

EH Subgroup Minutes

Meeting date	Thursday 25 nd Sep 2025, 14:30 to 16:00
Meeting location	Microsoft Teams
Meeting title	Environmental Health (EH) Subgroup Meeting #59
HS2 contact or group	planning.forum@hs2.org.uk
Stakeholder	Environmental Health Subgroup to Planning Forum

External Attendees

Independent Chair

Planning Forum Chair

Nominated Undertaker Attendees

Air Quality Manager – HS2 Ltd

Environment Graduate – HS2 Ltd

Head of Noise Assessment – HS2 Ltd

Noise and Vibration Manager – HS2 Ltd

EH Attendees

Buckinghamshire Council (BC)

London Borough of Camden (LBC)

London Borough of Ealing (LBE)

London Borough of Ealing (LBE)

Cherwell District Council (CDC)

West Northamptonshire Council (WNC)

London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham (LBHF)

Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC)

Staffordshire County Council (SCC)

Westminster City Council (WCC)

Birmingham City Council (BCC)

Apologies

Three Rivers 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 Chair. The meeting was recorded to aid with minute taking, attendees were notified.

Item 2 - Review of Minutes from Previous Meeting

A review of the July 2025 meeting minutes was undertaken.

There were no further comments and the meeting minutes for July 2025 were agreed.

Item 3 – Annual Air Quality Update

HS2’s Air Quality Manager provided a summary presentation of the Air Quality Annual Report 2024

Questions/Comments:

(Q) LBE: What are the trends with Particulate Matter (PM) from observations and monitoring

(A) HS2’s Air Quality Manager: PM₁₀ is only monitored on construction sites, which is an indicative monitor to ensure the effectiveness of dust management rather than long term trends

Item 4 – Project Updates

A general update of Phase One construction works and highlights of the latest press releases from across the programme were provided by HS2’s Environment Graduate.

(Q) The Independent Chair asked for an update on Euston Tunnelling

(A) HS2 outlined that the Tunnel Boring Machines (TBM) are being constructed and tested. Commencement of the boring is subject to change with the HS2 reset.

Item 5 – Operational Noise Update

The Head of Noise Assessment at HS2 provided an update on operational noise outlining the newly appointed Pantograph Expert Panel, a Noise Assessment Parameter Update and technical papers submitted by HS2s suppliers to the International Workshop on Railway Noise (IWRN).

Questions/Comments:

(Q) LBE wanted to understand how operational noise forecasts for the daytime and nighttime L_{Aeq} results remained similar despite various changes such as the increase in noise from the pantograph.

(A) HS2's Head of Noise Assessment: The pantograph change has increased the expected noise of a single train when it is operating behind a noise barrier. However, the increase in daytime and nighttime L_{Aeq} has been offset to a degree because previous noise models were assuming a higher train service frequency rather than the planned service following the cancellation of Phase 2. Assumptions about operational speed have also changed in some locations which has contributed to the L_{Aeq} levels.

(Q) The Independent Chair: Asked if the revised service patterns are conservative enough if, for example, Phase 2a is brought back online.

(A) HS2's Head of Noise Assessment: Explained that train timetable assumptions are robust for noise because they include more trains than required to operate the planned service level between London, Birmingham and the north. They are also similar, in terms of number of trains, to previous assumptions when Phase 2a was part of the scheme.

(Q) The Independent Chair: Asked if the increase in L_{max} irrespective of the number of trains in operation are a cause for concern.

(Q) BC flagged that some communities in Buckinghamshire are concerned by L_{max} levels

(A) HS2's Head of Noise Assessment: Explained that the railway forecast is to remain compliant with noise commitments despite some changes in L_{max} . He noted that EKFB will be briefing Bucks in the coming weeks and encouraged BC to raise questions to ensure the changes are understood in their full context.

Item 6 – Other Updates

North Warwickshire Council has applied to the Court of Appeal to challenge High Court judgment on the Bromford Tunnel East Portal. Given the similarities, the Bromford Tunnel East Portal headhouse judicial review judgment has been paused until the one relating to the first work has made its way through the judicial system.

Item 7 – Ongoing Construction and Section 61 & Schedule 17 Experience

BC emphasised the importance of good communication of Section 61 with examples of night-works in the Wendover area. HS2's Noise and Vibration Manager agreed with BC, details will be shared and taken up with EKFB.

BC outlined general challenges with schedule 17 reviews because noise assessments were not yet updated with new parameters for all areas. HS2's Head of Noise Assessment outlined BC should be the only local authority to be impacted by the changing source term during schedule 17 submissions and hopes EKFBs upcoming briefings to BC will be of assistance.

Item 8 – 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.

The Chair requested that future agenda items include Camden's Clean Air Action Plan and a small claims update from HS2's Public Response manager.

The joint construction commissioner has been invited to the November meeting subject to confirmation.

BC confirmed BS5228 has been signed off by DEFRA and can be presented in a future meeting.

The Chair closed the meeting.