

EH Subgroup Minutes

Meeting date	Thursday 1 st December 2022, 14:30 to 17:00
Meeting location	Microsoft Teams
Meeting title	Environmental Health (EH) Subgroup Meeting #43
HS2 contact or group	planning.forum@hs2.org.uk
Stakeholder	Environmental Health Subgroup to Planning Forum

External Attendees

Independent Chair

HS2 Construction Commissioner

Nominated Undertaker Attendees

Air Quality Manager (Construction) – HS2 Ltd

Environment Advisor– HS2 Ltd

Head of Environment (Routewide) – HS2 Ltd

Head of Noise Assessment – HS2 Ltd

Noise Assessment Manager – HS2 Ltd

Phase One Town Planning Lead – HS2 Ltd

EH Attendees

Buckinghamshire Council (BC1)

Buckinghamshire Council (BC2)

London Borough of Camden (LBC1)

London Borough of Camden (LBC2)

London Borough of Camden (LBC3)

London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham (LHF1)

London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham (LHF2)

North Warwickshire Borough Council (NWBC)

Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC)

Staffordshire County Council (SCC)

Stratford District Council (SDC)

Westminster City Council (WCC)

Apologies

Director of Environment – HS2 Ltd

London Borough of Ealing

North Warwickshire Borough Council

Oxfordshire County Council

Staffordshire County Council

Item 1 – Chairman’s Introduction and Apologies

The Chair called the meeting to order and provided an overview of the meeting etiquette. The Chair welcomed attendees and asked for introductions to be made in the chat function. Apologies were shared by the secretariate. The meeting was recorded to aid with minute taking, attendees were notified.

Item 2 - Review of Minutes from Previous Meeting

A review of the previous meeting minutes was undertaken. The meeting minutes were agreed by attendees and there were no further items for discussion

Item 3 – Construction Commissioner: Latest report and general update

The Chair welcomed the HS2 Construction Commissioner to talk through the latest report published and provide a general update. An overview was provided of previous complaints, noting a downward trend and the systems in place which may have led to this. The predominant issues were traffic, noise, site lighting and more recently water management.

Questions/Comments:

Q (Chair): Your reports mention noise insulation and your concerns on this. What is your current view?

A (Construction Commissioner): My concern was over the slow roll out of noise insulation, especially in Camden, but things are improving in both rolling out insulation and communicating to residents. The largest difficulty is gathering feedback from rental accommodation and landlords.

Q (Chair): A review is being undertaken of the prolonged disturbance compensation scheme, are you contributing to this review?

A (Construction Commissioner): The Residents Commissioner and I are both involved in this. I welcome the review that is being undertaken. I ask any local authorities that have views to get in touch.

Q (Chair): Your report mentioned resistance from contractors towards small claims scheme. What are your opinions on this?

A (Construction Commissioner): Some contractors were reluctant to acknowledge fault. This scheme is in the contractor’s interest.

Item 4 – Phase One Update

An update on Phase One was provided by HS2’s Environment Advisor. Highlights were given of the latest press releases across the HS2 programme, including:

- Community feedback inspires new HS2 bridge and landscape designs in North-East Birmingham
- HS2 uses rail freight to take extra 300,000 truck journeys off Bucks Roads
- Brackley Town FC clubhouse rebuilt thanks to HS2 £75k grant

- HS2 completes largest ever UK pour of carbon-reducing concrete on Euston station site.
- HS2 Chiltern tunnel – ‘Florence’ and ‘Cecilia’ reach 4 mile at Chalfont St Giles

An update was given for Phase One, which included ongoing excavation, foundation, piling and utilities works ongoing. An update was also provided of key works for all HS2 Stations and contracts, including what progress has been made and a lookahead of works. HS2’s

Questions/Comments:

Q(WCC): We have found that low carbon concrete takes longer to cure, have you found this with your recipe?

A (HS2 Head of Environment – Routewide): We have trailed various blends across the route. We can find out for this specific site but you are correct that some take longer time to cure.

Q (WCC): I assume this is not required to be finished to a particular standard?

A (HS2 Head of Environment – Routewide): We are about to use low carbon concrete for our first permanent structure. Everything so far has been temporary. Once this has been done, we can bring it to this group.

C (Chair): This may be of interest for other people. We should discuss this at a future meeting with a short presentation.

Q (Chair): Please could HS2 brief the group on personnel changes.

A (HS2 Head of Environment – Routewide): Changes have come about due to Phase 2b going into Select Committee. Our Director of Environment will be focused on this as our environment expert witness but due to the large number of works in Phase One, we need an interim cover. We have had an internal reshuffle, with our Head of Environment – Routewide stepping into the Director role. And I as Head of Environmental Sciences stepping into that role. Our HS2 Air Quality Manager is stepping into my previous role. Our Environment Graduate/Secretariate has completed their graduate scheme and is now an Environment Advisor and will be covering the Phase One update moving forward.

Item 5 – Air Quality Update & Item 6 – Monthly Reporting Tool Working Group

The Chair welcomed HS2’s Air Quality Manager (Construction) to provide an air quality update across the route. A reminder was given of HS2’s approach to air quality such as emission standards for NRMM and dust risk assessments on sites. Vehicle compliance figures and vehicle trip summaries were shown from January 1 to October 31 2022. It was noted that ongoing engagement was being carried out with contractors to discuss air quality emissions requirements and setting up risk reduction meetings where needed. NRMM compliance figures were also presented for this time. HS2’s Air Quality Manager (Construction) also provided a summary of the Air Quality Annual Report 2021

An update was provided on the workshop carried out to discuss the monthly monitoring – dynamic reporting portal. Recommendations were taken away to inform next steps which includes developing a data hub for storing data to sit behind the interface. The Chair invited a representative from Buckinghamshire to share feedback on the monthly monitoring reporting portal. Timings of reports being published and the public understanding of what the reports will be were discussed.

Questions/Comments:

C (Chair): The figures for light duty vehicles do not seem to be improving. Time has been spent on re-training but what is the next step?

A (HS2- Air Quality Manager (Construction)): Risk reduction meetings have been set up with logistics team on how to incorporate their action plans.

Q (LBHF1): There is also room for improvement in Area South. London authorities are within a ULEZ so I would expect a larger number.

A (HS2 – Air Quality Manager (Construction)): I looked into this. Network Rail use our gates for their maintenance, but this is picked up on our systems. They are non Euro-6 vehicles so impact our figures even though they are not doing any HS2 related works.

Q (LBHF1): Is HS2 doing anything in relation to Network Rail to address this and put pressure on them?

A (Chair): There is only so much HS2 can influence. Perhaps this should be brought up at a London environmental health group or alternative channels.

Item 7 –Noise Update

HS2's Noise Assessment Manager was introduced to provide an update on the S61 working group which took place on November 24th. Two items were discussed which had previously been brought up at the October EH Subgroup. This was who has the authority to sign S61 applications and a review of additional working hours. Figures were shown of S61 applications, Statement of Intents, Variations and Dispensations for October and November 2022. It was noted that the figures appear lower since they do not include December. The low number of variation and dispensation figures is being looked into to confirm this is being recorded accurately. A forward look was provided of the next two months for S61 and Sol's for each contractor.

Questions/Comments:

Q (Chair): I feel that when the local authority issues the consent it should be issued to the partner companies rather than the joint venture.

A (HS2 Noise Assessment Manager): This was discussed. Across Phase One, local authorities are doing different things. The majority are issuing consents back to the named individual who is within the joint venture.

Item 8–Section 61 Working Group

Representative from Buckinghamshire Council provided an update of the latest Section 61 Working Group. Concerns were raised regarding audit trails between local authorities and parent companies. A view was shared that S61 notices should not be issued across individual companies and should be to the person who has made the application. It was suggested for this to be discussed with HS2's legal team. Working hours were also discussed in regards to earthworks seasons and that further guidance is required on this to avoid Sunday working especially.

Question/Comments:

C (Construction Commissioner): My concern is on potential working hour infringements. If local authorities have instances of any breaches to working hours, bring this up to me.

Q (Chair): At a previous meeting, it was proposed there would be a working group for Sch17 applications. Has this been scheduled?

A (HS2 Head of Noise Assessment): We have diarised this for this on the 14th December

Item 9 – Joint Regulators Forum Feedback

Representative from Buckinghamshire Council was invited to provide feedback from the Joint Regulators Forum which took place in October 2022. The representative from the Environment Agency would no longer be able to attend future meetings. Update was provided on behalf of the EH Subgroup, noting the work being done on carbon emissions. Topics of discussion also included H&S performance metrics and the recent protestor eviction.

Item 10 – Planning Forum Feedback

Hs2 Phase One Town Planning Lead was introduced to provide a Phase 1 Planning Forum update. Client Director for Align IPT attended to provide a Phase One project update. The HS2 Construction Commissioner provided an update. Regular standing items were discussed including planning consents performance and determined Sch17 performance from the previous months. Delays to Sch17 approvals were discussed from a HS2 and local authorities' perspective. Commons design elements and Planning Forum Notes were also discussed at the Phase One Planning Forum. Planning Forum Note 18, which captures line-side noise barrier design, was agreed upon. Issues raised included the quality of Sch17 submission quality and the current situation regarding Sch17 appeals

Questions/Comments:

Q (Chair): Is Planning Forum Note 18 up on the website?

A (HS2 Phase One Town Planning Lead): It should be available in the next few weeks. I can share a link when it is to be provided to attendees. If anyone is interested in a presentation, this can be arranged.

Item 11 – Ongoing Construction and Section 61 Experience

The Chair noted that a few minor points were discussed at the pre-meet. These included the potential of issues with site lighting and the reduction of complaints. There was no further input from attendees

Item 12 – Action Log / Forward Plan / AOB

The Chair reviewed the action log, which has been updated to reflect items that remain open and those which are now closed. HS2's Head of Environment – Routewide clarified the current progress of LEMPs for each area, noting that this was a rolling issue. The Chair asked due to the ongoing nature, this should be marked as closed. HS2's Noise Assessment Manager provided an update on the action regarding the Camden/Imperial health impact study and the prolonged disturbance policy.

Future agenda items were included on the action log. The proposed dates for the 2023 meetings were discussed, noting the April meeting and all which follow, may be subject to revision due to the pre-election Purdah period. This would be discussed at the next meeting in February.

A representative from London Borough Hammersmith & Fulham raised an issue regarding difficulty in obtaining QC/QA reports of the dust monitors from Old Oak Common contractors. HS2's Air Quality Manager (Construction) noted that the information was provided and the contractor was enquiring into the purpose of obtaining this information and where is this set out in guidance. The Chair asked HS2 to look into this and add this as an action.

The Chair closed the meeting and thanked attendees.