deferred VR fly-through experience and access to SharePoint. An amendment to a recorded action was agreed for clarity, which now reads <i>"HS2 Ltd to advise if the useful links contained within the context reports can be included on the HS2 website"</i> .	

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2	<p>Construction programme (EEW) – update</p> <p>HS2 Ltd updated members on the Phase 2a construction programme (see slide for timeframes).</p>	
3	<p>Biodiversity Investment Fund</p> <p>HS2 Ltd introduced the £2 million Biodiversity Investment Fund (BIF) to members and explained that the Fund is there to enable biodiversity projects. It was also noted that the BIF was launched in February 2021 following P2a Royal Assent and applications opened on 10th May 2021. A flowchart of the BIF application process was shown (see slide pack).</p> <p>The Chair sought clarification of the acronym ERG. It was explained that ERG referred to the Ecological Review Group, which comprises relevant statutory bodies and nongovernmental organisations who were engaged with during the BIF development process and this group will be represented on the BIF Expert Panel.</p> <p>SPC queried if there is a geographical limitation to the fund. HS2 Ltd advised that there are no geographical boundaries, as the nature of biodiversity projects mean that proposed sites might extend beyond any prescribed boundary.</p> <p>LDC sought clarity on whether the BIF and other funds such as developer contributions could be combined to maximise the benefits of biodiversity projects. Specifically, where sites are located within the HS2 Bill limits, it was questioned whether organisations could still apply for BIF to improve this HS2 land within limits. HS2 Ltd explained that land within Bill limits is only taken where required for construction or mitigation works: therefore, it is unlikely that such land could also be used for BIF projects as it will have a designated construction purpose already.</p> <p>Action: LDC to share specific examples for discussion with HS2 Ltd to explore whether or not organisations could use BIF to contribute towards existing biodiversity projects under TCPA within Bill limit land.</p>	
4	<p>Community engagement – update</p> <p>HS2 Ltd provided an update on three key areas: Strategic activity, Communities and Looking ahead.</p> <p>Strategic activity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement continues to be in line with the latest guidance on COVID-19 • Government response to Section 60 consultation published 29 June • CEF/BLEF/BIF and Highways funds announced • ECW2 contract awarded • Protestor camp eviction • Festival of archaeology <p>Wider community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ground investigation work underway in the north • Online presentations: general update, ecology, ground investigation, tunneling 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Virtual 1:1 meetings First CEF/BLEF award for Phase 2a <p>Looking ahead</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement activity to support EEW compound establishment Roadshow events CEF/BLEF 1:1 virtual meetings Contact cards Parish council engagement HS2 in the north campaign <p>SPC requested a record of communities and parish councils that have taken up HS2 Ltd's offer to meet, as it will assist local authorities with their understanding of involvement/engagement. The Chair thought this was a good suggestion and would assist in joining up engagement activities.</p> <p>HS2 Ltd agreed to continue to keep members updated on engagement activities with parish councils and explained that all communities affected would be involved, even if not on the line of route e.g. Woore Parish where communities are affected by lorry routes but not railway works.</p> <p>Post meeting note: Kier, delivering the ECW2 contract, will be looking to make contact with local authority colleagues over the forthcoming weeks to set up an introductory meeting regarding design for the highway improvement works.</p>	
5	<p>Planning Consents Performance</p> <p>HS2 Ltd introduced this recurring agenda item and stated that its purpose is to identify any issues that may or could impact upon the Schedule 17 determination periods.</p> <p>Standard slides going forward will include a chart showing the number of Schedule 17 submissions planned and actually submitted, and a chart showing the elapsed times of Submissions awaiting determination.</p>	
6	<p>Feedback from LAs</p> <p>The Chair invited LA members to raise any concerns or issues that HS2 Ltd should be made aware of.</p> <p>SBC raised a concern that they had not received Schedule 17 applications on an agreed date, which was set three months prior to the submission date. It was also explained that arrangements with staff had been undertaken in advance to ensure that applications were dealt with expediently, but no application was received until three weeks after the agreed date.</p> <p>HS2 Ltd agreed that this was not good practice, and a matter that they will be discuss with the appointed contractors. It was also noted that forecasting of submissions with the contractor would be undertaken to provide more accurate timeframes for members.</p>	

	<p>The Chair noted that the contractor should be maintaining communication with members, especially if a sudden programme change occurs.</p> <p>SCC raised concerns over a single lorry route submission as it was a considerable amount of information to process with limited control once a decision had been made, especially as there were still outstanding mitigation issues to be addressed. It was also explained that SCC have stated on several occasions, that they will not approve bulk Schedule 17 lorry route submissions and would prefer smaller more manageable submissions.</p> <p>HS2 Ltd noted the concern and explained that bilateral pre-applications meetings have been scheduled to address concerns and any outstanding issues. It was also noted that no application would be submitted until the outstanding mitigation issues had been resolved.</p> <p>SCC explained that in the Phase 1 Planning Forum a commitment had been given to local authorities that HS2 Ltd would be responsive to local authorities' views on packaging.</p> <p>HS2 Ltd noted the comments and agreed that ongoing discussions are required. It was stated that the law was not prescriptive on how packages are submitted: it enabled a local authority to approve lorry routes either through a series of small packages or through one large package.</p> <p>The Chair recalled the Phase 1 meeting, noting that each member had different views on how they wanted the packages submitted. It was stated the principle was to ensure package size by agreement. HS2 Ltd agreed that this was the optimal outcome, which is why bilateral meetings have been scheduled but noted there was no obligation to commit to package sizes.</p> <p>Action: HS2 Ltd to update the Forum on the outcome of contractors' discussions regarding forecasting of Schedule 17 applications and the dates provided to local authorities.</p>	
7	<p>Common Design Elements (CDEs)</p> <p>HS2 Ltd recapped the Common Design Elements and their purpose for members (see slide deck).</p> <p>HS2 Ltd invited members to provide their comments on Planning Forum Notes (PFN)15 and 16 as no comments had been received following a recent email.</p> <p>The Chair queried if mockup designs were available and if these could be shared with members.</p> <p>SBC advised that they have not seen the CDE material before and requested a copy of the PFN15 & 16 for review.</p> <p>Action: HS2 Ltd to send design colleagues a copy of May's slide deck and PFN 15 & 16.</p> <p>Action: HS2 Ltd to set up a design workshop with members to discuss CDEs and KDEs.</p>	

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8	<p>Key Design Elements (KDEs)</p> <p>HS2 Ltd introduced the KDEs to members and explained their purpose, specifically that some sensitive locations warranted additional engagement with communities.</p> <p>SBC sought clarity on when members would be engaged on the KDEs. HS2 Ltd explained that KDEs will be brought forward by the main work contractor on Phase 2a. It was noted that contractors would not be brought on board until late next year but HS2 Ltd would speak to members as soon as the programme had been drafted.</p>	
9	<p>Planning Forum Notes (PFNs)</p> <p>HS2 Ltd reminded the Forum that an extension of time had been given to allow for any additional comments in relation to PFN 13 (guidance on pre-application engagement). It was noted that no comments had been received.</p> <p>Members agreed PFN 13.</p>	
10	<p>Planning Appeal</p> <p>HS2 Ltd informed members that there are seven appeals outstanding and decisions are expected shortly.</p> <p>Appeals</p> <p>2 lorry route (LB Hillingdon) 2 lorry routes (Align and SCS) non determination 5 lorry route (Bucks) 5 lorry routes (Align and EKFB) – non determination</p> <p>Judicial Reviews</p> <p>JR2: SCS lorry routes APP/HS2/5 (LB Hillingdon)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sch 17 consent granted on appeal 28 July 2020. Hearing at High Court 10 February; determined in SoS's favour Rolled up hearing at the CoA on 20 July. 	
11	<p>Subgroup update</p> <p>HS2 Ltd provided an overview of Subgroup activities for Phase 2a.</p> <p>The Chair requested that all Subgroup meeting minutes and any relevant documents be circulated to the Forum.</p> <p>Action – HS2 Ltd to circulate all Subgroup minutes and any other relevant documents to the Forum.</p>	

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12	Forward Plan and Document Tracker HS2 Ltd provided an overview for the upcoming Forum.	
13	AOB LDC raised a query on a Schedule 17 application. LDC were advised to email a member of the Phase 2a team outside of the Forum meeting, as it was considered a bilateral matter. SPC and LDC advised of staff departures and new contacts. The Forum thanked departing members for their input at meetings and wished them well.	
	Meeting concluded at 12:25pm	