

High Speed Rail (Crewe – Manchester)

Supplementary Environmental Statement 2 and Additional Provision 2 Environmental Statement

Volume 5: Appendix EC-001-00000

Ecology and biodiversity

Ecological baseline data - designated sites

MA06: Hulseheath to Manchester Airport

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Department for Transport

High Speed Two (HS2) Limited has been tasked by the Department for Transport (DfT) with managing the delivery of a new national high speed rail network. It is a non-departmental public body wholly owned by the DfT.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Structure of this appendix

- 1.1.1 This report is an appendix to the ecology and biodiversity assessment which forms part of Volume 5 of the Supplementary Environmental Statement 2 (SES2) and Additional Provision 2 Environmental Statement (AP2 ES).
- 1.1.2 It provides details of changes to nature conservation site designations (new site designations, changes to existing site designations, and/or changes to existing site designations extents) since the production of the High Speed Two (HS2) High Speed Rail (Crewe – Manchester) Environmental Statement (ES) published in 2022¹ (the main ES) and the Supplementary Environmental Statement 1 (SES1) and Additional Provision 1 Environmental Statement (AP1 ES) also published in 2022².
- 1.1.3 There were no changes to site designations in Community Areas (CA) MA01, MA02, MA03, MA07 or MA08, therefore this report covers only Hulseheath to Manchester Airport (MA06).
- 1.1.4 This report should be read in conjunction with the main ES Ecological baseline data – designated sites report (see main ES Volume 5, Appendix: EC-001-00001) and the SES1 and AP1 ES Volume 5, Appendix: EC-001-00000.
- 1.1.5 Maps relevant to this report are contained in the SES2 and AP2 ES Volume 5, Ecology and biodiversity Map Book: Map Series EC-01 – Designated Sites.
- 1.1.6 In order to differentiate between the original scheme and the subsequent changes, the following terms are used:
- ‘the original scheme’ – the Bill scheme submitted to Parliament in 2022, which was assessed in the main ES;
 - ‘the SES1 scheme’ – the original scheme with any changes described in SES1 that are within the existing powers of the Bill;
 - ‘the AP1 revised scheme’ – the original scheme as amended by SES1 changes and AP1 amendments;
 - ‘the SES2 scheme’ – the original scheme with any changes described in SES1 (submitted in July 2022) and the SES2; and

¹ High Speed Two Ltd (2022), High Speed Rail (Crewe – Manchester), *Environmental Statement*. Available online at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/hs2-phase2b-crewe-manchester-environmental-statement>.

² High Speed Two Ltd (2022), High Speed Rail (Crewe – Manchester), *Supplementary Environmental Statement 1 and Additional Provision 1 Environmental Statement*. Available online at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/hs2-phase-2b-crewe-manchester-supplementary-environmental-statement-1-and-additional-provision-1-environmental-statement>.

- ‘the AP2 revised scheme’ – the original scheme as amended by SES1 and SES2 changes (as relevant) and AP2 amendments.

1.2 Methodology, assumptions and limitations

- 1.2.1 The assessment scope, key assumptions and limitations are as set out in the main ES Environmental Impact Assessment Scope and Methodology Report (SMR)³.
- 1.2.2 Additional data on designated sites of nature conservation importance were obtained to inform the SES2 and AP2 ES. Data were sought from Natural England with respect to statutory designated sites and from Cheshire Wildlife Trust and Manchester Environmental Records Centre with respect to non-statutory Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) and Sites of Biological Importance (SBI). It was reviewed against the AP2 revised scheme to identify newly designated sites, changes in the reason for designation and/or revision to the importance of site, and changes in site boundaries and extent, since the production of the main ES for MA06, MA07 and MA08 and since production of the SES1 and AP1 ES for MA01, MA02 and MA03.
- 1.2.3 Changes to designated sites of nature conservation importance meeting the following criteria are presented in this report:
- all statutory designated sites within a 500m buffer of the land required for the AP2 revised scheme;
 - any other statutory designated sites which are considered potentially subject to significant effects;
 - all non-statutory designated sites within or adjacent to the land required for the AP2 revised scheme; and
 - any other non-statutory designated sites which are considered potentially subject to significant effects.
- 1.2.4 The updated dataset was also reviewed in relation to the AP2 revised scheme to identify designated sites relevant to the AP2 ES and SES2 ES that were not reported in the main ES or SES1 and AP1 ES. Where sites were identified, for example as a result of AP amendments meaning that sites are now within the buffers set out above, they are presented in this report.

³ High Speed Two Ltd (2022), High Speed Rail (Crewe – Manchester), *Environmental Statement, Environmental Impact Assessment Scope and Methodology Report*, Volume 5, Appendix: CT-001-00001. Available online at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/hs2-phase2b-crewe-manchester-environmental-statement>.

1.3 Reporting to inform Habitats Regulations Assessment

- 1.3.1 Assessment of the effects upon internationally important sites was undertaken to inform the main ES. Further assessment of internationally important sites relevant to MA01, MA02 and MA03 was undertaken to inform the SES1 and AP1 ES.
- 1.3.2 Further assessment to inform the SES2 and AP2 ES has been undertaken as set out in the following reports:
- see Designated Site Assessment report for the Midland Meres and Mosses Phase 2 Ramsar site (Oak Mere) and Oak Mere Special Area of Conservation (SES2 and AP2 ES Volume 5, Appendix: EC-016-00001);
 - see Designated Site Assessment report for Manchester Mosses Special Area of Conservation (Holcroft Moss) (SES2 and AP2 ES Volume 5, Appendix: EC-016-00002);
 - see Designated Site Assessment report for the Rostherne Mere Ramsar site and Midland Meres and Mosses Phase 1 Ramsar site (SES2 and AP2 ES Volume 5, Appendix: EC-016-00003);
 - see Designated Site Assessment report for Rochdale Canal Special Area of Conservation (SES2 and AP2 ES Volume 5, Appendix: EC-016-00004);
 - see Designated Site Assessment report for Rixton Clay Pits Special Area of Conservation (SES2 and AP2 ES Volume 5, Appendix: EC-016-00005);
 - see Designated Site Assessment report for the Midland Meres and Mosses Phase 2 Ramsar site (Oakhanger Moss) (SES2 and AP2 ES Volume 5, Appendix: EC-016-00006);
 - see Designated Site Assessment report for the Midland Meres and Mosses Phase 1 Ramsar site (Tatton Meres) (SES2 and AP2 ES Volume 5, Appendix: EC-016-00007); and
 - see Designated Site Assessment report for the Midland Meres and Mosses Phase 1 Ramsar site and the West Midland Mosses Special Area of Conservation (Wybunbury Moss) (SES2 and AP2 ES Volume 5, Appendix: EC-016-00009).
- 1.3.3 The further assessments take account of changes to traffic modelling and updated air quality modelling reflecting differences between the AP2 revised scheme, the original scheme (MA06-MA08) and AP1 revised scheme (MA01-MA03).

2 Baseline

- 2.1.1 Changes to designations since the main ES and SES1 and AP1 ES are described within Table 1. No substantive changes were identified within other community areas since previous reporting, although minor boundary amendments have been made to a proportion of sites reflecting updates to Ordnance Survey (OS) mapping and in some cases, localised changes to refine the extent of habitats included.
- 2.1.2 The sites listed in Table 1 include two sites designated since production of the main ES, Birkin Brook LWS and Sugar Brook Farm Grasslands LWS and one site which has been extended, Ashley Brickworks LWS. All of these sites are partially within the land required for the AP2 revised scheme.
- 2.1.3 No baseline updates are applicable to MA01, MA02 or MA03, MA07 or MA08.

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Ecology and biodiversity

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Ecological baseline data – designated sites

Table 1: Changes to non-statutory designated sites since the production of the main ES

Site name and designation	CA	Ordnance survey (OS) grid reference	Site description	Change in designation/ reason for inclusion	Distance from the AP2 revised scheme (m) and orientation	Relevant to AP2 amendments (Y/N)
Birkin Brook LWS	MA06	SJ 75925 84205	A small tributary of the River Bollin that comprises a meandering watercourse with some young trees and scrub along its edge. Grassland margins include species such as greater bird's-foot trefoil (<i>Lotus pedunculatus</i>), common bird's-foot trefoil (<i>Lotus corniculatus</i>), meadow vetchling (<i>Lathyrus pratensis</i>), meadow sweet (<i>Filipendula ulmaria</i>), wild angelica (<i>Angelica sylvestris</i>) and marsh cinquefoil (<i>Comarum palustre</i>). An area of grassland within the LWS supports vetch species including locally rare grass vetchling (<i>Lathyrus nissolia</i>).	Newly designated.	Within	Y
Ashley Brickworks LWS	MA06	SJ 77432 83531	This site (formerly Erlam's Meadow LWS) is designated for its lowland mixed deciduous woodland, rough meadow, ponds and stream habitat. The boundary was extended in 2020 to include wetland habitat to the south.	Extension to existing designation to include an additional 0.1ha of land adjoining the site to the south.	Within	Y
Sugar Brook Farm Grasslands LWS	MA06	SJ 77499 83072	This site comprises multiple grassland fields, covering 9.4ha in total. The site contains neutral grassland and species-rich grassland supporting species including bog	Newly designated.	Within	Y

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Ecological baseline data – designated sites

Site name and designation	CA	Ordnance survey (OS) grid reference	Site description	Change in designation/ reason for inclusion	Distance from the AP2 revised scheme (m) and orientation	Relevant to AP2 amendments (Y/N)
			stitchwort (<i>Stellaria alsine</i>), wild angelica and square-stalked St John's-wort (<i>Hypericum tetrapterum</i>).			

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