

THURSDAY, 23 JANUARY 2014

**REPORT OF THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR ECONOMY AND EDUCATION****HIGH SPEED RAIL 2 (HS2) PHASE TWO: RESPONSE TO THE PHASE TWO ROUTE CONSULTATION****EXEMPT INFORMATION**

Non Confidential

**PURPOSE**

To brief the Cabinet on the Governments High Speed Rail 2 proposals and the potential impacts for Tamworth and to seek Cabinets views on the principle of the proposal.  
To agree a response to the High Speed Rail 2 (HS2) Phase 2 route consultation

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 1) Cabinet confirms the Council's position on the principle of HS2.**
- 2) Cabinet recommends that no response to the Hybrid Bill for Phase 1 will be made by the Borough Council to the Government and that the Head of Planning and Regeneration is authorised to engage with the Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership and Staffordshire County Council as they prepare their response to advise them of the Borough Councils position as set out in this report.**
- 3) Cabinet approves the proposed response to the HS2 Phase 2 consultation as outlined in report for submission to the Government.**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

In January 2009, the Government established High Speed Two Ltd (HS2 Ltd) to consider the options and feasibility of a new high speed rail network in Britain, starting with a costed and deliverable proposal for a new line from London to Birmingham. The drivers behind the work were the recognition of capacity issues on the existing rail network, particularly the West Coast mainline, the need to address carbon reduction issues associated with short distance air travel and a desire to stimulate growth outside of the south east.

On the 28<sup>th</sup> February 2011, the Government published its preferred route for High Speed Two (HS2) as a first step in creating a national HSR network, and launched a national consultation. In January 2012 the Secretary of State for Transport announced the route of Phase One of HS2 linking London to Birmingham. Phase One of HS2 meets the West Coast Main Line (WCML) near to Handsacre in Lichfield.

On 28th January 2013 the Secretary of State for Transport, Patrick McLoughlin, announced the initial preferred route for Phase Two of HS2. If approved the route will extend the high speed line from Birmingham to Manchester and Leeds, with connections on to the West and East Coast Main Lines to serve the rest of the North of England and Scotland. Intermediate HS2 stations would be built at Manchester Airport, Sheffield Meadowhall and an East Midlands Hub at Toton. The proposed Phase Two route would be integrated into the existing

network, allowing trains to serve destinations such as Crewe and Liverpool. The West Midlands to Leeds route passes through a section (approximately 100m) of Tamworth Borough and continues in close proximity to the Borough boundary as it passes through north Warwickshire. The consultation on HS2 Ltd.'s proposed routes for Phase Two of HS2 was launched on 17 July 2013 and closes on 31 January 2014. A proposed response to the consultation questions is outlined in the 'Background Information' section of this report.

On 19 November 2013 the House of Lords approved the High Speed Rail (Preparation) Bill, and the so-called Hybrid Bill was deposited on 25 November 2013 for Phase One of HS2 between London and the West Midlands, which will secure the powers to construct and maintain Phase One. The Environment Statement that accompanies the Bill explains in detail the scheme proposals, the impacts of the project on the environment along the route and the steps taken to mitigate them is out for consultation and provides the opportunity to comment on matters such as links to HS1. The Hybrid Bill offers the only opportunity for local authorities, local communities and other interested parties to challenge the Government's proposals and seek to have changes made. This process is known as Petitioning which involves a formal notice being made by a party such as the Borough Council wishing to make a case to Parliament and then subject to that wish being acceded to by Parliament, presenting that case. It is considered that given that the Hybrid Bill for Phase 1 does not involve any land within Tamworth, and it is expected that other Authorities such as Staffordshire County Council are likely to be Petitioning, it would not be a good use of resources for the Borough Council to separately Petition.

There are many groups, organisations and individuals who are supportive of the principle of HS2 and the proposed route. There are also many who are opposed to the proposal. There is a growing body of research, studies and reports that aim to support the arguments for and against.

Given Tamworth's geographical location and proximity to both the station proposed in Birmingham City Centre and at Birmingham Airport, and the economic ties between Tamworth and Birmingham it is considered that there is considerable opportunity for any economic benefits to positively impact on Tamworth. It is assumed that there could be indirect economic impacts from both the construction phases and once operational although it is not considered by officers that either would be substantial to Tamworth. However, there may also be negative impact in terms of disruption during construction, particularly linked to the service station and access to the employment area adjacent to the service station. If HS2 goes ahead, the longer term impacts will no doubt be based around access to HS2 and access to frequent, high speed services on the 'classic network'. Rail users accessing the network from Tamworth wanting to travel to the north and south could be faced with longer journey times. If rail users want to access the high speed rail network they will have to use connecting forms of public transport (or drive) to travel into Birmingham interchange or Stafford. This increases the total door to door travel time. There is no information at present about what services to London on the west coast mainline, for example, will look like, but it would seem to be a backward step if HS2 meant that Tamworth was further away in time from major urban centres such as London and Birmingham. To realise any economic benefits from HS2, connectivity from Tamworth by road and rail will need to be optimised and the creation of opportunities for Tamworth businesses and residents to be involved in construction and operation. Key 'asks' could be:

- retention of fast service to London
- more local connections on WCML
- improved direct services to the North West (particularly Manchester and Liverpool)
- retention of journey times to Birmingham City Centre
- enhanced service provision to Birmingham city centre (quality and quantity)
- access to HS2 at either city centre or airport via new connection
- retention of services to North East and South West
- improved M42 capacity to the airport and HS2
- local engagement at the construction procurement phase to ensure that substantial links are made with the local supply chain development and employment of local

workforce, including targeted training initiatives for that workforce.

Although the phase 1 route does not go through Tamworth Borough, there is some potential for noise and visual impact as the line will pass to the south and west of Tamworth around Middleton, Hints and Whittington. It is likely that these impacts on Tamworth residents will be minimal as visually the majority of the line will be hidden behind Hopwas Hills.

Phase 2 runs alongside the eastern boundary of the borough and for a short section runs through the borough. The County Council estimate that three residential properties and one commercial property is within 120m of the phase 2 route. Within a 500m buffer this number increases to 501 residential properties and 27 commercial properties. Within a 1km buffer this increases further to 3,381 residential properties and 36 commercial properties.

The most likely impacts are noise. Visually the line is proposed to be in cutting and so visual impact would be minimised. However, new bridges, realignment of roads (such as Overwoods Road, Whateley Lane and M42/A5 junction) and service roads will have a visual impact.

There appears to be only one residential site in Tamworth Borough that would be significantly affected, by the proposed HS2 phase two. This site is off Overwoods Rd Hockley, the most affected roads would be Ottery, Dart and Tamar Road. It is considered however that the proposed developments and existing housing estate would be afforded some acoustic protection, as the HS2 track would be contained within a deep cutting at an approximate level of the existing M42 Motorway. It is considered that the noise from the motorway is likely to be the dominant noise source in the area. It is predicted that the greatest acoustic contribution from the HS2 line, would be either very early or very late at night when the noise from the M42 is at its lowest. It is considered that there may be an increase in noise levels as the HS2 track rises on approaching the M42 junction, however this may not have an overall contributory factor as distance to the probable receptors is starting to increase at this point.

During construction, disruption is likely to be considerable. The proposed plans require the remodelling of the A5/M42 junction and accesses to the employment area. Under the current route the service station would need to be demolished. The current proposed route also shows a temporary realignment to the M42, albeit moving eastwards away from the Borough it demonstrates the scale of construction required around Tamworth.

## **RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

There is minimal officer time costs likely to be incurred if the recommendations are accepted. However, if the Council chooses to Petition the Government on the Hybrid Bill then there will be significant costs incurred in officer time and also legal costs through the appointment of a Parliamentary Agent. There is no budget available to cover these costs at present.

## **LEGAL/RISK IMPLICATIONS BACKGROUND**

There is a statutory requirement under Section 239 of the Local Government Act 1972 for local authorities to obtain the authority of full council to deposit a petition in Parliament in respect of a bill. A Hybrid Bill falls within the scope of Section 239. If the Council choose to Petition the Government on the Hybrid Bill this would require specialist knowledge and expertise in drafting the petition and advising on procedure. Parliamentary Agents are solicitors who are approved by the Houses of Parliament to undertake this work.

## **SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

The sustainability implications of the proposed route are considered in the main body of the report and in the supporting documentation to the consultation.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### 1) HS2 and Route description

In January 2009, the Government established High Speed Two Ltd (HS2 Ltd) to consider the options and feasibility of a new high speed rail network in Britain, starting with a costed and deliverable proposal for a new line from London to Birmingham. The drivers behind the work were the recognition of capacity issues on the existing rail network, particularly the West Coast mainline, the need to address carbon reduction issues associated with short distance air travel and a desire to stimulate growth outside of the south east.

HS2 Ltd's report was presented to the previous Labour Government at the end of 2009 and was published alongside a Command Paper, setting out the then Government's proposed strategy for a High Speed Rail network in March 2010. The Command Paper also contained the Government's preferred route option for a high speed line between London and the West Midlands.

The Labour Government evaluated these proposals in respect of their costs and benefits for enhancing capacity and connectivity in a sustainable way, which was its key strategic objective for inter-city transport. As part of its analysis, the Government also considered other realistic options for meeting the UK's inter-urban capacity needs over the next 30 years, including carrying out a detailed analysis of the potential costs and benefits of major improvements to existing rail and road networks.

After the General Election in May 2010 the new Coalition Government expressed its support for a High Speed rail network and agreed to progress the work previously undertaken by High Speed 2 Limited on behalf of the Labour Government. On 20th December 2010, the Transport Secretary made a statement to parliament informing it of the Governments intentions to develop a High Speed rail network with the first phase being that of a route between London and the West Midlands.

On the 28<sup>th</sup> February 2011, the Government published its preferred route for High Speed Two (HS2) as a first step in creating a national HSR network, and launched a national consultation.

In January 2012 the Secretary of State for Transport announced the route of Phase One of HS2 linking London to Birmingham. Phase One of HS2 meets the West Coast Main Line (WCML) near to Handsacre in Lichfield.

On 28th January 2013 the Secretary of State for Transport, Patrick McLoughlin, announced the initial preferred route for Phase Two of HS2. If approved the route will extend the high speed line from Birmingham to Manchester and Leeds, with connections on to the West and East Coast Main Lines to serve the rest of the North of England and Scotland. Intermediate HS2 stations would be built at Manchester Airport, Sheffield Meadowhall and an East Midlands Hub at Toton. The proposed Phase Two route would be integrated into the existing network, allowing trains to serve destinations such as Crewe and Liverpool. The consultation on HS2 Ltd.'s proposed routes for Phase Two of HS2 was launched on 17 July 2013 and closes on 31 January 2014.

A local consultation event was held by HS2 at the Assembly Rooms in Tamworth on the 4<sup>th</sup> December.

#### *Phase 1*

HS2 Ltd's preferred scheme proposes a route that would extend from London via the Chilterns/Home Counties, the south midlands into Warwickshire then Staffordshire connecting to the West Coast mainline just north of Lichfield city. A spur would be developed off the line to connect Birmingham with a new dedicated station at Curzon Street in

Birmingham being provided for

### *Phase 2 - West Midlands to Manchester - Western Route*

The line would connect with the London-West Midlands leg in Lichfield, before heading north-west past Stafford and on towards Crewe. A connection with the West Coast Main Line would be provided just south of Crewe with the main line continuing in tunnel under the town heading north. It would cross over the M6 and then the M56 before heading past Warrington to a further connection with the West Coast Main Line south of Wigan. The Manchester stations would be served by a spur off the main line running roughly parallel with the M56 towards Manchester Airport. The proposed stations comprise new stations at Manchester Piccadilly and Manchester Airport.

### *Phase 2 - West Midlands to Leeds - Eastern Route*

The eastern leg would serve stations in the East Midlands, South Yorkshire and Leeds. The line would connect with the London to West Midlands leg to the east of Birmingham, near Junction 4 of the M6, and then follow the M42 corridor north-east towards Derby and Nottingham. The East Midlands Hub station would be located between these two cities at Toton, about a mile from the M1. The line would head north, following the M1 corridor as it heads towards South Yorkshire. The station serving this region would be located at Meadowhall alongside the M1, between Sheffield and Rotherham. From here the line would pass to the east of Barnsley and connect to the East Coast Main Line nine miles to the south-west of York. As with Manchester, Leeds would be served by a spur off the main line. It would run within the existing Castleford to Leeds railway corridor, passing the southern suburbs of Leeds before rising above street level into the new station at Leeds New Lane. The total route length would be 116 miles.

The West Midlands to Leeds route passes through a section (approximately 100m) of Tamworth Borough and continues in close proximity to the Borough boundary as it passes through north Warwickshire.

### *The Hybrid Bill*

On 19 November 2013 the House of Lords approved the High Speed Rail (Preparation) Bill, and the so-called Hybrid Bill was deposited on 25 November 2013 for Phase One of HS2 between London and the West Midlands, which will secure the powers to construct and maintain Phase One. The Bill is titled the 'High Speed Rail (London - West Midlands) Bill'. Along with the Hybrid Bill, the formal Environment Statement (ES) for Phase One was deposited (as were various supporting documents such as a Housing Statement, Estimate of Expense, Equalities Impact Assessment and Health Impact Assessment). The Environment Statement explains in detail the scheme proposals, the impacts of the project on the environment along the route and the steps taken to mitigate them. The ES that is out for consultation, provides the opportunity to comment on matters such as links to HS1.

The Environmental Statement runs to over 55,000 pages and it has been reported that approximately 877 pages were missing from the technical appendices on the public website. HS2 Ltd have confirmed that the website has now been updated to include these pages and have said:

"These omissions would not prevent a proper understanding of the scheme or its environmental effects. This does not affect anyone's ability to respond to the consultation on the Environmental Statement."

Hybrid bills are so called because they combine features of both public and private Bills. They are Government Bills which affect certain individuals and bodies in ways that do not affect everybody. Hybrid Bills have been used before to secure powers for national railway projects, such as HS1 and Crossrail. The hybrid Bill will secure the powers to:

- build and maintain the first phase of HS2 and its associated works, including secure planning permission for the works;
- compulsorily acquire interests in the land required;

- affect or change rights of way, including the stopping-up or diversion of highways and waterways (permanently or temporarily);
- modify infrastructure belonging to statutory undertakers (e.g. utility companies);
- carry out work on listed buildings and demolish buildings in Conservation Areas; and
- carry out protective works to buildings and third-party infrastructure.

It will also make other necessary changes to existing legislation to facilitate construction and operation of the railway.

This is a key legislative milestone in determining how the project will move forward, since this is when the petitioning phase begins – presenting the opportunity for those people who are directly and specially affected by the provisions of the Bill to petition for or against it. This stage of the process is therefore crucial to securing the best outcomes for the region.

Based on the original timescales the Government is aiming to deposit a Hybrid Bill late 2013, attain Royal Assent by early 2015, commence development in 2017 and open the new line by 2026 for phase 1.

The Hybrid Bill offers the only opportunity for local authorities, local communities and other interested parties to challenge the Government's proposals and seek to have changes made. This process is known as Petitioning which involves a formal notice being made by a party such as the Borough Council wishing to make a case to Parliament and then subject to that wish being acceded to by Parliament, presenting that case. It is considered that given that the Hybrid Bill for Phase 1 does not involve any land within Tamworth, and it is expected that other Authorities such as Staffordshire County Council are likely to be Petitioning, it would not be a good use of resources for the Borough Council to separately Petition.

## 2) Potential Impacts

There are many groups, organisations and individuals who are supportive of the principle of HS2 and the proposed route. There are also many who are opposed to the proposal. There is a growing body of research, studies and reports that aim to support the arguments for and against. The arguments for, focus on the economic benefits to regions and large cities outside of London. There is no detailed evidence to demonstrate the economic impact on smaller towns such as Tamworth. *The Strategic Case for HS2*, published by the Department for Transport, sets out the case for action and the need for HS2 (as opposed to the other options) to provide increased capacity and connectivity as current capacity fast reaches its limits, and to support a robust and balanced economy. The alternatives to HS2 – essentially, providing additional capacity by upgrading the existing rail lines – would require 14 years of weekend closures across the intercity network. *The Strategic Case* also sets out how destinations not directly served by high speed rail will benefit from reduced journey times, and identifies £1.3 – 3bn uplift in GVA for the West Midlands region. *The Economic Case for HS2*, published in October 2013 by HS2 Ltd, is the first update since August 2012. The document reviews and updates HS2 Ltd's approach, accounting for changes to route and design; revised demand forecasts; changes to the WebTAG appraisal guidance (including a revised value of time and an increased RPI assumption); updates to the transport modelling approach and improved service patterns. Subsequently, the economic case has reduced from £2.50 of benefit per £1 of spend to £2.30. This has caused some groups to claim that the economic case is significantly weakened, although the 2.3 ratio still represents "high" value for money. Furthermore, the 2.3 BCR is predicated on the assumption that demand growth will halt abruptly at 2040. The report further notes that an assumption of demand growth halting at 2049 would see a BCR in excess of 4.

Those against HS2 highlight the cost of the project, question the economic benefits and highlight the impact on the environment and local communities. Staffordshire County Council has taken a position of opposition to HS2 because of the potential impact on some of Staffordshire's communities, the lack of economic benefits and the potential to damage Staffordshire's environment. Similarly Lichfield District Council have formally objected to the principle and detail of HS2 as it affected the environment and residents & businesses of the District. The view expressed was that the proposal would have serious adverse impacts on

the countryside and certain villages/hamlets and also offer no economic benefits locally. In Tamworth it is proposed that the phase 2 line will run to the East of the Borough and will run through the Borough for approximately 100m.

Given Tamworth's geographical location and proximity to both the station proposed in Birmingham City Centre and at Birmingham Airport, and the economic ties between Tamworth and Birmingham it is considered that there is considerable opportunity for any economic benefits to positively impact on Tamworth. It is assumed that there could be indirect economic impacts from both the construction phases and once operational although it is not considered by officers that either would be substantial to Tamworth.

During construction there may be construction jobs created and benefits for local B&Bs / hotels in hosting workers. In the longer terms there may be opportunity for Tamworth residents to access jobs associated with the stations and depot.

However, there may also be negative impact in terms of disruption during construction, particularly linked to the service station and access to the employment area adjacent to the service station.

If HS2 goes ahead, the longer term impacts will no doubt be based around access to HS2 and access to frequent, high speed services on the 'classic network'.

Rail users accessing the network from Tamworth wanting to travel to the north and south could be faced with longer journey times. If rail users want to access the high speed rail network they will have to use connecting forms of public transport (or drive) to travel into Birmingham interchange or Stafford. This increases the total door to door travel time.

There is no information at present about what services to London on the west coast mainline, for example, will look like, but it would seem to be a backward step if HS2 meant that Tamworth was further away in time from major urban centres such as London and Birmingham.

There are currently 3 fast trains from Tamworth to Euston taking from 67min. Whilst the number of services to Euston may increase, it is likely that so will the time taken to get there. The County Council have suggested that the minimum journey time may be 80mins from Tamworth.

HS2 identify that 9 intercity routes per hour (ie. those from Glasgow, Manchester and Liverpool to London some of which stop at Tamworth) would be moved to the High Speed Network. This allows capacity on WCML for a further 11 fast regional services an hour.

HS2 have suggested that passenger number modelling had assumed the same price tickets as currently on the WCML and therefore these intercity journeys from cities in the north would have no reason not to use HS2, therefore the loss of those intercity routes on WCML could happen. Whilst this may be a benefit to those at Stafford and North of Stafford who could catch a HS train of this status before joining the HS2 line at Armitage under phase 1 and then all the way under phase 2, there is a real concern about the Trent Valley stations, such as Tamworth losing fast services to London.

In terms of connections to HS2, presently a train to Birmingham New Street can take less than 20mins. However, a walk of 10 to 15mins would then be required to the HS2 station at Curzon Street.

For several years the Water Orton corridor improvements and Camp Hill Chords schemes have been promoted which could give the opportunity for direct services in to Birmingham although with increased journey times to account for new stations along the route.

Recently there has been a proposal to reopen the Whitacre Link. This could give direct access from Tamworth to the HS2 station and the airport as well as through services

although it could have negative impact on local services to Birmingham city centre.

To realise any economic benefits from HS2, connectivity from Tamworth by road and rail will need to be optimised and the creation of opportunities for Tamworth businesses and residents to be involved in construction and operation. Key 'asks' could be:

- retention of fast service to London
- more local connections on WCML
- improved direct services to the North West (particularly Manchester and Liverpool)
- retention of journey times to Birmingham City Centre
- enhanced service provision to Birmingham city centre (quality and quantity)
- access to HS2 at either city centre or airport via new connection
- retention of services to North East and South West
- improved M42 capacity to the airport and HS2
- local engagement at the construction procurement phase to ensure that substantial links are made with the local supply chain development and employment of local workforce, including targeted training initiatives for that workforce.

Although the phase 1 route does not go through Tamworth Borough, there is some potential for noise and visual impact as the line will pass to the south and west of Tamworth around Middleton, Hints and Whittington. It is likely that these impacts on Tamworth residents will be minimal as I consider visually the majority of the line will be hidden behind Hopwas Hills.

Phase 2 runs alongside the eastern boundary of the borough and for a short section runs through the borough.

The County Council estimate that three residential properties and one commercial property is within 120m of the phase 2 route. Within a 500m buffer this number increases to 501 residential properties and 27 commercial properties. Within a 1km buffer this increases further to 3,381 residential properties and 36 commercial properties.

The most likely impacts are noise. Visually the line is proposed to be in cutting and so visual impact would be minimised. However, new bridges, realignment of roads (such as Overwoods Road, Whateley Lane and M42/A5 junction) and service roads will have a visual impact.

Environmental Health Officers have identified one residential site in Tamworth Borough that would be significantly affected, by the proposed HS2 phase two. This site is off Overwoods Rd Hockley, the most affected roads would be Ottery, Dart and Tamar Road. It is considered however that the proposed developments and existing housing estate would be afforded some acoustic protection, as the HS2 track would be contained within a deep cutting at an approximate level of the existing M42 Motorway. It is considered that the noise from the motorway is likely to be the dominant noise source in the area. It is predicted that the greatest acoustic contribution from the HS2 line, would be either very early or very late at night when the noise from the M42 is at its lowest. It is considered that there may be an increase in noise levels as the HS2 track rises on approaching the M42 junction, however this may not have an overall contributory factor as distance to the probable receptors is starting to increase at this point.

During construction, disruption is likely to be considerable. The proposed plans require the remodelling of the A5/M42 junction and accesses to the employment area. Under the current route the service station would need to be demolished. The current proposed route also shows a temporary realignment to the M42, albeit moving eastwards away from the Borough it demonstrates the scale of construction required around Tamworth.

To date the Council has not expressed a position of support or not for the principle of HS2. The Leader of the Council has asked Members of the Council to express their views on the principle of HS2 and the responses received by officers are reproduced and made

anonymous in Appendix A.

There will be environmental and economic impacts (positive and negative) of HS2 if it goes ahead as currently proposed and given the timescales and scale of the project it is difficult to have quantify these confidently at this stage. Members should therefore consider if the possible impacts on the local environment and communities in Tamworth is significant enough to object to the principle of HS2 given the potential economic benefits. However, Members should also consider that if they choose to support HS2, if they should qualify the support based on some key asks based on local and national connectivity on both the classic network and to the high speed network as detailed above and on mitigation of environmental impacts on Tamworth residents and businesses as detailed below.

### 3) Phase 2 consultation

The consultation on HS2 Ltd.'s proposed routes for Phase Two of HS2 was launched on 17 July 2013 and closes on 31 January 2014. The consultation seeks to obtain views on the proposed high speed rail route, as well as the sustainability impacts of the proposed line of route. The consultations asks 9 questions and the proposed response to those is detailed below. The proposed response has been worked up in conjunction with officers from Staffordshire County Council and GBSLEP.

#### **QUESTION ONE**

***Do you agree or disagree with the Government's proposed route between the West Midlands and Manchester? This includes the proposed route alignment, the location of tunnels, ventilation shafts, cuttings, viaducts and depots as well as how the high speed line will connect to the West Coast Main Line?***

It is proposed that no response is provided to this question as this leg of phase 2 does not impact upon Tamworth.

#### **QUESTION TWO**

***Do you agree or disagree with the Government's proposals for:***

- a. A Manchester station at Manchester Piccadilly?***
- b. An additional station near Manchester Airport?***

It is unlikely that residents or business from Tamworth would travel to make use of HS2 stations in these locations. Given the alignment of HS2 it is also likely that to access Manchester and the North West people from Tamworth would use the existing classic network. At present the services to major cities in the North West and Manchester airport are poor. Therefore as part of released capacity on the classic network we would like to see improved services in terms of speed to the north west from Tamworth.

#### **QUESTION THREE**

***Do you think there should be any additional stations on the western leg between the West Midlands and Manchester?***

In the County Councils draft response to this question they have said that whilst they do not believe that there should be an additional station that they do ask for the following:

- A package of intermodal connectivity measures to provide Staffordshire's residents and businesses with improved access to the proposed high speed rail network
- Modifications to the proposed infrastructure at Crewe to maximise connectivity between classic compatible and high speed services
- Greater use of classic compatible rail services that can serve Staffordshire stations on the West Coast Main Line to provide improved rail connectivity to both the north and south

Modifications to the proposed infrastructure at Crewe also provide the potential for other stations on the West Coast Main Line (such as Tamworth) to access the proposed high speed rail network north of Crewe. The County Council believe modifications to the proposed infrastructure at Crewe could provide improved integration of the HS2 network and the

existing classic rail network should the scheme go ahead.

The County Council also believe that there is the potential for a network of classic compatible services that could operate from stations such as Stafford and Stoke-on-Trent; while rail stations in Lichfield and Tamworth could utilise released capacity for improved rail services to both Manchester and London.

It is proposed that the Borough Council support these comments

#### **QUESTION FOUR**

***Do you agree with the Government's proposed route between West Midlands and Leeds? This includes the proposed alignment, the location of tunnels, ventilation shafts, cuttings, viaducts and depots as well as how the high speed line will connect to the East Coast Main Line?***

Whilst recognising that the proposed route is actually only in Tamworth for a very short distance and therefore has a limited impact on Tamworth's communities and environment, it does run alongside the Borough boundary and has potential impacts on the local landscape, a loss in amenity and more significantly the local economy.

We are concerned that the major changes to the M42/A5 junction will have an economic impact on Centurion Park during construction. The extensive highway remodelling works to accommodate the proposed route will have a negative impact on the efficiency of the network, resulting in delays. Such delay is expected to last for some time during construction. The economic impact locally appears to be exacerbated through the loss of the service area and other employment venues. Environmentally, the realignment may also affect the Kettle Brook Biodiversity Alert Site (BAS) and Local Nature Reserve. This is not acknowledged in the Sustainability Statement.

We ask that the impact of construction, particularly on the M42 / A5 junction and on access to the Centurion Park employment area is minimised. We would also ask that there is more detail on the affect and future provision in regards to the M42 services which has a value as a signpost for the town in regards to its visitors and general recognition as well as a employer.

We also ask that every step is taken to mitigate the noise and visual impact on local residents, particularly those off Overwoods Rd Hockley, and more specifically Ottery, Dart and Tamar Road.

We also wish to see appropriate measures put in place to compensate residents and businesses who will be affected by the construction of HS2.

***Do you agree or disagree with the Government's proposals for:***

***c. A Leeds station at Leeds New Lane?***

***d. A South Yorkshire station to be located at Sheffield Meadowhall?***

***e. An East Midlands station to be located at Toton?***

Tamworth already benefits from direct services to Leeds, Sheffield, Derby and Nottingham and wish to see no deterioration in either journey time or number of services to these destinations. If this is achievable it is unlikely that rail users from Tamworth would use either Birmingham High Speed station to access an East Midlands station at Toton although there may be some time saving to access Leeds and Sheffield.

#### **QUESTION SIX**

***Do you think that there should be any additional stations on the eastern leg between the West Midlands and Leeds?***

It is proposed that no response is provided to this question.

## **QUESTION SEVEN**

***Please let us know your comments on the Appraisal of Sustainability (as reported in the Sustainability Statement) of the Government's proposed Phase Two Route, including the alternatives to the proposed route as described.***

The County Council are proposing a detailed response to this question. It is suggested that the following response drawing on the most pertinent points to Tamworth is made.

We believe there should be opportunities to capture the indirect economic benefits of HS2 during construction. The creation of links to Tamworth's supply chain and workforce needs to result in the training and development of the local workforce.

The impacts of HS2 on property and affected communities are likely to be significant, not just during operation but also through many years of construction. It is expected that the formal ES will detail these impacts and the ways in which it will be avoided or reduced.

The impact on Staffordshire's road network is likely to be felt most during construction, with delays caused by constructing road diversions and increased construction traffic on local roads. We expect HS2 Ltd, in developing its assessment of the impacts, to be in detailed dialogue with the local authorities so that these impacts are reduced and eliminated where possible, for example at the A5 / M42 junction.

To provide economic prosperity and create employment, it is important that Staffordshire's residents and businesses can utilise the highway network with little delay as a result of increased HS2 related traffic during construction.

We expect HS2 to fully engage with the affected local authorities on all noise and vibration issues and to provide appropriate technical information as the route design is developed. We seek to ensure that HS2 Ltd develops the highest level of mitigation to reduce the impact where increases in noise are identified in the appraisal process. It is vitally important that the whole community is included in the process and that all dwellings subjected to noise impact will benefit from mitigation measures and not just at locations where there are clusters of properties.

We are extremely concerned with the increased levels of emissions and pollutants associated with construction activities, equipment and road traffic. Construction activities will generate dust and emissions from construction traffic which could have an impact on human and sensitive receptors as well as ecological receptors. Whilst mechanisms to control these potential impacts would be set out in and rigorously applied through the Code of Construction Practice (CoCP), we expect the CoCP to have suitable control measures in place so as to monitor and review the effectiveness of those measures.

## **QUESTION EIGHT**

***Please let us know your comments on how the capacity that would be freed up on the existing rail network by the introduction of the proposed Phase Two route could be used***

Tamworth benefits from being located in the heart of the country and has excellent communication links which make it an excellent place to live and do business. In particular it benefits from having a station that serves both the West Coast main line connecting us to London and the North West and the Cross Country line connecting us to the East Midlands, Scotland and the South West. Our residents and business benefit from these long distance connections but also the ability to connect to our more local functioning economic geography such as Birmingham in less than 20mins.

We want to ensure that these connections remain and are improved as a result of freed capacity. In particular we would also like to see:

- ◆ a dedicated fast service between Tamworth and Birmingham City Centre
- ◆ services that provide frequent access to HS2 stations (in Birmingham and the East

- Midlands)
- ◆ the provision of Classic / HS2 compatible services
  - ◆ Retention of a direct fast service to London Euston at peak commuting time (currently 1hr08mins)
  - ◆ Additional fast services to London Euston
  - ◆ Improved direct services to the North West major towns and cities, particularly Manchester in terms of frequency and speed

#### **QUESTION NINE**

***Please let us know your comments on the introduction of other utilities along the proposed Phase Two line of the route***

The County have proposed the following response which it is recommended is endorsed:

“Staffordshire’s landscape is marked by a range of utility equipment both above and below ground. It would appear logical for Government to think about the inclusion of utility apparatus along the proposed Phase Two line of route to further reduce the impact of future utility equipment on our landscape. We expect Government and the Department for Transport to consult with the relevant utility companies so as to develop an understanding of their long-term aspirations and planning. This joined up approach would ensure an opportunity is not missed and potentially reduce any further impacts on Staffordshire’s landscape. However, in supporting the proposal in principle to introduce other utilities along the proposed Phase Two line of route, we feel there is insufficient information at this stage to understand the wider impacts of what the introduction of utilities along the proposed route would mean. If the introduction of utilities results in a wider footprint of the proposed railway, and ultimately greater permanent land take, then we would need to understand what the alternative option is, i.e. a new network of overhead power lines and associated pylons compared to a 2m wide underground service trench as part of HS2. With this in mind, we expect Government to provide further details of what utilities are expected to be incorporated along the proposed Phase Two line of route and consult on the options available”.

#### **REPORT AUTHOR**

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#### **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

#### **APPENDICES**

Appendix A – Comments from Councillors