

Phase 2a Community Information Webinars

23 and 30 June 2021

Questions and Answers

Please find below the written responses to the questions asked during the Phase 2a community information webinars.

1. Could you provide the web links to the engagement websites?

Our local community webpages provide you with relevant, local information about HS2 works and developments in your area. We have local websites for HS2 as it travels through Staffordshire and Cheshire. You can also sign up to receive alerts on our latest activity.

www.hs2instaffordshire.co.uk
www.hs2incheshire.co.uk

2. In view of work patterns changing during Covid-19 will the necessity for this line be reviewed?

It is too early to make conclusions about the long term impacts of COVID-19, but the strategic case for HS2 – more capacity on our railways, better connectivity in the Midlands and North and cutting carbon - all remain important issues for the UK. Even if fewer people do travel, we will still need to get people out of cars and reduce crowding on trains – particularly outside of London. HS2 is also essential to supporting local services by taking fast trains off the existing network and freeing up space for more local, stopping services – both for work and leisure.

3. What times will construction work be undertaken 7 days per week?

Core working hours for the construction of HS2 will be from 08.00 to 18.00 on weekdays (excluding bank holidays) and from 08.00 to 13.00 on Saturdays. Our contractors are required to adhere to these core working hours for each site as far as is reasonably practicable. In some instances, to ensure safe working and to maintain the safe operation of existing roads and railways, as well as enabling the shortest possible construction period and minimising local resident disruption there will be expectations where work is carried out outside of these hours. For example a night time or weekend road closure for a utility diversion. In these instances, the relevant approvals have to be sought with the relevant local authority.

4. Will the Early Civils Works include site clearance and demolitions etc as well as highways works?

The Enabling Civil Works 2 contract only includes site clearance required to support the highways improvement works, and does not include any demolition works. There will be some surveys undertaken to support demolitions required later in the scheme.

5. When will the Advanced Civils Works start?

The Advanced Civils Work will be focused on possessing all the land required that has yet to be acquired and securing and preparing these sites (including highway access) for the main works. The contractors for this work are expected to come onboard in 2022 with work starting in late 2023 into 2024.

6. Will there be a junction between HS2 and the WCML south of Crewe to allow HS2 trains to stop at Crewe. Will there also be a junction north of Crewe to allow HS2 trains to regain HS2 phase 2b?

South of Crewe there is a junction that allows classic compatible services to move off the HS2 line and join the WCML into Crewe.

A junction to the north of Crewe to allow HS2 trains to rejoin the HS2 network (Phase 2b) was consulted on by the Government in October 2020 and we are currently awaiting the response from the Government on this. You can find information in relation to this consultation and the proposals at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/927058/10961-DfT-HS2_DRC2_Response_Correction_Slip_in.pdf

7. If HS2 has purchased land as part of the project are there any plans to build new houses on it?

HS2 will not build any new housing. Virtually all the land compulsorily acquired for HS2 will be used permanently for the construction and operation of the new railway. However, there may be some circumstances where land acquired becomes surplus to requirements after construction works are complete. In those cases, former owners will be given first opportunity to repurchase the land at current market value provided it has not materially changed in character since acquisition.

Further details can be found at

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/960649/C6_Disposal_of_Surplus_Land_v1.1.pdf

8. Where I live which is Madeley Park / Baldwins gate many properties have been purchased by HS2. What are HS2's plans for these?

All properties the Government buys for HS2 will be rented. However, the following conditions must be met.

- The cost of maintaining the property or making any improvements must be a reasonable use of taxpayers' money.
- The property must meet the standards required by health and safety legislation. If work needs to be done to the property, it will take place before it is rented out.
- In the short term, the property must not be needed for building work in connection with HS2.

The properties will then be sold on the open market once the new railway is operational and the trains are running.

9. What about the visual impact to those who now have to see the line whereas previously all we could see is hillside? Is HS2 going to ensure the appearance of the route is considered?

Where local communities and businesses are impacted by the visual aspects of the railway, HS2 Ltd and its design contractors will be developing a scheme that considers the wider landscape in its design. This will include the provision of adequate screening by undertaking works such grassland planting, new woodland, and hedgerow creation. These types of provisions would be dependent on the infrastructure; for example whether the High Speed trains are travelling on an embankment, in a cutting or on a viaduct.

You can find further information in the below documents:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/960666/D1_Design_v1.1.pdf

https://assets.hs2.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/11152821/24136_HS2_GreenCorridor_v43_CS1469_Interactive.pdf

10. If communities have issues with contractors (e.g HGVs) who is responsible for managing this? Is there a reporting system for issues/complaints and who is accountable?

If local communities have any concerns with the behaviour or activity of contractors working on behalf of HS2 Ltd please get in touch with our Helpdesk who are available all day everyday on:

Freephone 08081 434 434

Minicom on 08081 456 472 (if you have speech or hearing difficulties).

or Email at HS2enquiries@hs2.org.uk.

We will then investigate your concerns with the contractor in question to resolve any issues that have arisen and hold them accountable. If concerns need immediate attention (for instance, if it involves a risk to safety) we will always deal with it straight away.

11. What mitigation measures will be put in place to manage the impact of HGV's on the narrow rural roads, particularly South Cheshire?

We have prepared a Route-wide Traffic Management Plan (RTMP) for Phase 2a of the railway. This can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/volume-3-route-wide-effects-for-the-hs2-phase-2a-supplementary-environmental-statement-2-and-additional-provision-2-environmental-statement>

It covers how our contractors will be required to plan traffic and transport during construction. Contractors will need to prepare Local Traffic Management Plans which will set out how they intend to deliver the project, including significant changes to highways. The RTMP also sets out our requirements for monitoring construction traffic flows, as well as setting the project's standards for vehicle and driver safety, the development of workforce travel plans, and how we need to protect highways and other assets.

12. Will vehicular access be maintained for all businesses along the route particularly where the route goes right across the only entrance.

To construct the new railway it will sometimes be necessary to temporarily close or otherwise alter a highway, and temporarily divert traffic, pedestrians and/or other users. The general approach is to ensure that reasonable pedestrian access to a premise is maintained and, where reasonably practicable, vehicular access will be maintained. We will also put up signage for businesses to confirm they are still open where diversions may be in place or business visibility is obscured by our works. Where particular concerns for business access and needs are identified, arrangements will be made on a case- by-case basis. If you own a business and have questions or concerns in relation to access due to HS2 the HS2 Helpdesk will be able to look into this for you.

13. You mentioned a depot at Yarnfield - is there a depot at Handsacre too?

There is no planned depot at Handsacre.

14. When will Blakenhall compound become live and for how long. Also what are the vehicle routes?

The Blakenhall compound will commence in Autumn 2021 (September/October). It is expected to be in place for around a year, but exact timings will be dependent on a number of factors such as the weather and the ability for us to access and commence on site works during the appropriate season.

The traffic associated with the site will be made up of staff arriving on site using the local road network. Traffic for the site is not associated with main works construction traffic.

We expect to hold an engagement activity with our contractors Balfour Beatty prior to any works commencing in this area, where further details of programme and activity will be shared.

15. Will the A53 road be blocked where the line goes through the tunnel as it is being built near Whitmore? If so for how long?

The A53 will not be blocked as a result of HS2 works. During the Hybrid Bill stages a design was approved which shows the HS2 line traveling deeper under the A53. Because the line will be deeper there will be no need to raise the road as originally planned.

16. When will lorries commence coming through Woore, how many each day and for how long?

The main works construction, and associated traffic, is not due to commence until 2024. This is when Woore will see increased traffic movements. Below sets out the worst-case scenario for traffic movements.

- For the A51 at peak it is 258 two way HGV movements daily with 7 months of peak activity
- For the A525 at peak it is 256 two way HGV movements daily with 8 months of peak activity.
- From A525 and turning right onto the A51 at peak it is 49 two way HGV movements daily with 2 months of peak activity.

17. Are the roadworks in Woore permanent?

HS2 will be putting in place a number of measures in Woore. The permanency of these will be dependent on whether the local highways authority (Shropshire Council) takes the decision to adopt the measures put in place by HS2.

18. How can I find out how the track will pass through Streethay?

This section of the route is part of Phase One of HS2. The route will travel under the A38 and West Coast Mainline in a covered cutting stretching from Cappers Lane to Fradley, which will be between 18 - 20m deep. If you would like further details on the plans and works for this section of the route these can be provided to you by the HS2 Helpdesk.

If you have any further questions, or would like any further information please contact the HS2 Helpdesk:

Freephone 08081 434 434

Minicom on 08081 456 472
Email: HS2enquiries@hs2.org.uk.