***WOORE PARISH COUNCIL***

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The Rt Hon Owen Paterson MP,

House of Commons,

London SW1A 0AA

6th October 2017

Dear Mr Paterson,

**HS2A**

I refer to our previous correspondence and, in particular, to the letters of 12th and 22nd September which you received from Mr David Higgins, the Chairman of HS2, copies of which you forwarded to Cllr Cowey under cover of one of your two letters to him of 27th September.

I have been asked by Cllr Cowey to respond to HS2’s correspondence.

It does seem to me that HS2 persist in their correspondence to you in giving the impression that the pros and cons of routing construction traffic through Woore have been balanced carefully against the pros and cons of routing such traffic elsewhere. However, having perused the documentation published by HS2 when opening the recent consultation period, the environmental statement makes little reference to Woore. The only references to Woore which I can find are to a traffic count carried out there and to the purported environmental impact of certain highway modifications which HS2 propose to carry out in Woore with a view to allowing their construction vehicles to traverse the Parish. The environmental impact assessed is limited to the impact on other road users and does not extend to the impact of construction traffic on the residents of Woore.

This is a point which the Parish Council has made in the consultation responses which it has lodged in relation to HS2’s Environmental Statement and Equality Impact Assessment Report. I enclose copies of the Parish Council’s consultation responses and of the consultation responses made by the Woore (Parish) Action Group, referred to in the Parish Council’s responses, for your information.

As you will see from the consultation response, it is the Parish Council’s position that the absence, until recently, of consultation with it and with Shropshire Council and the omission by HS2 to carry out a full and proper environmental and equality impact assessment in respect of its proposals for Woore represent serious failings on the part of HS2. In particular, the absence of such an environmental impact assessment means that HS2 cannot properly have assessed that Woore should be the preferred route for construction traffic. The lateness of the decision to make Woore the route preferred over the previously preferred routing of traffic through Madeley appears to be the reason why no environmental impact assessment has been conducted in respect of Woore. However, the lateness of that decision is not justification for your being given the impression that that decision follows a careful and thorough balancing of the merits and demerits of the various options for dealing with construction traffic.

I should add that, as well as substantially ignoring Woore in its environmental statement, HS2 has done likewise in its equality impact assessment report.

Yours sincerely,

**Sarah Pimlott**

**Clerk to Woore Parish Council**