

Phase 2a Design Journey Webinar

28 February 2022

Questions and Answers

Please find below the written responses to the questions asked during the Phase 2a Design Journey webinar.

1. Are we able to share the presentation slides on our Parish Council social media?

Yes, we have no issue with the presentation slides being shared to wider audiences.

2. There are areas of the proposed route which are either in the path of existing flood plains or close to them. How do you work around building a railway on such types of ground conditions?

The impacts of flooding on communities can be significant and that is why ensuring the new railway does not increase the risk of extreme flooding to local communities, nor worsen the impact should they occur, is a key consideration in developing its detailed designs.

We are committed to mitigating any loss of floodplain by the creation of replacement storage areas with the capacity for a 1 in 100-year event, including an allowance for climate change.

To ensure that we understand, consider, and manage such flood risks, we are carrying out surveys and hydraulic modelling of the significant watercourses and culvert crossings. We will be using the latest data and climate change guidance to ensure the design and any mitigation is effective for both now and in the future.

We work closely with the Environment Agency and Lead Local Flood Authorities who will assess and approve any of our work to watercourses and their floodplains. We are also engaging with local parish councils, gathering community knowledge on local flood issues. This allows our designs to be developed in consideration of these localised challenges, with design alterations which are beneficial in managing flood risk in the local area being considered and included, where practicable.

We are also keen to support opportunities for environmental schemes with a flood risk element as part our Community and Environment Fund.

3. How will you be able to establish that all protected species that exist currently in the vicinity of the planned railway will have moved to the new habitats you are going to be building?

Ecology surveys for Phase 2a have been ongoing since 2016 to evaluate which protected species are likely to be affected by the works and population estimates to determine the size of impact.

Pre-construction works include creating mitigation sites for protected species to be translocated to after they have established. Various trapping/relocation methods are used, all species specific, following best practice guidance and under licences from Natural England.

During construction Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoWs) are present to relocate any additional species present with all works monitored closely. The mitigation sites are then also monitored (the length of time is determined by the habitat) to ensure they are meeting their intended function.

4. Where can I find information on a property who received a blight payment from HS2?

If you have a specific enquiry in regard to your property please contact the HS2 Helpdesk who will be able to look into your personal circumstances for you.

Freephone 08081 434 434

Minicom on 08081 456 472

Email: HS2enquiries@hs2.org.uk

You can find out more information about the HS2 property discretionary schemes available on the HS2 Gov.uk website - <https://www.gov.uk/claim-compensation-if-affected-by-hs2>

5. Is there any way of knowing what the railway will look like in specific areas?

You can find outline plans of Phase 2a of HS2 within the Phase 2a Hybrid Bill information reports and documents. The Volume 2 Community Area Map books provide drawings of the scheme in the construction phase and the operational phase.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/volume-2-community-area-reports-and-map-books-for-the-hs2-phase-2a-supplementary-environmental-statement-2-and-additional-provision-2-environmental-s>

6. What is happening at Lichfield with the A38? And is there a tunnel planned underneath the A38?

The original HS2 Environmental Statement (ES) scheme design included a large embankment and viaduct within the Streethay area. The viaduct being proposed would have been a minimum of 250 metres long and 20 metres above ground level.

During the parliamentary stages, following public feedback, the HS2 contractor Balfour Beatty/Vinci (BBV) identified ways to reduce the visual impact of the scheme and the design was changed to a cutting; this includes the construction of the A38 Rykneld Street overbridge and retained cutting.

The mile long “retained cutting” will enable the HS2 line to pass under the A38, West Coast Main Line and South Staffordshire Rail Line, below ground level, therefore reducing its visibility from line of sight.

7. Do you have maps of where the new ecological sites are?

We are currently in the process of possessing the sites from landowners, so whilst discussions with landowners are ongoing, and the site designs are still being finalised these will not be shared more widely at this stage.

8. Although Phase 2a is called West Midlands to Crewe it stops at the southern portal of the tunnel under Crewe. There is a connection to the West Coast Mainline 2 miles south of Crewe Station, but no information is available of how HS2 trains will enter and leave Crewe. Similarly Phase 2b stops short on the Northern outskirts of Crewe. What is happening please? Who holds the monies for Crewe Station improvements and timescales?

Under the Phase 2a Hybrid Bill two spur lines will be constructed in the Blakenhall area to connect North and South to the West Coast Mainlines. Until Phase 2b is constructed HS2 will travel into Crewe Station on the WCML, utilising platform 5 which will be lengthened to accommodate the high-speed trains.

The Crewe Station re-development sits outside of HS2’s scope and any plans relating to this are being led by Cheshire East Local Authority.

9. Where will the station be in Crewe?

There will be no new station built in Crewe. HS2 will use the existing station, utilising platform 5 which will be lengthened to accommodate the high-speed trains.

10. I was under the impression possessions were already taking place locally. Why are they 1 year earlier than just stated?

Yes, this is correct. There are possessions underway as part of the Early Environmental Works (EEW). There are around 80 ecological sites planned across Phase 2a.

In terms of progressing the creation of these new habitat sites, we have been possessing the land, with fencing going up to secure these sites. As we move into spring the sites will start to be created in key locations and this will continue over the next year.

The Advance Civils Works (ACW) will follow with its possession programme from early 2023, and this will be the sites and land we need for our construction sites, haul roads and railway.

11. What is the plan at the Den lane/Mill Lane area?

Survey work is currently underway in the area ahead of any main works activity. To carry out some of this survey works we may need to put traffic management or temporary closures in place to ensure the safety of our teams. Main works in the area include the spur lines North and South to connect the High-Speed trains to the WCML to enable them to stop at the existing Crewe Station.

Mill Lane is not designated as a construction traffic route. In Additional Provision two of the Phase 2a Hybrid Bill Den Lane is shown as a construction traffic route, 45 HGV movements are likely for a peak of 3 months, with an additional 4 busy months. Outside of these periods numbers of HGV's decrease.

Links to the most recent information are below.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/775955/J14_HS2_Phase_2a_AP2_ES_Volume_2_CA5_South_Cheshire.pdf

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/776003/J19_HS2_Phase_2a_AP2_ES_Volume_2_CA5_map_book.pdf

12. Is it still planned to move the M6 to allow HS2 to cross it?

The M6 motorway will not see any changes to its existing alignment. We will be constructing a viaduct over the M6 for the HS2 railway to cross the motorway. Our contractors will develop the detailed plans for this that will be shared ahead of its construction from 2024 onwards.

13. Will the M6 junction 15 work improvements be carried out alongside the recently announced Midlands Connect plans?

The HS2 planned M6 J15/A500 works are separate to the Midlands Connect plans. Our road improvement scheme is focused solely on mitigating the effects of HS2 traffic on the existing junction.

National Highways will be developing their plans for the junction separately as their Road Investment Strategy (RIS) programme for 2025-2030 is developed.

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

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