

















INDEPENDENT Phase 2a Planning FORUM FOR HS2

Title:	Phase 2a Planning Forum for HS2	
Date & Time:	Wednesday 11 October 2023, 10:30 – 11:15 Microsoft Teams (Virtual meeting)	
Chair:		Independent Chair
HS2 Ltd		HS2 Ltd - Head of Town Planning
Attendees:		HS2 Ltd - (Acting) Town Planning Lead, Phase 2a
		HS2 Ltd - Head of Phase 2a, Community and Stakeholder Engagement
		HS2 Ltd - Town Planning Lead, Phase 2a
		HS2 Ltd - Town Planning Manager
		HS2 Ltd - Town Planning Advisor
		HS2 Ltd - Senior Town Planning Manager, Phase 2b
		HS2 Ltd - Town Planning Assistant
		HS2 Ltd - Town Planning Manager
		HS2 Ltd - Lead Urban Designer
		HS2 Ltd - Traffic Manager, Logistics
		HS2 Ltd - Public Response Manager
		HS2 Ltd - Urban Designer
		HS2 Ltd - Senior Commercial Manager, Procurement & Supply Chain
		HS2 Ltd - Town Planning Administrator

Local Authority Attendees:	[REDACTED]	Lichfield District Council (LDC)
	[REDACTED]	Lichfield District Council (LDC)
	[REDACTED]	Cheshire East Council (CEC)
	[REDACTED]	Newcastle under Lyme Borough Council (NULBC)
	[REDACTED]	East Staffordshire Borough Council
	[REDACTED]	Stafford Borough Council (SBC)
	[REDACTED]	Staffordshire County Council (SCC)
	[REDACTED]	Staffordshire County Council (SCC)
	[REDACTED]	
Promoter Attendees:	[REDACTED]	Department for Transport (DfT)
	[REDACTED]	Department for Transport (DfT)
	[REDACTED]	Department for Transport (DfT)
Apologies:	[REDACTED]	HS2 Ltd - Delivery Director, Phase 2a
	[REDACTED]	HS2 Ltd - Head of Early Works, Phase 2a
	[REDACTED]	Staffordshire County Council (SCC)
	[REDACTED]	Newcastle-Under-Lyme Borough Council (NULBC)
	[REDACTED]	Shropshire County Council (SCC)
	[REDACTED]	Stafford Borough Council (SBC)
	[REDACTED]	Stafford Borough Council (SBC)
	[REDACTED]	East Staffs Borough Council (ESBC)
	[REDACTED]	Lichfield District Council (LDC)
	[REDACTED]	HS2 Ltd - Traffic and Transport

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Item		Action Owner
	<p>Introductions</p> <p>The Chair requested all attendees who were new or who had not attended for some time to introduce themselves.</p>	
1.	<p>Review of previous meeting minutes and actions</p> <p>The minutes of the previous meeting (July) had been circulated so the Chair asked the Forum if any amendments were required. It was thereafter agreed they could be published on gov.uk. ACTION.</p> <p>The Chair reviewed the actions log and the following actions were discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Chair requested action items recorded as closed should no longer list the Action Owner in the Action column. Subject to that change, the minutes were agreed and could be published on gov.uk. • There is no indication when the DfT will be able to share the updated Statutory Guidance wording but when there's clearance from the legal team DfT will provide more information. • Urban Integration to present in 2024. Superseded. • HS2 will update on the award of the DDP contract and the forward strategy in due course once it is announced. Superseded. • The Chair suggested a further discussion on Decision Making Processes and all LAs to provide 'what triggers submissions going to planning committee and the percentage involved'. Superseded. • New PFN19 - still in early development, HS2 to circulate for consultation in due course. Now for Phase 1 only. • Introduction – Video HS2 played a video introduction, but due to technical issues at the SCC Office, it was only visible to online attendees. It was suggested to circulate the video Forum members after the meeting. [Post meeting note: ACTION COMPLETE] • LPAs' Determination Processes and Schedules of Delegation The Chair confirmed previous receipts from three authorities. He received another one from EW (Cheshire East Council) responding to his email. Chair to share with Forum. Superseded. • The Chair noted that SCC also had one that had been prepared for Phase 1. He understood it was being put into a flow chart but had not yet received it. SCC agreed to do so. Superseded. • Schedule 17 performance slides - David Clark (ESBC) asked what applications might be made in the next six months to a year. Numbers will be very limited: HS2 will check further and advise. • 2a Community Engagement Snapshot - The Chair noted the Ministers six-monthly report was not available in pdf format. He requested that this be fed back to the DfT team to produce a downloadable pdf version if possible. DfT 	<p>HS2 Ltd</p> <p>Closed</p> <p>Dft ongoing</p> <p>Closed</p> <p>Closed</p> <p>Closed</p> <p>Closed</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>Closed</p> <p>Closed</p> <p>HS2 Ltd</p> <p>Closed</p>

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	<p>agreed to chase this up. It was suggested that it's a more accessible format as not everyone has pdf access.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning Forum Forward Plan - It was agreed that the next Hybrid meeting would be held again at Staffordshire County Council offices. Superseded. 	Closed
2.	<p>Dept for Transport (DfT) Update – Cancellation of Phase 2</p> <p>(DfT gave an update following the Prime Minister's announcement.</p> <p>DfT explained that it was a high-level decision and DfT officials will work what it means in practice for matters such as the 2a Act and U&As.</p> <p>The DfT team are working through the announcement to identify issues arising. DfT noted that many related to Phase 2a and its interaction with Phase 1, which will take time to work through. He commented that there will still be work relevant to the Planning Forum going forward, such as site restorations and other matters which require Local Authority input and/or consents. PS invited questions.</p> <p>The Chair suggested that any questions from the LAs would be helpful to the DfT in compiling its list of issues. He agreed with the DfT continuing to refer to Phase 1 and Phase 2a as both Acts will be necessary to do the 'tidying up'. For example, he noted that some powers in the Phase 2a Act may be required to complete the connection to the West Coast mainline.</p>	
3.	<p>Questions / discussion</p> <p>The Chair acknowledged it had been a difficult week for everyone to digest the news and he requested questions, views, or concerns on the situation from the LAs.</p> <p>SA (LDC) stated within Lichfield they have Phase 1 and Phase 2a works, noting what the Chair said about using Phase 2a powers for the West Coast Mainline connection (Handsacre Junction) is important. SA sought clarity of the status of those works: DfT advised to wait until there was official confirmation on the position.</p> <p>JM (HS2) confirmed that the works are covered by safeguarding on both Phase 1 and Phase 2a. From LDC's perspective it is about site restoration and compounds in Phase 2a: what is proposed to be used going forward?</p> <p>SA stated LDC should be written to if compounds are closed for more than 12 months, as she believed the Act only allows for closures of 12 months. After the 12-month period she asked how LDC should be informed of what's happening to manage them? LDC had begun an internal audit of the EEW sites that LDC consented. She asked what will happen to those?</p> <p>SA noted that residents and landowners, if not communicated with, will probably start coming to the LA to ask about the status of environmental sites, noting a couple of places where works intersected with public rights of way. She said LDC will need to audit the status of completion, ensuring public rights of way are</p>	

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	<p>maintained open in a safe manner at the earliest opportunity. LDC appreciates the shock for colleagues in HS2 and the DfT.</p> <p>The Chair thanked LDC for the questions and asked if they have temporary rights of way diversions in place that will need reversing? SA replied that they need to go through them all to identify the situation.</p> <p>The Chair asked what the constraint in the Act was regarding a 12-month limit on how long a construction site could be closed?</p> <p>PG (HS2) thought the reference was to paragraph 11 in Schedule 17, covering Site Restoration agreements. The 12 months is a backstop date after which, a site that has been used for HS2 purposes requires a restoration agreement. There is a range of questions as to what the end of HS2 use means and this will be worked through, HS2 has no further updates on the process, the mechanics of it, and timing unfortunately. HS2 also stated there is a commitment in the Planning Memorandum to seek to restore sites earlier where we can.</p> <p>The Chair asked if other authorities had the same issues, of construction sites being restored and environmental works that need completing or reversing. HS2 confirmed that this is the case.</p> <p>PS (DfT) clarified that Handsacre is in the Phase 1 scheme, so the junction at Handsacre is still in construction scope. it was noted that some powers in the Phase 2a Act would be needed to complete the junction current design of the junction.</p> <p>JH (SBC) said that Phase 2a cuts across the borough and SBC have dealt with approximately twenty Schedule 17 requests for approval for early environmental works. SBC noted the main concern from politicians, local landowners, and residents, is the uncertainty caused by these consents and HS2 sites.</p> <p>SBC also noted the effects of the Phase 2a Safeguarding Directions. Until the safeguarding direction is amended or withdrawn, SBC are still obliged to consult with HS2 on relevant planning applications and there is a question regarding land charges. SBC will receive more queries regarding land sales, property sales, etc. soon. Other Forum members echoed these concerns.</p> <p>The Chair noted that guidance is urgently needed with planning applications at stake.</p> <p>PS (DfT) explained that the position on safeguarding had not yet been established and that he expected there would be communications, but that it would take time.</p> <p>CJ (NULBC) supported comments made by colleagues at LDC and SBC in terms of planning – safeguarding, approach to planning applications etc. He further asked if plans had been drawn up in response to the announcement to shut down Phase 2a and also whether there would be formal communications coming out from ministers to local authority leaders following the recent announcement.</p>	
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	<p>PS (DOT) stated that the DOT was still in the process of assessing the implications of the announcement and confirmed that formal communications with LAs would in due course be made though could not say when this would be.</p> <p>The Chair thanked SA (LDC), JH (SBC) and CJ (NULBC) for their contributions and invited further questions. He stated the most urgent messages received in the Forum were safeguarding and land issues with a presumption to move on to restoration next.</p> <p>The Chair asked HS2 (PG) if thought had been given about the task of designing restoration yet, or would it mean that construction sites would have to be restored some years down the line. He presumed there were no restoration plans yet for any of the construction sites and that some effort would be needed to design them.</p> <p>PG (HS2) noted the issues raised and that there is a long list of things HS2 will work through to get to the point where there is a strategy for site restorations and consents that links into work around land disposal and property issues. It will take a while for HS2 and DfT to develop a strategy. HS2 recognise the importance of having clarity but explained that the issues are complex and it will take time to provide all the answers.</p> <p>The Chair said he did not think anyone was expecting immediate answers but noted the question of who will design the restoration, and who will implement it, remains.</p> <p>LB (DfT) have considered the implications for the Statutory Guidance update: if there will be substantial site restoration applications to be made, the Guidance for Phase 2a, as well as Phase 1, may require updating. The DfT will take legal advice on this. ACTION DfT to check and confirm.</p> <p>The Chair thanked everyone for sharing their thoughts and questions.</p>	DfT
4.	<p>Phase 2a Planning Forum – Future Arrangements</p> <p>SA (LDC) queried if future Phase 2 Forums would be cancelled or if there would be continuity to provide updates to LA planning departments, and if there was a plan.</p> <p>The Chair stated if any Phase 2a Act powers were to be used, such as for the restoration of construction sites, the Act requires the Planning Forum to continue to oversee the use of Sc.17 powers. Forum meetings also provide an efficient vehicle for consistent communication and minimising uncertainty and misinformation. The DfT and HS2 would continue to make use of the Forum to ensure consistent messages are given to all authorities at the same time.</p> <p>The Chair stated things could move quite quickly, requiring answers. It was agreed to initially hold monthly meetings until January 2024, then move to bi-monthly and then perhaps quarterly. HS2 and DfT agreed.</p>	

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	<p>PS (DfT) agreed the need for the Forum going forward to ensure an orderly close down. He suggested calling it the Phase 2a Planning Forum (close down), to prevent any confusion that people may think there is an ongoing Phase 2a Planning Forum.</p> <p>PS (DfT) confirmed the need to work through issues raised in the Forum and others that will become clear in the coming weeks and months. There will be many actions and activities to get to the point of close down, that need to be taken in a Forum.</p> <p>The Chair proposed the meetings would be conducted on Microsoft Teams and last for 1 hour. It was agreed to call the meetings 'Phase 2a Planning Forum – (Close Down)'.</p> <p>SA (LDC) requested that a Land and Property representative attends future meetings as questions are being raised and applications already have holding objections and are going to committee. She noted that two months is too long to leave people in limbo.</p> <p>The Chair requested that PS (DfT) invite a Land and Property representative for the next Forum to explain the situation. ACTION. It was agreed the next meeting would be held on 8th November 2023 at 2pm. HS2 to send an invite. ACTION. [Post meeting agreement, other future dates would be 6th December at 10.30am, 17th January 2024 at 10.30am.]</p>	DfT HS2 Ltd complete
5.	<p>AOB</p> <p>There being no other business, the Chair thanked everyone for attending and in particular the several representatives from DfT. The Chair then closed the meeting.</p>	11:15