

Warwickshire County Council Briefing Note on HS2 January 2012

Announcement made

On the 10 January Justine Greening, the Secretary of State for Transport announced that HS2 would go ahead. In her Ministerial Statement she said:

Since becoming Secretary of State for Transport, I have examined all the available evidence, including the work undertaken by my right hon. Friend the Member for Runnymede and Weybridge (Mr Hammond) and by the previous Labour Administration in developing the consultation proposals, the evidence submitted during the consultation, and the further work undertaken by my Department and HS2 Ltd. My decision had to consider not only the full environmental impact of HS2 but its benefits to our economy, jobs and our competitiveness not just today but decades into the future.

I also had to be clear about the implications of not investing in high-speed rail—about how it would affect our leading cities, and how that would affect the road network and aviation. Generating growth, helping people back to work and supporting Britain's companies and wealth creators so that they can compete and win in the global marketplace are at the top of the Government's priority list, and, from day one in office, the coalition has had a laser focus on investing in and modernising our country's transport infrastructure with unprecedented levels of investment.

The full text of the statement can be found on the [DfT website](#)

Information published

As the announcement was made by the Secretary of State a new set of documents were published which included a summary of the consultation responses and details of some changes made to the route as a result of the consultation.

The complete set is:

- High speed rail: Investing in Britain's future - the Government's decisions
- High speed rail: Investing in Britain's future - decisions and next steps
- Review of the Government's strategy for a national high speed rail network
- High speed rail strategic alternatives study: Update following consultation
- Review of strategic alternatives to High Speed Two
- Economic case for HS2: Updated appraisal of transport user benefits and wider economic benefits
- Economic case for HS2: Value for money statement
- Review of the technical specification for high speed rail in the UK
- Review of possible refinements to the proposed HS2 London to West Midlands route
- Summary of effects of HS2 London to West Midlands route refinements
- Review of HS2 London to West Midlands route selection and speed
- Review of HS2 London to West Midlands appraisal of sustainability
- Review of property issues
- HS2 revised line of route maps

These can be found on the DfT website and copies of some are available from DfT Publications on 0 300 123 1102 however this service is facing huge levels of demand and there may be delays in documents being provided this way.

Attached to this briefing are documents which summarise some of the newly published information which it is hoped will be useful.

Consultation summary

The Government has published *High speed rail: Investing in Britain's future consultation summary report A report to Government by Dialogue by Design* which summarises the responses to the consultation and runs to more than 200 pages. This shows clearly the opposition to the scheme that was expressed in the responses to the consultation.

Changes to the route post-consultation

Also attached to this briefing is a set of maps which show the changes which have been made to the route of the line as it passes through Warwickshire. These were detailed in a document called *Review of possible refinements to the proposed HS2 London to West Midlands Route* which is also on the DfT website and copies are being supplied to the public libraries along the route.

In summary these changes are:

Middleton: (Map 1)

- revised alignment 50m to the east away from the village
- still at ground level lower viaduct across the flood plain
- small reduction in noise impacts and demolition but more difficult to screen
- saving of £20m

Balsall Common: (Map 2)

- revised alignment 100m to the east avoiding Lavender Farm
- reduction in the viaduct height
- avoid demolition of two dwellings and one Grade II listed structure
- estimated to be £10-20m cheaper

Burton Green: (Map 3)

- reduced depth of cutting, 27m down to 19m ,
- extend the green tunnel from 300- 520m
- reduction of spoil due to less digging
- expect there to be less noise
- estimated saving of £20-30m

Kenilworth (Map 4):

- revised alignment 100m further east to avoid golf club

Stoneleigh Park (Map 5):

- line to be lowered into cutting through National Agricultural Centre.
- Grade II building no longer directly affected (but the route will affect other farm buildings)
- increase in landscaping to reduce visual impact

Cubbington (Map 6):

- reduction of the depth of cutting
- removal of access road
- spoil reduction due to smaller cutting
- 1250m retaining wall through Cubbington Wood
- estimated saving for this and Kenilworth and Stoneleigh £10-20m

- **Long Itchington & Southam (Map 7)**

- revised alignment slightly to the north east.
- extend bored tunnel from southern edge of Long Itchington and Ufton Woods SSSI
- introduction of a green tunnel – which will have some impact on the Polo ground
- significant reduction in quantity of spoil
- southern entrance is along the line of the consultation route and slightly lower, reducing the need to the embankment to 2.3m
- reduced impact on Codemasters site
- estimated to save £130-140m

Impact of changes

Historic environment

With the decision and the raft of decision documents published together on 10 January it is too early to see exactly how the proposed changes will affect the county. However, a quick look at the impact on the historic and natural environment has been undertaken.

As far the historic environment is concerned this can only relate to the known historic environment but the main adverse effect is the re-alignment at Middleton which brings the edge of the route up against a scheduled site.

It is possible, depending on the construction methods, that the longer tunnel at Ufton Wood may marginally reduce the impact on Stoneythorpe Park but the new alignment near to Dale House Farm still results in a major impact.

Milburn Grange is no longer clipped by the route but the route change at Middleton brings it right up to the edge of the medieval North Wood Moat a Scheduled Ancient Monument and closer to the adjacent cropmarks and this is the most significant change in its impact on the historic environment.

Ecology

As far as the ecology of the county is concerned the changes provide greater safeguarding for Ufton Wood which is an SSSI and the adjacent Bascote Heath Wood. There is some further reduction in the impact on other woodlands with the exception of Broadwells Wood to the east of Burton Green

where there is increased cutting. There is marginally less effect on North Wood, Middleton.

At South Cubbington Wood the proposed new retaining structure would lessen the impact on the ancient woodland but there is a need to look at the impact on terrestrial animals of the vertical drop and the barrier this forms.

Business case

Two further documents have been published relating to the business case for the rail line. A summary of *The Economic Case for HS2: Value for Money Statement* is included below. The other publication is *Economic case for HS2: updated appraisal of transport user benefits and wider economic benefits* both are available on the DfT website www.dft.gov.uk

The Economic Case for HS2: Value for Money Statement

In January 2012, the Department for Transport published a document setting out the economic case for High Speed Rail. The document provides an assessment of the benefits, costs, value for money and alternatives to HS2; this paper provides a brief summary of the document (<http://www.dft.gov.uk/publications/hs2-economic-case-value-for-money/>).

Objectives and decision making

- The document states that *'the catalyst for the Government's assessment of new line and enhancement options on the key north-south rail routes is the continuing pattern of demand growth for rail travel, which is forecast to outstrip available capacity over the coming decades'*.
- Although the primary objective of the project is to enhance capacity, other potential impacts are also taken into account; these include the impact on network performance, environmental impacts, wider economic impacts and financial costs.
- The document highlights that decision making processes for the business case are consistent with HM Treasury Green Book guidance, and are designed to show whether schemes meet the strategic case, the economic case, the commercial case, the financial case and the management case.

Value for money

- To establish if the proposal offers value for money, Benefit Cost Ratios (BCR) have been calculated by taking into account all of the economic costs and benefits of the scheme, and those of the alternatives to HS2.

$$\text{BCR} = \text{Benefits} / (\text{Costs} - \text{Revenue})$$

- A three stage approach to calculating BCR has been adopted.
 - An 'initial BCR' is calculated based on impacts where the evidence for monetisation is robust; this includes travel time savings, noise, air quality, accidents and physical activity.
 - An 'adjusted BCR' then takes into account impacts where monetisation is less robust; this includes, reliability, regeneration, wider economic impacts, landscape and journey quality.
 - Finally a 'judgement' is made having taken into account impacts where it is not possible to give monetary values; this includes impacts to the townscape, biodiversity, water environment, security and affordability.
- Converting a BCR score to a 'value for money' category is done using the following conversion table:

Benefit Cost Ratio	Value for Money Category
Less than 1.0	Poor
Between 1.0 and 1.5	Low
Between 1.5 and 2.0	Medium
Between 2.0 and 4.0	High
Greater than 4.0	Very high

- The estimated 'initial BCR' for the London to West Midlands line is 1.4, the 'adjusted BCR' is 1.6, although recent updates to the Office of Budget Responsibility's economic outlook is expected to reduce the 'adjusted BCR' to 1.5. Using the conversion table indicates that the 'adjusted Benefit Cost Ratio' is on the boundary between '**medium**' and '**low value for money**'. Some of the heritage and biodiversity impacts that can't be monetised have not been included in this BCR measure, and the document assesses that there is a risk that these could push the BCR into the '**low value for money**' bracket.
- The document has only been able to calculate a range for the BCR for the route extensions to Manchester and Leeds, because key route decisions are yet to be made. The 'initial BCR' is estimated to be between 1.6 and 1.9 and the 'adjusted BCR' between 1.8 and 2.5, although these figures omit a wide range of effects that can only be ascertained once the scheme design is sufficiently developed.
- The document highlights that the BCR, and therefore value for money, are likely to change over time. There are many reasons for this, including revised forecasts of GDP, the refinement of cost assumptions and changes to the Department for Transport's demand forecasting and appraisal framework. Since February 2011, the 'initial BCR' for the project has changed from 1.6 to 1.4, partly due to an increase in costs from £24.0 billion to £27.4 billion.

Alternatives to HS2

- The Government has considered alternative options to HS2, including a 'new conventional line' and 'enhancements to the existing network'. These alternatives all have various assumptions, compromises and concerns associated with them, and should be considered in conjunction with the full document.
- Although it is deemed that a new conventional speed line would reduce the capital and operating costs of a high speed line, these would be outweighed by less revenue generated by fewer passengers and lower time saving benefits by a factor of more than 4 to 1.
- Rail Package 2 (RP2) involves an increase in train frequencies on the West Coast Main Line with supporting enhancements; the BCR for this package has been calculated at 4.0 – on the boundary between **'high'** and **'very high value for money'**.
- RP2A is identical to RP2, except that RP2 reduces the allowances built into the existing timetable to help maintain performance levels, whereas RP2A retains the current approach; the BCR for this package has been calculated at 2.7 – **'high value for money'**.
- 51M is an alternative enhancement package proposed by a group of local authorities; the BCR for this option has been calculated at 5.2 – **'very high value for money'**.
- Scenario B is an enhancement scenario that enables increased passenger capacity and enhanced long distance service frequency through a range of infrastructure enhancements including upgrades to stations and junctions; the BCR has been calculated at approximately 1.5 – on the boundary between **'medium'** and **'low value for money'**.

Criticisms of the economic case

- The document also reviews the criticisms raised in responses to the *High Speed Rail: Investing in Britain's Future* consultation document relating to technical elements of the economic case for HS2. The consultation responses have been summarised into five key themes:
 - The 'without scheme' assumptions were inappropriate
 - The appraisal of the strategic alternatives to high speed rail was inadequate
 - The approach to demand forecasting was flawed
 - The assumptions on benefits were overstated
 - Insufficient account had been taken of risk and uncertainty
- The document addresses each of these concerns in turn, further information can be found in the full document.

Technical changes

Attached is a note describing the technical changes made to the proposed route.

Route Realignment January 2012 Technical Note

This note compares the details published on the 10 January 2012 with those that were previously published in September 2012. It is limited to engineering matters only and is also limited to comments about the line within Warwickshire.

Plans referred to are ref HS2-ARP-00-DR-RW-05019 to 05027

Starting at the south east of the County and progressing north.

Drg No 05019 Boddington to Ladbroke

There are no discernable changes to the horizontal or vertical alignment of the line in this section.

At the county boundary it now shows the road realigned over HS2. This is the junction of the Stoneton Lane and the Wormleighton to Boddington Road.

Drg No 05020 Ladbroke to Bascote Heath

At Codemasters the line is moved to the east by about 40 metres. The tunnel under Long Itchington Wood (Ufton Wood) has been extended east to now start near Codemasters and goes under the Leamington Road.

The maps show the realignment of the A423 and the B4451 roads over HS2

Drg No 05021 Bascote Heath to Cubbington

The line has been raised by up to 2.4 metres over this length. This has resulted in the depth of the cutting past Offchurch being reduced. Welsh Road is now shown as diverted under HS2

There is a possible closure of the road between Offchurch and Burnt Heath Farm.

The Hunningham Road is now shown as being diverted off line over HS2

Drg No 05022 Cubbington to A46

As the line goes near Cubbington there are now retaining walls some 1250metre long that reduce the extensive cutting slopes. Through this area the line is raised by up to some three metres. The Coventry Road is diverted off line over the HS2. Similarly the A445 Leicester Lane is also diverted over the HS2.

As the line approaches the showground at Stoneleigh Park from the south it has been lowered by up to a maximum of 9 metres. It means that through the showground the track is in deeper cutting.

There is some slight change to the horizontal alignment as it emerges from the showground at Stoneleigh Park and crosses the River |Avon. The line has been moved some 40 metres eastward. In this area the line has been raised by 0.8 metre.

The B4115 is diverted off line over Hs2.

Drg No 05023 A46 to Burton Green

The line has moved east some 120 metres and now avoids Kenilworth Golf Course. It is now situated just east of Dalehouse Farm and is further away from Milburn Grange.

It shows the Kenilworth Road being diverted off line over HS2. Crackley Road is also diverted off line over HS2

As the line enters the tunnel at Burton Green it has been raised by some 10 metres. The Tunnel at Burton Green has been extended westward by some 220 metres

Drg No 05024 Meriden

This length of line is within Solihull MBC as such no comments are made

Drg No 05025 Hampton in Arden to Chelmsley Wood

This length of line is situated within Solihull MBC however the A446 which is parallel to the east but close to the line is the Boundary between Solihull and Warwickshire.

There are is no changes to the line over this length.

The only changes to the road network is a new roundabout on the A452 near Diddington Hall that provides a new road access to Hampton in Arden.

Drg No 05026 Chelmsley Wood to Curdworth (Water Orton)

This section includes the spur into Birmingham.

The horizontal and alignment alignments of the main line and the spurs do not appear to have changed.

The access to Hams Hall Industrial estate ie Farrady Avenue, has been realigned and the roundabout on the A446 has been enlarged and relocated .

Drg No 05027 Curdworth to Middleton

Bodymoore Heath Road has been diverted towards Middleton Farm House and over HS2

The line has been moved approximately 40 metre further east of Middleton and goes through the centre of Middleton Farm House. At Middleton the height of the track has been lowered by 4.0metres

Wishaw Lane access to A4091 is to be stopped up.

Summary

In summary the line of the route of HS2 through Warwickshire has not materially changed. However there have been a number of slight amendments and these are summarised as follows.

- At Long Itchington the tunnel has been extended to the south and the line moved slightly further away from Codemasters.
- At Cubbington the line has been raised and retaining walls have been introduced to remove large cutting slopes.
- The route has been moved further east to avoid Kenilworth Golf Course and has been lowered through the NAC showground
- There is a longer tunnel at Burton Green and the track through the tunnel has been raised.
- The line of the route has been moved slightly further away from Middleton.

The plans now show the proposed realignment of roads that cross the line of HS2, this includes the position of realignment and the length of new road required.

If you require any further clarification please do not hesitate to contact Mandy Walker on 01926 412843 or email: mandywalker@warwickshire.gov.uk. or HS2@warwickshire.gov.uk

Our website at www.warwickshire.gov.uk/HS2 carries the latest information.