

HS2 Consultation and Engagement Programme



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1. Introduction

In January 2012 Justine Greening, the Transport Secretary, announced her decision to proceed with HS2 and confirmed a route for the first phase of the project from London to the West Midlands.

This decision followed the completion of a consultation on a national strategy for high speed rail and on a proposed route for London to the West Midlands. Before this consultation High Speed Two (HS2) Ltd, which is a company wholly owned by the Department for Transport, had spent over two years developing and shortlisting a range of options for high speed rail between London and the West Midlands.

Nearly 55,000 responses were submitted to the consultation, which were essential in helping the Transport Secretary arrive at her decision. As a direct result of the consultation several important changes have been made to the London to West Midlands route, all designed to lessen its impacts on local communities and the environment.

This document provides an overview of upcoming consultation and engagement programmes. It aims to inform local communities and authorities when they can become involved and how they can continue to have their say on plans for the first phase of HS2.

2. What will happen now that the decision has been made to proceed with HS2

Construction on the London to West Midlands route is planned to start around 2017 and the line is expected to be operational from 2026.

Before construction starts the Government has to obtain the necessary legal powers to build and operate the railway. Our aim is to deposit a hybrid bill in Parliament by the end of 2013 with a view to Royal Assent being granted by March 2015.

Hybrid bills are typically used for large infrastructure projects, such as new railway lines promoted by the Government. As well as following the normal stages for a Government bill, a hybrid bill is considered by a Select Committee, which takes the role of a planning inquiry and considers evidence for and against the bill. This provides an opportunity for people and groups with an interest in the scheme to submit evidence to the Select Committee and seek amendments to the bill.

An Environmental Statement (ES) will be submitted as evidence as part of the hybrid bill process, along with a number of other documents. The ES is an important body of work which shows how all likely significant environmental effects of the proposals have been assessed and considered, and the Government's proposals to mitigate or avoid those impacts. The ES also outlines the main alternatives considered by the developer and the reasons for the choice.

Work will also continue on developing proposals for the route from the West Midlands to Manchester and Leeds, as well as a direct link to Heathrow. A full consultation on a proposed route is expected once the proposals have been developed.



3. Consultation & engagement in the lead up to the hybrid bill

In preparation for the hybrid bill HS2 Ltd will work closely with local authorities, communities and stakeholders to develop our plans in a way that seeks to minimise potential impacts and identifies opportunities for community benefit. We are committed to delivering informative, accessible and open consultations.

Consultations and engagement in the lead up to the hybrid bill for the London to West Midlands route will include:

- **Consultation on the draft Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Scope and Methodology** (spring 2012). We will invite statutory bodies, key environmental stakeholders and relevant planning authorities to respond to a technical document that sets out the ways in which we plan to carry out the EIA for phase 1 of HS2. A list of those bodies will be put on our website. They will be asked to share their recommendations for how the project should assess impacts, what should and should not be included in assessments, how information should be collected, and the method and criteria that should be used for analysing impacts. Responses from the consultation will be analysed, enabling the scope and methodology document to be refined, finalised and published on our website. If we receive responses that are more relevant to the EIA itself, rather than the scoping, we will hold these back and consider them as part of the EIA process (see below).]
- **Consultation on a package of discretionary compensation measures** (spring 2012). We will consult on a package of compensation and assistance measures to help those whose properties may be blighted through their proximity to the route of phase 1 of HS2. This is a full public consultation aimed primarily at those people to whom the finalised compensation measures would apply.
- **Consultation on the safeguarding zone for phase 1 of HS2** (spring 2012)
Safeguarding is the process of protecting from future development the land that will eventually be needed to build and operate HS2 from development that would conflict with HS2. Safeguarding directions apply primarily to local planning authorities who would notify us of any planning application within the zone. We will request feedback from a range of statutory authorities and interested parties on a draft set of safeguarding directions, before considering their suggestions and finalising the safeguarding directions.
- **Local engagement during the Environmental Impact Assessment process** (spring 2012 – spring 2013). Before introducing a hybrid bill for phase 1 of HS2 we will carry out an Environmental Impact Assessment to identify the likely significant environmental effects of the proposal, both negative and positive. As this assessment develops, HS2 Ltd will be able to discuss the potential

environmental effects of the route with communities in each area, listen to their specific concerns, and discuss possible solutions. Our engagement will contribute to the development of a Draft Environmental Statement (ES).

- **Consultation on the Draft Environmental Statement (ES)** (spring 2013) An Environmental Statement will explain the findings of the EIA. The ES will set out the likely significant environmental effects, and how these have been assessed and considered. It will then describe the mitigation measures proposed to remove, reduce or offset adverse effects. It will also outline the main alternatives studied and the reasons for the choice. As part of the EIA process, we will produce a draft of the ES and carry out a public consultation on this. This will give the public an opportunity to comment on likely impacts and proposed mitigation measures before the formal hybrid bill process begins.

4. How HS2 Ltd will engage with local communities and relevant organisations

The various stages of consultation and engagement described in this document will require close involvement with the individuals and organisations who have an interest in our work. To help this process we have established a number of community, planning and environment forums, with representatives from along the London to West Midlands route. The various forums are a mechanism for dialogue and information gathering rather than decision making itself, but they are intended to ensure that relevant views from stakeholders and interested parties are reflected as far as practical in our decision making.

In addition to these forums we will continue to hold bilateral meetings and other forms of engagement in order to better understand localised matters related to our work.

A number of **Community Forums** have been established along the line of route from London to the West Midlands as a means of working with local communities. Membership of community forums will include representatives of local authorities, residents associations, interest groups and environmental bodies. These forums will meet regularly and the aim is for representatives of each local community to work with HS2 Ltd in order to:

- inform local people about developing HS2 proposals and consultations
- consider local issues and discuss potential ways to avoid and mitigate impacts of the route, such as screening views of the railway, managing noise and reinstating highways
- identify local benefits and activities that could be linked to HS2 work

To find out more about community forums please see <http://highspeedrail.dft.gov.uk/>.

If you want to contact or feedback your local views to community forums please email us on community.forums@hs2.gsi.gov.uk, or write to:

Community Forums, HS2 Ltd, 2nd Floor Eland House, Bressenden Place, London, SW1E 5DU.

Minutes from the community forums will be published on the above website once agreed by the forum members.

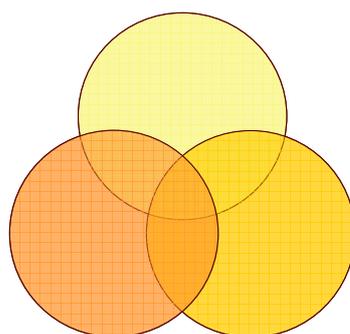
Planning Forums have been set up to facilitate discussion between HS2 Ltd and local authority officers on matters such as design development, planning issues, environmental impacts and mitigation principles. They provide a focal point to our ongoing engagement with local authorities and their communities through our area based teams.

In parallel, HS2 Ltd will be arranging separate sessions to meet with elected council members.

The Environment Forum has been established to provide advice on environmental policy for HS2, including project-wide mitigation strategies and principles for a Code of Construction Practice. The purpose of this Forum is to enable the project to receive advice on environmental policy matters from Government departments, statutory bodies and other environmental stakeholders.

Forum Structure

National Environment Forum



LA Planning Forums

Community Forums

5. What will happen if you live very close to the line

We have written to owners of all properties that we know may have to be purchased to construct phase 1 of the railway, informing them of the Government's decision, and the potential need to purchase their property.

In due course people who own properties that may need to be acquired will be contacted again by representatives of HS2 Ltd. This would be to discuss the particular circumstances concerning their property and the process and arrangements that may apply regarding the potential future acquisition of all (or part) of their property, a process known as 'compulsory purchase'.

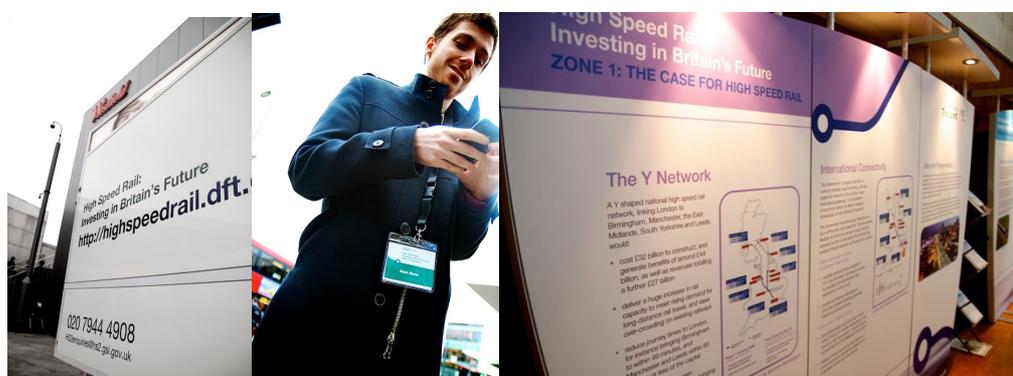
During 2012 we will begin a more detailed stage of identifying the ownership of land and property, providing a better understanding of those properties that would be directly affected by the route.

The properties that need to be acquired for the scheme would not be required before 2015 at the earliest, but individuals may seek to bring purchase of their properties forward if they wish, by serving a blight notice.

There is already a statutory code for compulsory purchase of property required for major public infrastructure schemes. This sets out rights to compensation and other arrangements. The Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) has published a series of documents which provide clear advice on this complex area. Details of how to obtain copies of these documents are at the end of this booklet.

In addition to the statutory compensation code, the Secretary of State has asked that proposals for discretionary measures be considered, aimed at assisting property owners along the route.

We recognise that to develop an effective set of policies on blight and compensation we have to understand the market impacts and local issues thoroughly. That is why we will consult further on blight and property proposals. We plan to open a 12 week consultation in spring 2012 which will enable us to finalise the Government's approach to blight policies.



6. How to find out more about HS2 proposals

Please visit <http://www.dft.gov.uk/highspeedrail> for more information on HS2. The site also includes links to all of the documents that explain the recent decision to proceed with HS2 and further information on the history of the project.

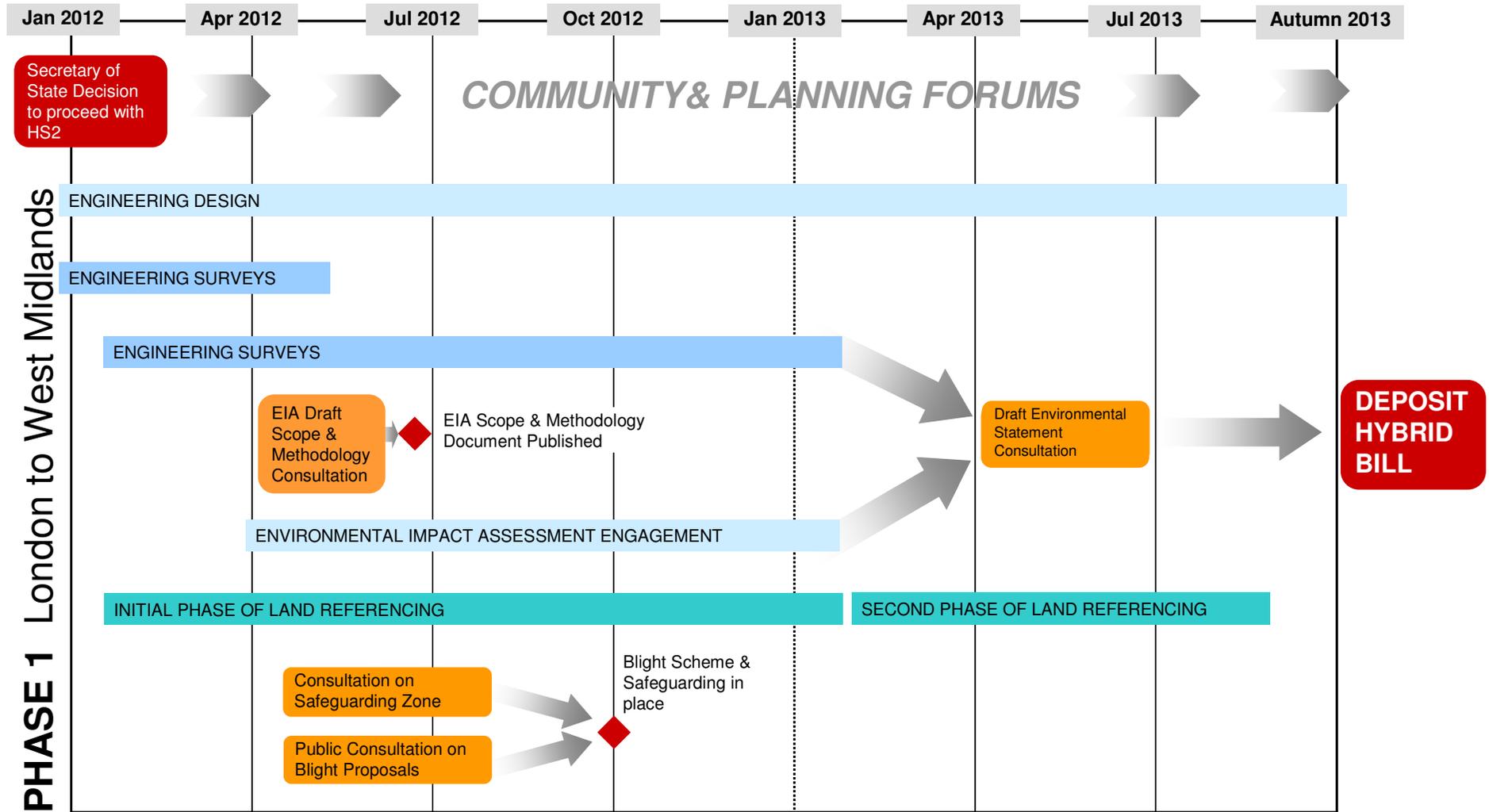
You can contact HS2 Ltd in the following ways:

- On the HS2 enquiry line: 020 7944 4908
- By email: HS2enquiries@hs2.gsi.gov.uk
- By post: HS2 Ltd, 2nd Floor Eland House, Bressenden Place, London, SW1E 5DU.

The booklets on Compulsory Purchase referred to in this document can be downloaded or ordered through the following link:
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/compulsorypurchase>

Alternatively, you can call the CLG publications line on 0300 123 1124 between 8am and 8pm between Monday and Friday and ask to be mailed a free copy of the compulsory purchase booklets.

Annex A - Programme of Engagement and Consultation



EIA : Environmental Impact Assessment • ES : Environmental Statement
 NB: All timings are approximate.