

Meeting minutes

Phase 2b Planning Forum – Environmental Health Subgroup – Operational Noise Working Group Minutes #1 – April 2022

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| Meeting date | Thursday, 28 April 2022 |
| Meeting location | Microsoft Teams |
| Meeting time | 10:30 am – 12:00 pm |

| Presenters |
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| Coordinator & Chair: Technical Engagement Advisor (TEA) HS2 |
| Sound Noise and Vibration: Noise Assessment Specialist (NAS) HS2, Head of Noise Assessment (HNA) HS2 |
| Meeting minutes: Technical Engagement Assistant (TEA) HS2 |
| Attendees |
| Organisation |
| Cheshire East Council |
| Cheshire West and Chester Council |
| Manchester City Council |
| Manchester City Council |
| Wigan Council |
| Wigan Council |
| Attachments |
| Vol 5 Appendix: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1046714/M255.pdf |

1 Agenda item – Welcome and Introduction

- 1.1 TEA, HS2 ran through the agenda and gave an introduction to the EHO exceptional operational noise working group meeting.

2 Agenda item – Overview of the Operational Noise Working Group

- 2.1 NAS, HS2 gave an overview of the aim and purpose of the operational noise working group and what Information Papers will be covered in each of the sessions.

Questions and Discussion

Manchester City Council queried how the Operational Noise working group sessions will benefit them.

NAS: HS2 advised that the working group sessions are to inform and help stakeholders to understand all the documents that have been published, and as the hybrid bill process will be going on for several years the working group sessions give stakeholders the opportunity to ask questions on the policy and give HS2 the opportunity to explain how they have developed the policy papers.

HNA: HS2 added that the Information Papers set out HS2's commitments and the noise policy which will apply for the lifetime of the railway. HS2 also explained that the ES will have given stakeholders an idea of the noise impact and the effect of the railway, but the Information Papers outline the commitments that HS2 are making to support that impact and improve on it. HS2 stated, the policy papers are important as they will be conditions of the Bill, so HS2 are keen for stakeholders to understand those and give stakeholders a chance to comment on them prior to the Hybrid Bill process.

Cheshire West and Chester Council asked if the Information Papers that HS2 are presenting are the exact replicas of Phase 1 and Phase 2A.

NAS: HS2 advised that a lot of the key information within the Information Papers is the same as Phase 1 and Phase 2A however, explained that there are slight differences as, there is provision for additional wording to cover Scottish noise policy and some slight rewording and updated references.

Cheshire West and Chester Council: stated that they are at a stage where they are looking at petitioning, and they wouldn't have been the first authority along the route to have raised concern on noise. They advised that if the issues that they have regarding operational noise are the same as what has been brought up before, it gives an indicator of what they can expect of the operational noise working group discussions.

HNA: HS2 advised how there are some small changes to the Information Papers, but the numerical values are identical to Phase 1 and Phase 2A. HS2 also explained how they have been monitoring new research and guidance at each phase and deciding whether that should lead to an update to the Information Papers. Stakeholders were advised that if they do have concerns, to raise them and HS2 can respond to the concerns in writing now and hopefully satisfy their concerns.

3 Agenda item – Presentation on HS2 Information Paper E9

- 3.1 NAS, HS2 gave a high-level overview on how the noise policy sits within the Bill and advised that this working group session will concentrate on Information Paper E9: Control of airborne noise from altered roads and the operational railway.
- 3.2 NAS, HS2 went through sections 3, 4 and 5 of Information Paper E9, and advised that Information Paper E12 will cover how noise and vibration will be monitored during operation of HS2, which will be discussed in a later session. HNA, HS2 added further detail to the overview of sections 5.1 and 5.2 of Information Paper E9 and explained how section 5.2 of E9 shows how HS2 is effectively going further than the current statutory requirements for railways.

Questions and Discussion:

Manchester City Council queried if there will be a reassessment of the properties that have been identified to qualify for noise insulation?

HNA: HS2 advised that, for Phase 1, the contractors are reassessing noise from the scheme according to the changes made to the design. HS2 stated that they are not at point yet where they are approaching properties to install noise insulation, that will come closer to the point where they start to operate the railway, and the reason for that is, there's still design ongoing for a number of years, and HS2 want to make those offers based on the most up to date information.

Cheshire West and Chester Council asked, in terms of what they have seen for predicted noise levels for the modelling work that has been done, on previous phases, has HS2 found that the model levels have been quite accurate, and what has been experienced previously.

HNA: HS2 explained how they are using the same methodology during detailed design, but if their contractor didn't change anything and modelled again, HS2 would expect identical results, so they are currently not using different methodologies during detailed design.

Cheshire West and Chester Council had asked HS2 to confirm that once their nominated undertaker has been appointed and they have looked at the detail that goes into the particular length of track, would the results be effectively no different to what had been anticipated at the initial modelling phase.

HNA: HS2 explained how small changes within the limits of deviation do happen and HS2 contractors do have the chance to optimise the noise barriers, so they are seeing some changes in the noise predictions; generally reduced noise levels. HS2 advised how critical the commitments are as, the wording within the Information Papers become undertakings to the Secretary of State, which means HS2 have a commitment to deliver them, and they get fed down to the contractors for the different elements of the scheme. HS2 stated that they continually monitor the information that they receive from the contractors.

Cheshire West and Chester Council queried the appropriateness of the LMAX levels that HS2 reference in the Significant Observed Adverse Effect Level (SOAEL) within the Information Paper.

NAS: HS2 advised that there are slides that cover at a reasonably high-level the evidence for the information that informs the decision to choose certain sound levels.

- 3.3 NAS, HS2, went through the appendices of Information Paper E9, gave an overview of the Noise Policy Statement for England, provided detail on how HS2 have implemented government policy and summarised the Lowest Observed Adverse Effect Level (LOAEL) and SOAEL for operational airborne noise.

Questions and Discussion:

Cheshire West and Chester Council had stated that they have had an overwhelming amount of information to try and get through in a short time, and it would be near impossible to expect members of the public to have the same opportunity to do so, so any help that HS2 can give, such as signposting and providing direct links to information is appreciated.

NAS: HS2 agreed to provide a link to the volume 5 appendix (section 3 of Annex H) of ES, which provides health evidence based on sleep disturbance, [linked here](#).

Action 1: Circulate the link to the volume 5 appendix of ES

4 Agenda item – AOB

- 4.1 TEA, HS2 took attendees through future meeting dates and meeting topics and advised how attendees are able to leave feedback on Information Paper E9.