

Warwickshire County Council

HS2 Briefing Note

April 2014

Briefings on HS2 from the county council aim to provide an overview of the current activities around the high speed rail proposals.

Further information can be found on our new look website at www.warwickshire.gov.uk/hs2 and on HS2Ltd's site at www.hs2.org.uk

HYBRID BILL & PETITIONING

The Government is currently seeking powers to build the line through the hybrid Bill process, which was deposited to Parliament in November 2013. WCC is closely engaged with HS2 Ltd and other local authorities to influence the Bill, and to seek assurances to gain the best possible mitigation through petitioning.

A hybrid Bill is legislation used to deliver schemes of national importance such as key infrastructure projects including High Speed 1 (HS1) and Crossrail. The Bill will essentially grant planning permission for the works needed to bring the railway into operation, subject to certain consents and approvals to be given by Local Planning Authorities. It can be viewed on the Parliament website at <http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2013-14/highspeedrailondonwestmidlands.html>

For full details of the hybrid Bill process and details of petitioning, visit <http://www.parliament.uk/business/bills-and-legislation/current-bills/hybrid-bills/>

The Bill is scheduled to receive its Second Reading in Parliament over two days, starting on April 28.

The House has also announced the membership to the HS2 Select Committee. The membership of the committee is as follows:

Henry Bellingham (Conservative)

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Henry_Bellingham_\(politician\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Henry_Bellingham_(politician))
<http://www.henrybellingham.com/>

Peter Bottomley (Conservative)

<http://www.sirpeterbottomley.co.uk/>
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peter_Bottomley

Ian Mearns (Labour):

<http://www.ianmearns.org.uk/>
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ian_Mearns

Yasmin Qureshi (Labour)

<http://www.yasminqureshi.org.uk/>
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yasmin_Qureshi

Robert Syms (Conservative)

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Syms
http://www.conservatives.com/People/Members_of_Parliament/Syms_Robert.aspx

Michael Thornton (Liberal Democrat):

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mike_Thornton_\(politician\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mike_Thornton_(politician))
http://www.libdems.org.uk/mike_thornton

Following the Second Reading, petitions from local authorities can be submitted up to May 16, other groups and communities including parish and town councils will have an extra week until May 23.

The county council received Full Council approval in February to formally petition against the hybrid Bill through the authority's Parliamentary Agent Sharpe Pritchard.

CONSULTATIONS

Phase One

Environmental Statement

In February the county council submitted its 302-page response to the Environmental Statement contained within the Hybrid Bill. The deadline had been extended by around six weeks after a Parliament ruling on missing information from the original 50,000-plus page document.

<http://wcchs2.wordpress.com/2014/02/21/wccs-draft-final-submission-for-the-hs2-environmental-statement-consultation/>

The Independent Assessor has now issued a summary of the responses to the ES:

<http://www.parliament.uk/documents/commons-private-bill-office/2013-14/HS2-Independent-Assessor-report.pdf>

In total, there were 22,833 replies, of which the majority were pro forma replies or post cards, the largest number coming from the Chilterns. Only 87 responses were listed as positive.

Among the issues raised in the report, which notes an optimism bias of the ES in favour of the promoter, is that traffic effects are downplayed, ecology relies too heavily on the desk top research, and the design of the line is poor and will have a negative impact on the landscape.

In Warwickshire, the number of responses from each Community Forum Area (CFA) was: CFA16 - Ladbroke/ Southam 211; CFA 17 - Offchurch 56;

CFA 18 Stoneleigh Kenilworth and Burton Green 138; CFA 19 - Coleshill 44; CFA20 - Middleton 59.

Property Compensation 2013 Consultation for the London - West Midlands HS2 route

The Property Compensation 2013 Consultation for the London to the West Midlands closed on 4 December 2013. The County Council submitted this response to the consultation:

<https://democratic.warwickshire.gov.uk/cm5/CalendarofMeetings/tabid/128/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/645/Meeting/2951/Committee/554/Default.aspx>

Following the consultation, several changes have recently been announced, although the property bond idea was considered and rejected. A further consultation on the new measures will take place later this year. If this scheme is approved, it will come into force once the hybrid Bill has Royal Assent – until then the Exceptional Hardship Scheme will remain as it stands.

Under the new scheme, the 120-metre zone will remain in place, but if a property is 0-60 metres from the centre line the owner will receive pre blight price plus an additional 10 per cent.

The primary difference from the previous proposal is that for property owners within the zone who do not wish to sell will be offered compensation packages of between £30,000 and £100,000.

HS2 Ltd will also adopt a 'need to sell' scheme and introduce criteria including unemployment, relocation for a new job, the need to release capital for retirement.

The full details are on the website: <http://www.hs2.org.uk/developing-hs2/property/april-2014-announcement>

Phase Two

The consultation on the proposed route alignment for Phase 2 closed on 31 January 2014. The County Council's Cabinet on 12 December approved the County Council's response to the consultation (item 10):

<https://democratic.warwickshire.gov.uk/cm5/CalendarofMeetings/tabid/128/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/645/Meeting/2675/Committee/468/Default.aspx>

No further announcements on the result of the consultation are expected until later this year.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Phase Two

Community Forums for Phase Two will begin once the consultation on the route alignment has closed and any route refinements have been identified. It is unlikely that these will get under way until the autumn of 2014 at the earliest.

IN THE NEWS

- The new Chairman of HS2 Sir David Higgins produced a report outlining his plans to build the line quicker and at less cost. Proposals included starting construction of Phase 2 earlier and cancelling the link from Euston to HS1 at St Pancras.
- The Transport Secretary confirmed that the HS1 link will be removed from the hybrid Bill.
- Michael Fabricant, Conservative MP for Lichfield, was relieved of his duties as vice chairman of the Party after he announced he would oppose HS2. He has tabled an amendment to the hybrid Bill which, if passed, would require the government to draw up a new route allowing the line to be built more cheaply.
- The information commissioner has accused transport secretary Patrick McLoughlin of 'unlawfully' blocking the release of damaging information about HS2 and has announced plans to launch a judicial review against the decision.

WHAT IS WCC CURRENTLY DOING AND WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS?

- Officers are identifying the issues that are likely to form the content of the county council's petition. It is hoped that some issues will be the subject of successful negotiation with HS2 Ltd and can be removed from the petition before Select Committee stage. We are also working with North Warwickshire Borough Council, Stratford District Council and Warwick District Council to co-ordinate the petitioning process.
- Warwickshire's recently published mitigation report, [Living with the Line](#) which sets out the guidelines and standards we expect from HS2 Ltd to minimise the disruption and impact of the railway on the county, is being updated as a live document. This document has the broader support of all four Warwickshire local authorities affected on the route plus two Members of Parliament, Dan Byles MP and Jeremy Wright MP, plus many local and national organisations.
- WCC has organised an event for communities on petitioning and the hybrid Bill to be held at Shire Hall on April 24. It is designed to provide the community with a greater understanding of the process and support their own petitions.

- The county council's dedicated HS2 web pages have been refreshed and updated to make the site easier to navigate. It remains a central repository for council documents and information on all things HS2. Visit www.warwickshire.gov.uk/hs2

For further clarification on any of the above, please contact Mandy Walker or Sara Board on 01926 412830 or email: HS2@warwickshire.gov.uk

Previous editions of the briefing note can be found here:
<http://wcchs2.wordpress.com/tag/briefing-note/>