HS2 Equality Impact Assessment

Question 1

We endorse the comments of the Woore Parish Action Group concerning the EQIR.

We would make the following further comments below.

Paragraph 2.2.3 of the EQIR states that “*an overarching spatial approach based around the following five community areas (shown in Figure 2: Community areas) is used across the ES and the EQIA, ensuring consistency between the assessments*”.

The route-wide assessment in Section 5 of the EQIA appears to be confined to the five community areas and so does not deal with our Parish as it is not within any of the community areas.

We are not clear why the EQIA has not also been conducted in areas (termed in the ES as off-route areas) outside the five community areas where it is perfectly clear that the construction of HS2 will have potential for differential and / or disproportionate effects on protected characteristic groups in such off-route areas.

Our Parish is one such off-route area as very heavy flows of construction traffic for the Proposed Scheme will be routed through it. Traffic, transport and accessibility, noise and air quality are matters addressed in Section 5 of the EQIA as having potential for differential or disproportionate effects on protected characteristic groups and they are all matters which could arise by reason of the flow of construction traffic in an off-route area. In our Parish, for example, one such protected group, the young (who attend Woore Primary School), will be affected by the noise and decline in air quality caused by construction traffic. The elderly in our Parish will be affected by air quality and accessibility issues. However, the EQIA does not address the effect of the Proposed Scheme on the young and elderly of our Parish because our Parish is not in a community area. This seems illogical and unfair.

Question2

Our Parish is not considered in any of the Community Area Assessments and so we have no comments to make.

Question 3

Our Parish is not considered in either of the Appendices and so we have no comments to make.

Question 4

We have no comments to make other than we consider that an EQIA should have been carried out in respect of our Parish and that we also support the views expressed by the Woore Action Group in finding it particularly disappointing that the first time our parishioners knew about the proposal to route construction traffic through our Parish was in July 2017. This has only given our parishioners three months to find out further information and respond to the consultation.