

**THIRTY-FIRST REPORT: QUARTER THREE
2024**

icc

HS2 Independent Construction Commissioner: Thirty-First Report

Introduction

This is the Thirty-First Report of the Independent Construction Commissioner HS2 (ICC) and covers the third quarter of 2024 (1st July – 30th September).

Overview

The number of complaints as registered by HS2 Ltd continue to remain steady over the quarter.

Phase 2a is quiet.

As in previous quarters, noise, traffic, lighting, road conditions, site management, were the issues most raised by the public.

Line of route visits during the quarter included, Birmingham, Warwickshire, West London and the Camden and Euston areas.

I continue to meet regularly with HS2 Ltd, its contractors and with the Department for Transport.

Representations

The ICC received 53 individual case approaches (see Annex) during the quarter. 27 were issues which had been raised with HS2 Ltd already but which the complainant thought the ICC should be aware of; a further 21 cases approached the ICC and these were referred on to HS2 Ltd for response. An additional 2 cases were raised with the ICC but were outside the remit.

During the quarter 3 cases were subject to a full investigation and concluded.

Small Claims Scheme (SCS)

Under the Small Claims Scheme, 28 new claims were registered with HS2 Ltd for the quarter. 2 claims were settled and 21 claims were rejected in the period.

Since the commencement of the scheme 666 claims have been registered. Of those, 164 have been approved and 438 have been rejected.

The total amount paid out stands at £83.607.

Observations

Since the publication of my last report there have been a number of significant announcements connected to the future of HS2. Consequently, here, I intend to limit my observations to the potential impacts of these major outcomes.

I welcome the Government's decision to begin work again on the tunnels which will link Old Oak Common to Euston. The overall project made no sense without the connection into Central London and a new station in the heart of the capital.

I do recognise that this decision will not be welcomed universally. The announcements, first of a pause in works on the route into Central London and subsequently a cessation of works, created a great degree of uncertainty and anxiety for local communities and has added several years to the completion of the project. That uncertainty has been removed now and residents and businesses will have a more focused picture of the future. This area of London has been suspended in a sort of limbo for the past few years. At least that is at an end.

Recently, the Government has given an even clearer idea of how the Euston HS2 station will fit into a wider redevelopment. Announcements have been made regarding the number of platforms, the ability to create more kept open to meet the requirements of any potential further expansion of high speed rail which may be proposed in the years ahead and on the integration of the HS2 station into the broader Euston mainline terminus.

There remains much to outline in more detail. The local community in Camden in the vicinity of Euston Station, will still press for more information on the new works timeline and I would hope that HS2 Ltd will be able to give some fresh updates shortly, particularly on the tunnelling and the works on the Euston approaches. Likewise, as construction is reopened at the vent shafts, local residents will wish to know what to expect. These will be major challenges for the engagement teams of both HS2 Ltd and of the Joint Ventures.


In addition, local residents and businesses will want to know more about how the redevelopment of Euston is going to be delivered and about the design of the new station. Naturally, we might have to wait a little longer for some of these aspects to emerge.

Although matters may be clearer in the Euston/Camden area there remains a great deal of uncertainty as to what will happen to the north of Birmingham. The outline proposals put forward by the Mayors of Greater Manchester and of the West Midlands along with other potential consortium members have attracted considerable interest. Given that some of the land to take HS2 to

Crewe has been acquired already a number of future possibilities might arise. I look forward to seeing how these ideas might develop. If the project is to be limited to joining the West Coast Mainline at Handsacre, as has recently been envisaged, then an early clarification of works in this area would be welcomed by the local community.

Construction works are at their height now. There will continue to be major areas of disruption. However, some of the new structures are beginning to be put in place. Much of the tunnelling works are completed, except those to Central London. In the years ahead, HS2 Ltd will move from main construction to systems implementation and I hope that these will have a lesser impact on most communities along the line.

I submit my report.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mark Worthington". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sir Mark Worthington OBE

Independent Construction Commissioner HS2

December 2024

Annex: Quarter Three alerts, representations and complaints

	Align	BBV	BBVS	EKFB	SCS	Euston	Non Area	2 A	Total
July	6	22	1	11	23	3	0	0	66
August	3	25	1	15	17	2	0	1	64
Sept	1	15	2	24	17	0	0	0	59
Total	10	62	4	50	57	5	0	1	189

*Euston Station is covered by Mace Dragados.

Representations received by the ICC for the 3rd Quarter 2024

	Alerts*	Referrals to HS2**	Not within remit***	In depth investigations****
3rd Quarter 2024	27	21	2	3
Total To Date	632	685	104	29

*Alerts identified to the ICC already either under examination by HS2 Ltd or previously alerted to them.

**Alerts not made to HS2 Ltd directly but referred to them by the ICC.

***Alerts outside ICC remit but may have been referred to HS2 Ltd.

****In depth investigations carried out by the ICC and concluded during the quarter.