High Speed Rail (London – West Midlands)

Supplementary environmental information report

Temporary Closure of School End Road

September 2025

Department for Transport

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High Speed Two (HS2) Limited
Two Snowhill
Snow Hill Queensway
Birmingham B4 6GA

Telephone: 08081 434 434

General email enquiries: HS2enquiries@hs2.org.uk

Website: www.hs2.org.uk

A report prepared for High Speed Two (HS2) Limited:

EKFB Working in partnership with HS2

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background to High Speed Two

1.1.1 The hybrid Bill for High Speed Rail between London and the West Midlands ('the Bill') was submitted to Parliament together with an Environmental Statement (ES) in November 2013 ('the main ES'). The Bill was amended a number of times following its submission resulting in five Additional Provisions (APs) which were each accompanied by Supplementary Environmental Statements (SES).

1.1.2 Any new or different significant effects that were likely to result from changes to the design which did not require amendments to the Bill; changes to construction assumptions, new environmental baseline information and corrections to the main ES were reported in Supplementary Environmental Statements (SESs). These were deposited alongside the APs.

1.1.3 The Bill was enacted in February 2017 to become the High Speed Rail (London – West Midlands) Act 2017 ('the HS2 Act'). The HS2 Act confers the necessary powers required to construct, maintain and operate the HS2 railway from London to the West Midlands.

1.1.4 HS2 comprises the construction of a new railway approximately 230km (143 miles) in length between London and the West Midlands.

1.2 Introduction to this SEI and its purpose

1.2.1 This Supplementary Environmental Information (SEI) report describes new or different likely significant effects near Chetwode (within Community Forum Area 13) arising from changes to construction methodology that exceed those reported in the ES (as amended) and that, despite the implementation of the controls set out in the Environmental Minimum Requirements (EMRs), are predicted to remain as new significant effects (NSE).

1.2.2 The Environmental Minimum Requirements

1.2.3 The HS2 EMRs set out the high-level environmental and sustainability commitments that the Government has entered into through the hybrid Bill process.

1.2.4 The EMRs consist of a suite of framework documents which: (i) define the mechanisms by which the nominated undertaker will engage with communities and other key stakeholders; and (ii) implement environmental and sustainability management measures designed to protect communities and the environment during detailed design development and construction. The nominated undertaker is

the body, appointed by the Secretary of State for Transport (SoS), responsible for delivering Phase One of HS2.

1.2.5 The nominated undertaker, taking forward the detailed design and implementation of Phase One of HS2, is required by the SoS to comply with the EMRs. The components of the EMRs are described in the EMR General Principles (CS755 02/17, February 2017).

1.2.6 The controls contained in the EMRs, along with powers contained in the HS2 Act and the Undertakings given by the Secretary of State, will ensure that impacts which have been assessed in the ES (as amended) will not be exceeded, unless any new impact or impacts in excess of those assessed in the ES:

- results from a change in circumstances which was not likely at the time of the ES[1];
- would not be likely to be environmentally significant[2];
- results from a change or extension to the project, where that change or extension does not itself require environmental impact assessment (EIA) under either (i) article 4(1) of and paragraph 24 of Annex 1 to the EIA Directive[3] ; or (ii) article 4(2) of and paragraph 13 of Annex 2 to the EIA Directive[4]; or
- would be considered as part of a separate consent process (and therefore further EIA if required).

[1] In addition, Supplementary Environmental Statements and Additional Provision Environmental Statements were published and tabled by the Promoter in July 2015, September 2015, October 2015 and December 2015
[2] i.e. a situation that could not reasonably have been anticipated at the time of the Environmental Statement. This covers all effects (both positive and negative)
[3] 2011 consolidated EIA Directive (2011/92/EU)
[4] Broadly, this would not allow those changes or extensions to the project (once it has received Royal Assent) which would give rise to adverse environmental effects within the EIA

2 Scope

2.1.1 Section 63(3) of the High Speed Rail (London – West Midlands) Act 2017 Act ("the Act") amends Regulation 9 (relating to subsequent applications) of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations. In particular Regulation 9, paragraph (1)(b)(ii) of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations is amended to specifically reference the Act.

2.1.2 Regulation 9(3) allows the relevant planning authority to request further environmental information (under Regulation 25) where they believe environmental information currently provided is deemed not adequate to assess the significant effects of the development on the environment.

2.1.3 This Supplementary Environmental Information Report (SEI) provides further environmental information to the ES (as amended) so as to satisfy any requests under paragraphs 9 and 25 of the EIA Regs by the relevant planning authorities (in this case West Buckinghamshire Council) when considering any relevant subsequent applications.

2.1.4 Additionally, Paragraph 1.1.3 of the High Speed Rail (London – West Midlands) Environmental Minimum Requirements (EMR) General Principles states that:

> "The controls contained within the Environmental Minimum Requirements (EMRs) [...] will ensure that impacts which have been assessed in the ES will not be exceeded, unless any new impact in excess of those assessed in the ES results from a change in circumstances which was not likely at the time of the ES..."

2.1.5 Furthermore paragraph 3.1.8 states:

> "In the circumstances in the first bullet point of paragraph 1.1.3, if the significant adverse impacts identified in the ES are likely to be exceeded, the nominated undertaker will take all reasonable steps to minimise or eliminate those additional impacts. If despite these reasonable steps, significant impacts remain the nominated undertaker will report them."

2.1.6 Consequently, this document also provides a report to meet the requirements of paragraph 3.1.8 of the EMR General Principles.

3 Site and works description

3.1.1 The works are located within Community Forum Area (CFA) 13, in rural Buckinghamshire. It provides local connectivity between the villages of Barton Hartshorn, Chetwode, Godington and Stratton Audley.

3.1.2 Based on the ES (as amended), the road accommodates an estimated 164 daily motorised users and 14 non-motorised users (all cyclists).

3.1.3 No Public Rights of Way (PRoW) or public transport routes are present along School End Road.

3.1.4 The area overview during the construction phase is shown in the ES (as amended) maps presented in Figure 1 below.

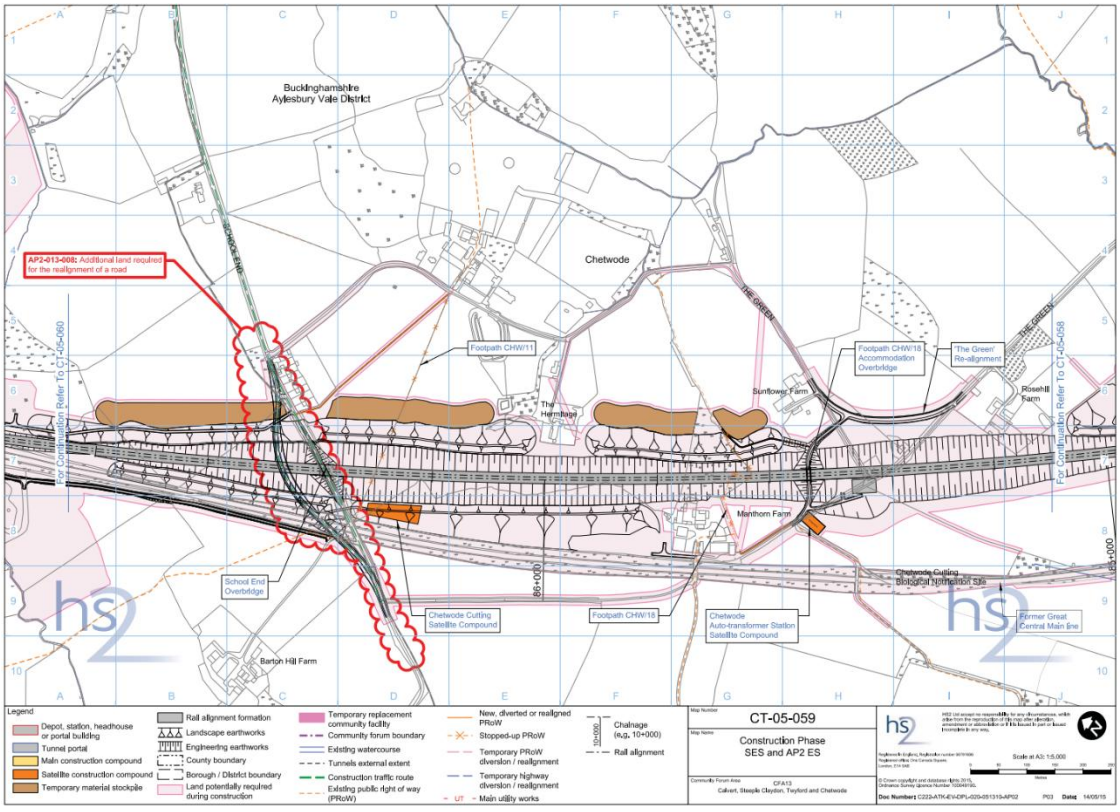


Figure 1. ES Volume 2, CFA 13, Construction Phase Mapbook CT-05-059

3.1.5 The construction proposals involve the installation of an overbridge along School End Road, which require highway tie-ins and utility connections to the existing road network. The works necessitate a series of full road closures along a 365 m section of School End Road throughout 2025, exceeding a cumulative total of 28 days within a 12 month period.

3.1.6 The closures will take place on 9 separate occasions, as detailed in Table 1.

Table 1. Closures of School End Road in 2025

Closure No.	Road Name	Start Date	End Date	Duration (days)
1	School End Road	27-Jan-25	06-Feb-25	11
2	School End Road	06-May-25	23-May-25	18
3	School End Road	02-Jun-25	14-Jun-25	13
4	School End Road	30-Jun-25	18-Jul-25	19
5	School End Road	08-Sep-25	03-Oct-25	26
6	School End Road	13-Oct-25	24-Oct-25	12
7	School End Road	03-Nov-25	05-Nov-25	3
8	School End Road	06-Nov-25	17-Nov-25	12
9	School End Road	17-Nov-25	29-Nov-25	13

3.1.7 Residents of School End Road will always retain access to their properties during the proposed closures. No other properties are directly affected.

3.1.8 Figure 2 shows the alignment of School End Road following completion of the proposed works.



Figure 2. School End Road area after completion of the proposed works

4 Summary of changes from the ES (as amended)

4.1 Changes to the engineering design and construction methodology from the ES (as amended)

4.1.1 Since the submission of the ES (as amended), it has been necessary to make changes to engineering design and construction methodology for the School End Road permanent realignment works. These changes have resulted in a requirement for up to 127 days of temporary closure of School End Road over the course of a 12 month period prior to November 2025. These changes are described below.

Engineered Design and Construction Methodology as described in the ES (as amended)

4.1.2 The scheme, as assessed by the ES (as amended), includes a permanent overbridge along School End Road. This overbridge allows the existing road network to pass over the HS2 railway.

4.1.3 The ES (as amended) anticipated the inclusion of a new temporary road to the north of the existing School End Road for the duration of construction. This would allow the construction of the School End Road realignment would occur “off-line” allowing the current road to remain open to traffic until tie-in works were completed. Only short-term closures (overnight/weekend) were expected to be required to connect the new road realignment with the existing highway, with minimal impact on public traffic.

4.1.4 The ES (as amended) did not anticipate any major utility works in the School End Road area. It was assumed that any necessary service diversions could be managed within short-term (weekend/overnight) road closures, avoiding extended impacts on users.

Engineering and design changes since the time of the ES (as amended)

4.1.5 Since publication of the ES (as amended), it was confirmed that constructing a temporary diversion around School End Road would require two prolonged closures: one to connect the diversion to the existing road and utilities, and another to remove it and disconnect utilities once the overbridge is complete. As the design developed, it was determined that the road could remain open for most of the construction period, removing the need for a temporary diversion. Closures are now only needed for permanent realignment tie-ins and utility works.

4.1.6 As a result, a series of short-term, staggered closures of School End Road will be required throughout 2025, amounting to a cumulative total of 127 closure days within a 12 month period. These closures are essential to complete the utility works and permanently connect the road to the newly constructed overbridge.

4.1.7 Residents of School End Road will retain access to their properties at all times during the proposed closures. A signed 5.5 km diversion route for all traffic, including Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs), will be provided via Manor Farm Road, Buckingham Road and Watergate Farm Lane.

4.1.8 There are no shorter formal or informal diversion routes suitable for motorised traffic due to existing road constraints. Local PRoWs across the HS2 trace are currently closed, and non-motorised users will be diverted via a 4.7 km route to the nearest open crossing along the A4421 highway.

4.2 Topics impacted

4.2.1 Following a review of the combined changes in circumstances detailed in the preceding paragraphs new significant effects have been identified with respect to the following:

- traffic and transport.

4.2.2 Effects for other environmental topics assessed in the ES (as amended) because of the changes are not assessed to be significant and are not considered further in this report.

4.2.3 A review of the environmental topics identified above is reported in Chapter 5.

5 Assessment of changes

5.1 Traffic and transport

Introduction

5.1.1 This section of the report describes the environmental baseline in relation to traffic and transport that is relevant to the assessment. It then identifies any new or different likely significant environmental effects as a result of the changes introduced in Section 4, compared to the ES (as amended).

Scope, assumptions and limitations

Methodology

5.1.2 The assessment scope, key assumptions and limitations for traffic and transport are as set out in Volume 1, the SMR (Volume 5: Appendix CT-001-000/1) and the SMR Addendum (Volume 5: Appendix CT-001-000/2). This report follows the standard assessment methodology.

5.1.3 Definitions as defined in the Scope and Methodology Report Addendum (CT-001-000/2), Annex I, Section 3.

Assumptions and limitations

5.1.4 Local assumptions and limitations for traffic and transport are set out in the main ES (Volume 2, CFA12, Section 12).

Environmental baseline

5.1.5 The existing baseline for traffic and transport is as set out in Volume 2, CFA12, Section 12 of the ES (as amended).

Effects arising during construction

Avoidance and mitigation measures

5.1.6 The HS2 Control of Construction Practice (CoCP) (see Volume 5: Appendix CT-003-000/1) includes measures which seek to reduce the impacts and effects of deliveries of construction materials and equipment, including construction lorry trips during peak background traffic periods. The CoCP includes HGV management and control measures.

5.1.7 Other measures in the CoCP include clear controls on vehicle types, hours of site operation, and routes for heavy goods vehicles, to reduce the impacts of road-based construction traffic. To achieve this, generic and site-specific management measures will be implemented during the construction of the works on or adjacent to public roads, bridleways, footpaths, and other PRoW affected by the works as necessary.

Assessment of significant effects

Traffic Flows

5.1.8 The cumulative total of closure days of School End Road during the 12 month period is 127 days, across nine separate closures. Each closure will affect approximately 164 motorised vehicle users per day. These vehicles will be required to undergo a maximum diversion of up to 5.5 km, resulting in a moderate significant effect on traffic flows.

5.1.9 Residents of School End Road will retain access to their homes at all times during the proposed closures. A 5.5 km signed diversion for all traffic, including HGVs, will use Manor Farm Road, Buckingham Road and Watergate Farm Lane.

5.1.10 There are no suitable informal diversion routes available for motorised traffic due to surrounding road constraints. The signed 5.5 km route represents the shortest feasible diversion suitable for all vehicles.

5.1.11 The signed diversion route is illustrated in Figure A 1 in Appendix A.

Severance

5.1.12 The closure of School End Road will impact fewer than 14 non-motorised users (all cyclists) per day. There is no public footpath along School End Road.

5.1.13 There are no highways or local PRoW within 1,500 m of the affected section of School End Road that provide non-motorised users with access across the HS2 route. All nearby PRoW crossings are currently closed due to construction works associated with the project.

5.1.14 The shortest available route for non-motorised users from School End Road is to travel 4.7 km via the local PRoW network to the A4421, where the highway remains open to public traffic across the HS2 trace.

5.1.15 As a result, a moderate significant effect from severance has been assessed.

Other mitigation measures

5.1.16 Closures have been phased to minimise the total duration of the impact, whilst maintaining local access where possible.

5.1.17 EKFB will continue to develop their construction methodology and mitigation measures to minimise the duration of closures, whilst implementing local solutions to partially mitigate impacts on local communities

6 Conclusion

6.1.1 Table 2 provides a summary of the new significant effects anticipated as a result of the changes described in Section 4.

Table 2. Summary of new significant effects

Environmental Discipline/Category	Effect
Traffic & Transport Traffic Flows	The temporary closures of School End Road will require approximately 164 motorised vehicles per day to follow a signed 5.5 km diversion, resulting in a moderate significant effect on traffic flows. No shorter alternative diversion route is available due to local road constraints.
Traffic & Transport Severance	The closure of School End Road will affect fewer than 14 daily non-motorised users (all cyclists). These users will require a diversion of approximately 4.7 km, resulting in a moderate significant effect from severance.

7 List of acronyms and abbreviations

Environmental Discipline /Category	Effect
AP	Additional Provisions
CFA	Community Forum Areas
CoCP	Code of Construction Practice (Annex 1 of the EMRs)
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EMR	Environmental Minimum Requirements
ES	Environmental Statement
HGV	Heavy Goods Vehicle
SMR	Scope and Methodology Report
SES	Supplementary Environmental Statement
SoS	Secretary of State for Transport
PRoW	Public Right of Way

8 References

HS2 Environmental Statement, Volume 5: Appendix CT-001-000/1); Scope and Methodology Report (SMR)

HS2 Environmental Statement, Volume 5: Appendix CT-001-000/2); Scope and Methodology Report (SMR) Addendum

HS2 Environmental Statement, Volume 2, Community Forum Area Report: CFA13 I Calvert, Steeple Claydon, Twyford and Chetwode

High Speed Rail (London - West Midlands), Environmental Minimum Requirements General Principal

9 Appendix A

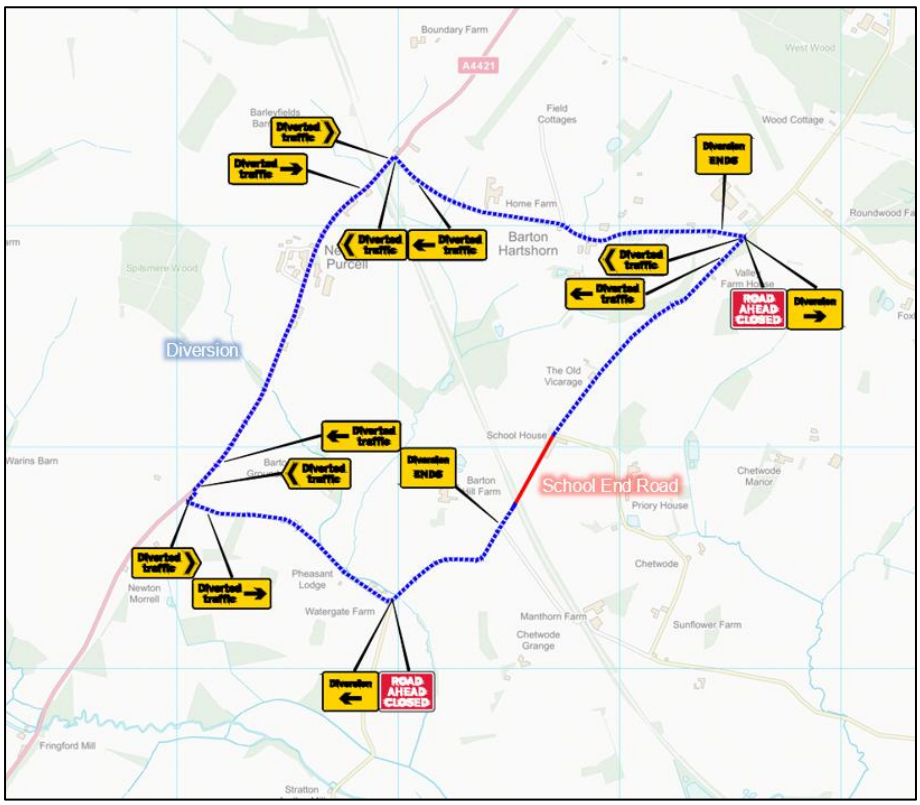


Figure A 1. Maximum diversion of 5.5 km for motorised users during School End Road closure periods

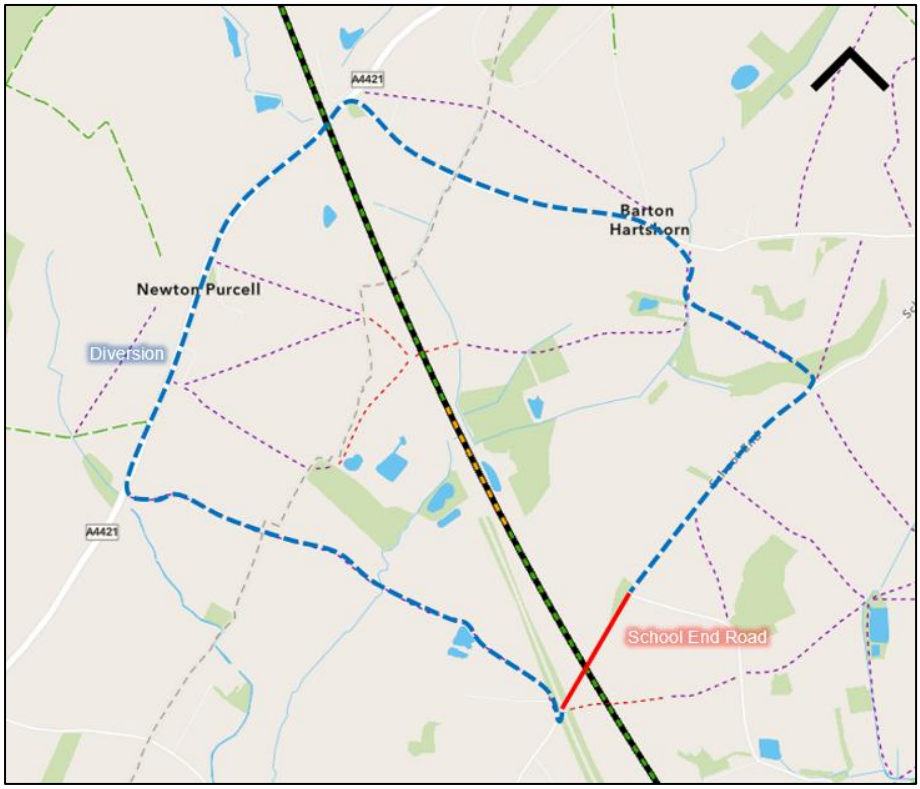


Figure A 2. Maximum diversion of 4.7 km for non-motorised users during the School End Road closure periods