



Schedule 17 designs for Balsall Common Viaduct, HS2 Ltd

Balsall Common Viaduct

In July the panel met to discuss the Schedule 17 stage designs for Balsall Common Viaduct – in advance of a Plans and Specifications Schedule 17 submission being made to Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council.

The panel recognises the extensive work undertaken over several years to evolve the viaduct designs. It now feels that the proposals can result in a significant and elegant structure which responds sensitively to its context, and delivers a high quality landscape. It welcomed the major decisions made to date, including extending the viaduct length, choice of span length, crafting and faceting of piers, refinements to abutments, response to local landscape character and

connections to local routes. Continued refinement of details such as diaphragm heads and testing materials will be important to achieving the quality presented at Schedule 17 stage.

The landscape proposals are impressive, including connections to historical landscape character and proposals to restore historic planting and reconnect hedgerows. Many of the proposals depend on reaching agreement with landowners and so it is essential that HS2 Ltd pursues the necessary negotiations to achieve this approach.

The panel also encouraged HS2 Ltd to share the design solutions developed for Balsall Common Viaduct across HS2, to ensure the benefits of best practice are distributed as widely as possible.

Design Panel activities June and July 2022

2

Panel briefings

- Panel Impact Briefing
- Design assurance post – Schedule 17 stage

2

Schedule 17 stage meetings

- Calvert Infrastructure Maintenance Depot
- Balsall Common Viaduct

4

Phase One meetings

- Euston Design Vision
- Interchange Station car park
- Interchange Station and Automated People Mover Art and Culture Strategy
- River Blythe Workshop

3

Governance meetings

- June and July monthly team meetings attended by the Design Panel chair, vice chair, secretariat and HS2 Ltd
- Governance Advisory Panel meeting attended by the Design Panel chair, vice chair, deputy chairs and secretariat

Interchange Station Art and Culture Strategy

In July, the panel met with the HS2 Ltd Art and Culture team to discuss the development of an art strategy for Interchange Station and the Automated People Mover.

The panel was very impressed with the rigorous and impressive process undertaken. It congratulated HS2 Ltd on its decision to involve Eastside Projects (based in Birmingham). The knowledge, passion and creativity they have brought to the project is a fantastic example of the value and insight small and medium enterprises (SMEs) can offer a national infrastructure project like HS2.

The work has involved a range of talented artists and presents a real opportunity to positively contribute to the identity and success of HS2, as well as to the regeneration of the wider area. The panel considers the art strategy and proposals to be integral to the success of Interchange Station and the Automated People Mover stops, and to their ability to meet the aspirations of the HS2 Design Vision.

The work is a powerful example of the central role Art and Culture can play in the design of HS2. The panel highlighted the importance of ensuring that it is embraced by the design and build Contractor for Interchange Station (Laing O'Rourke) as they are brought on board.



Schedule 17 stage designs for Interchange Station, HS2 Ltd



Gavin Wade
Director and Artist-Curator
Eastside Projects

People's stories

As part of HS2 Ltd's commitment to working with local expertise, Eastside Projects has been appointed to help develop and advise on the Arts and Culture Strategy for Interchange Station and the Automated People Mover.

“Our strategy explores ways of connecting architecture and landscape with the communities and future users of the site. It highlights the area's historical significance as a central UK crossroads, and pursues an ambition to bring together artists from the region, the UK and globally to respond to the place and imagine its future.”

Involving artists and curators alongside architects and engineers creates opportunities to enhance the evolving stories of new places – making people stop and think, encouraging new interconnections and new experiences. It has been really special to contribute to the evolving story of an exciting new place in the heart of the West Midlands.”

Panel impact briefing

In July the panel attended a panel impact briefing session to help provide with further insight into HS2 Ltd design assurance mechanisms and processes. It included an overview of the panel's input to date, including key design issues discussed at Schedule 17 stage Design Panel meetings and feedback from HS2 Ltd staff on its involvement. This insight will help focus future panel discussions so that they can support design efforts across the project in the most effective way – maximising its value to HS2.



Frame Projects
Secretariat to the
HS2 Independent
Design Panel

**HS2 INDEPENDENT
DESIGN PANEL**