

# Transport and Environment Committee

10.00am, Tuesday, 14 January 2014

## HS2 Phase 2 Consultation response 'Better Connections' response

Item number	7.4
Report number	
Wards	All

### Links

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Coalition pledges	<a href="#">P18</a> <a href="#">P19</a>
Council outcomes	<a href="#">CO7</a> <a href="#">CO8</a> <a href="#">CO9</a> <a href="#">CO10</a> <a href="#">CO22</a>
Single Outcome Agreement	<a href="#">SO1</a>

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# Executive summary

## HS2 Phase 2 Consultation response 'Better Connections' response

### Summary

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The Department for Transport is consulting on the second phase of High Speed 2 (HS2) infrastructure between Birmingham and Leeds and Manchester). Consultation closes on 31 January 2014.

Network Rail has invited comments on a related document: 'Better Connections; Options for the integration of High Speed 2', also by 31 January 2014. This report sets out the Council's proposed responses.

### Recommendations

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It is recommended that the Committee approves the attached responses to the consultation on HS2 Phase 2, and to 'Better Connections; Options for the integration of High Speed 2'.

### Measures of success

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Submission of both responses to consultation by 31 January 2014.

### Financial impact

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None.

### Equalities impact

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Responding to the consultation has no impacts on equality or rights.

There are no Equalities and Rights Impact Assessment recommendations.

## Sustainability impact

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The impacts of this report in relation to the three elements of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 Public Bodies Duties have been considered, and the outcomes are summarised below.

- The report's proposals to respond to consultations will have no impact on carbon emissions.
- The need to build resilience to climate change impacts is not relevant to this report's proposals to respond to consultations.
- This report's proposals to respond to consultations will have no impact on achieving a sustainable Edinburgh.

## Consultation and engagement

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None.

## Background reading/external references

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Appendix 1: draft response to 'High Speed Rail: Investing in Britain's Future. Consultation on the route from the West Midlands to Manchester, Leeds and beyond'.

Appendix 2: draft response to 'Better Connections; Options for the integration of High Speed 2'.

## HS2 Phase 2 Consultation response 'Better Connections' response

### 1. Background

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- 1.1 The Department for Transport is consulting on the second phase of HS2 (ie infrastructure between Birmingham and Leeds and Manchester). Consultation closes on 31 January 2014.
- 1.2 Network Rail has invited comments on a related document: 'Better Connections; Options for the integration of High Speed 2', also by 31 January 2014.

### 2. Main report

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- 2.1 On 17 July 2013, HS2 Ltd published proposed routes for Phase Two of HS2, between Birmingham, Leeds, Manchester and beyond. This consultation seeks views on the proposed route and on the sustainability impacts of the line of route. The consultation website is available at <http://www.hs2.org.uk/phase-two/route-consultation>.
- 2.2 The route of Phase One of HS2 (London-Birmingham) was announced by the Government in January 2012, following a similar consultation in 2011.
- 2.3 In July 2013, Network Rail published 'Better Connections; Options for the integration of High Speed Two', <http://www.networkrail.co.uk/improvements/high-speed-rail>. It notes that the government had asked Network Rail to advise on options for the future use of the existing rail network once HS2 had been built. 'Better Connections' reports on that advice and invites comments.
- 2.4 Draft responses are set out in the Appendices. The response to the consultation on the routes of HS2 Phase 2 follows the sequence of questions set out in the consultation document. It is not proposed to comment on the sustainability impacts of the line of route; this is more appropriate for those with either local or specialist knowledge and interest.
- 2.5 The main comments offered are that the extent of tunnelling should be reviewed (with a view to reducing it), and that no change should be made to the location and number of stations. It is noted that the High Speed1-High Speed 2 link is not part of the current consultation, but that HS2 Ltd should consider that concept more positively than it has done so far.

- 2.6 'Better Connections' concludes that three broad approaches could be taken to determine how to run services on the existing network and HS2 using capacity released by HS2. These are: the 'Do Minimum Approach', the 'Incremental Approach' and the 'Integrated Connectivity Approach'. Each comprises a different level of change. The 'Do Minimum' would not provide the benefits that the others would; the Council's draft response agrees and suggests it now be discarded. The response then argues that the most desirable outcome may well be a mix of the 'Incremental' and 'Integrated Connectivity' approaches.
- 2.7 The response indicates that the opportunities are complex; for example on the East Coast Main Line they may largely comprise more frequent services to intermediate stations. Whereas on existing corridors which are not 'parallel' to HS2 (for example, travelling from Edinburgh to Wales and the west of England), journey times may be significantly improved by using HS2 for part of the journey, and changing. Thus capacity may be freed not just on the north-south axis, but also on Crosscountry services.
- 2.8 The response notes that the external stakeholders involved in this exercise to date (i.e. before 'Better Connections' was published) are those local authorities on or near the line of new HS2 infrastructure. The response states that this limited pre-consultation was not extensive enough, given the significant impact of HS2 services on Edinburgh, for example.

### 3. Recommendations

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- 3.1 It is recommended that the Committee approves the attached responses to the consultation on HS2 Phase 2, and to 'Better Connections; Options for the integration of High Speed 2'.

**Mark Turley**

Director of Services for Communities

## Links

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### Coalition pledges

#### Council outcomes

**CO7** - Edinburgh draws new investment in development and regeneration

**CO8** - Edinburgh's economy creates and sustains job opportunities

**CO9** - Edinburgh residents are able to access job opportunities

**CO22** - Moving efficiently – Edinburgh has a transport system that improves connectivity and is green, healthy and accessible

#### Single Outcome Agreement

**SO1** - Edinburgh's Economy Delivers increased investment, jobs and opportunities for all

#### Appendices

Appendix 1: draft response to 'High Speed Rail: Investing in Britain's Future. Consultation on the route from the West Midlands to Manchester, Leeds and beyond

Appendix 2: draft response to 'Better Connections; Options for the integration of High Speed 2'

Appendix 3: glossary of terms in Appendices 1 and 2

High Speed Rail: Investing in Britain's Future. Consultation on the route from the West Midlands to Manchester, Leeds and beyond

Comments by the City of Edinburgh Council

The City of Edinburgh Council is pleased to submit comments on Phase 2 of HS2. The Council continues to support the development and implementation of the HS2 project. In responding, the Council has followed the sequence of questions set out in the consultation document, whilst reserving the right to submit further comments in future as the project develops.

- (i) Do you agree or disagree with the Government's proposed route between the West Midlands and Manchester as described in Chapter 7? 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.

We agree with and support the route proposed, but suggest that the following be reviewed:

The extent of tunnelling. Our view is that tunnelling should be used only in the most sensitive areas or where it is physically necessary (for example through high ground).

The terminology applied to the route. In this case 'West Midlands and Manchester' conveys a misleading message. It would improve public understanding of the scheme if it were described as being between the West Midlands, Manchester and the north west.

- (ii) Do you agree or disagree with the Government's proposals for:

A Manchester station at Manchester Piccadilly as described in Chapter 7 (sections 7.8.1–7)?

An additional station near Manchester Airport as described in Chapter 7 (sections 7.6.1–6)?

We agree with and support the stations proposed.

We welcome the apparent introduction of some flexibility in the standards applying to stations, in particular that it no longer required that platforms be absolutely straight along their full length.

- (iii) Do you think that there should be any additional stations on the western leg between the West Midlands and Manchester?

We do not consider any additional stations, financed by the general public purse, should be built between the West Midlands and Manchester or Preston. If a third party were to propose and fully finance an additional station or stations, that would be a matter for them **provided** it was clearly demonstrated such stations would not impact negatively on the operation of the overall system, including having no impact on journey times between Scotland, the West Midlands and London. As a matter of general policy, we would not support a station that relies largely or entirely on access by car.

- (iv) Do you agree or disagree with the Government's proposed route between West Midlands and Leeds as described in Chapter 8? 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 East Coast Main Line.

As noted above, the terminology applied to the route could improve general public understanding of the scheme if it made it clear that it runs between West Midlands, Leeds, and York.

We agree with and support the route proposed, although it appears that there are a some opportunities to shorten the total line length, and hence reduce costs, whilst either slightly reducing journey times or at least not increasing them. We suggest that these be reviewed.

- (v) Do you agree or disagree with the Government's proposals for:

A Leeds station at Leeds New Lane as described in Chapter 8 (sections 8.8.1–5)?

A South Yorkshire station to be located at Sheffield Meadowhall as described in Chapter 8 (sections 8.5.1–8)?

An East Midlands station to be located at Toton as described in Chapter 8 (sections 8.3.1–6)?

We agree with and support the stations proposed. When progressing detailed design, a key objective should be to ensure the platforms at Leeds are as close to the existing station as possible. The station should perhaps be operated as an extension of the current Leeds station, and named accordingly.

Similarly, we suggest the station at Toton be named to reflect more clearly that it serves Nottingham and Derby.



The stations at Sheffield Meadowhall and East Midlands will have 'provision for four platform faces each'. However, the (Manchester Airport) intermediate station will have only two platform faces. It is not clear why the additional expense of an extra two platforms needs to be incurred (twice) on the eastern but not the western leg. It may be that the term 'provision' indicates scope for future expansion rather than actual construction, but this is not clear.

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

No. There are three stations on this route, which is approaching the maximum that is appropriate for a HSL over an equivalent distance.

- (vii) 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 in Chapter 9

None.

- (viii) 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 as described in Chapter 10?

We are submitting comments directly to Network Rail on its paper 'Better Connections; Options for the integration of High Speed 2'. A copy of this is enclosed.

- (ix) Please let us know your comments on the introduction of other utilities along the proposed Phase Two line of route as described in Chapter 11?

In principle, the introduction of other utilities is to be encouraged where it offers the benefits set out (eg combining engineering and planning costs, increasing value, and creating options for future upgrades). However, introducing other utilities must not be at the expense of compromising optimal HS infrastructure, or introducing risks to the railway (eg if a gas pipe ruptures).

Whether or not it is practical remains to be seen; the outstanding opportunity would appear to be water supply and/or drainage, but it is already evident that this may be impractical.

Provision of a long-distance walking and cycle path (with numerous local connections) may not technically comprise a 'utility', but is strongly encouraged. It appears not to incur any of the risks described above.

Finally, we note that the HS1-HS2 link is not part of the current consultation and therefore no comments are invited on it. Nevertheless, we strongly suggest that, alongside the possibilities of operating direct trains between the Continent and north of London, consideration is given to options for operating direct trains between Kent (and Stratford) and north of London. We believe there are significant potential benefits to be gained from doing so.

### **'Better Connections: Options for the integration of High Speed 2' Comments by the City of Edinburgh Council**

'Better Connections: Options for the integration of High Speed 2' states that 'Network Rail welcomes feedback on the approaches and associated options presented'.

The document is clear that the detailed descriptions of 'potential new journey' opportunities are illustrative only. This is entirely appropriate; as even Phase 1 of HS2 is not scheduled to open until 2026, the level of detailed planning implied would be premature for a comprehensive timetable.

The document's relevance is a) in illustrating the kind of capacity that will be released by HS2, and b) in raising the strategic issues which do need to be considered now, which are set out as a choice between:

- a 'do-minimum' approach
- an 'incremental' approach
- an 'Integrated Connectivity' approach

The Council's response focuses on these choices. The interface between the choices and HS2 itself is critical. Therefore this response also comprises part of the Council's contribution to HS2 Ltd's consultation on Phase 2 of HS2.

#### **Comments on the methodology**

The study methodology was (Chapter 4) 'undertaken at a relatively high level' through workshops involving internal and external stakeholders building on previous Network Rail and Passenger Focus work. It 'consulted with local, regional and industry stakeholders' (it is not clear whether this is additional to the workshops); considered the Long Term Planning Process (LTPP) outputs; analysed future demand and how to best meet it with future capacity; incorporated committed schemes to 2019; and produced indicative options for using the network when HS2 is completed.

It appears that only local authorities on, or close to, the route of HS2 infrastructure were included in 'external stakeholder engagement'. To the best of our knowledge, no Scottish Councils were involved, for example. But HS2 services will operate to/from other areas which were not included in this 'engagement'; Edinburgh, for example. Furthermore, the potential use of released capacity affects areas which were not included in the engagement (eg East Lothian and Northumberland). Therefore, whilst Appendix 3 states 'Listed below are the aspirational journey opportunities and comments captured at the external stakeholder workshops ... these journey opportunities options will be considered as part of the LTPP' the list cannot be considered comprehensive, due to the exclusion of a number of affected authorities from the process.

The difficulty is that the need to provide illustrative examples is misused by third parties as a statement of intent. Our estimate is that, in the event a 'do-minimum' approach being adopted for the post-HS2 network, detailed timetable planning need take place only shortly before HS2 opens. Indeed, the existing timetable planning process may suffice.

If an 'incremental' or 'Integrated Connectivity' approach is adopted, we suspect that an additional 2 or 3 years should be added to the current timetable planning process. This suggests that the complete exercise (ie HS2 and existing network timetabling) would need to start 3-4 years before HS2 opens.

### **Preferred approach**

We would not support deployment of the 'Do minimum' approach. Indeed, an objective of HS2 is to free capacity on the existing network, which inherently means that the freed capacity will be used in a new way. Given the scale of the HS2 project, it cannot be conceived as a separate system which is overlaid and has no impact on the existing network.

The document describes the Incremental Approach as identifying existing services which are replicated to a greater or lesser extent by HS2. The transfer of passengers to HS2 allows released capacity to be aligned as far as practical with the market study outputs. Mostly this would substitute long distance, fast services with inter-urban connectivity (particularly for places not directly served by HS2) or additional commuting capacity.

On the WCML and ECML complete train paths could be released, whilst on the MML there could be a transfer of passengers. This could provide new journey opportunities and freight paths.

The transfer of passengers will depend on various factors such as journey time reduction, fares, ease of interchange and onward connections. This approach assumes that the level of fares on HS2 would be the same as existing trains (as the Government has assumed).

The Integrated Connectivity Approach plans services on the existing network to work in conjunction with HS2: where appropriate, long distance high speed services would be provided by HS2, with services on the existing network set up in a feeder pattern to provide frequent and reliable connectivity between surrounding areas and HS2 stations. This would change passengers' view of long distance services, and allow additional opportunities to improve cross country services and services to other markets that are currently prevented by capacity constraints.

This assumes fares on HS2 are comparable with that of the existing network, allowing unconstrained transfer of passengers from the existing network; and easy interchange between HS2 and existing services. The overall 'end to end' journey time must be considered; the local (feeder) services must be reliable and integrated transport planning is required.

Released capacity on the existing network and some timetable restructuring would allow the existing network to feed into HS2 hubs, provide onward connectivity either by rail or other modes and to deliver new journey opportunities.

### *Observations*

The assumptions behind the Incremental and Integrated Connectivity approaches are the same: fares on HS2 comparable with those on the existing network, easy interchange between HS2 and existing services, and consideration of the overall 'end to end' journey time. But these are conditions which the existing network should strive for even without HS2; hence need not constrain this analysis.

The concern with the Integrated Connectivity Approach is that an integrated network based entirely on HS2 would not meet the needs of most passengers. Even if the HS network were significantly expanded beyond the current plans, most rail journeys would continue to be unrelated to HS2. It would, therefore, be inappropriate for such journeys to be restructured around HS2. For example, commuters who travel daily by train between Longniddry and Edinburgh and back would probably not welcome their regular train being retimed simply to connect with an HS departure to London.

Therefore any planning of services on the existing network in conjunction with HS2, especially if set up to feed frequent and reliable connectivity between surrounding areas and HS2 stations needs to be based on a pragmatic, not a principled basis. The outcome may well look like a cross between the Incremental and Integrated Connectivity Approaches. This suggests an approach including:

Identifying existing long distance high speed services which can be replaced by HS2.

Identifying any medium-distance and local services which are likely to be used by significant numbers of connecting passengers.

Assessing the potential for timetabling these to maximise connectivity, including the implications for other services (taking account of freed capacity on the existing network).

Other use of freed capacity on the existing network.

We suspect that some of the greatest opportunities for change may be in indirect, as much as direct, substitution. To illustrate this point:

On trips between Edinburgh to London, we would expect 100% switching from the ICEC franchise to HS2 (as well as very substantial switch from air).

However, the potential for journeys between Edinburgh and intermediate stations, perhaps as far south as Newark, may mean that rather than withdrawing existing services, they be rescheduled to take advantage of the fact that end-to-end journey times are no longer important, for example by calling at more stations.

Conversely, there may be opportunities to reduce current services (to free paths for other services) on corridors which are not 'parallel' to HS2. For example, travelling from Edinburgh to Bristol, Wales, and West England currently involves a direct journey on CrossCountry Trains, lasting at least 6.5 hours (or just under 6 hours with two changes). An indirect journey via Old Oak Common might take 5.25 hours, which may save sufficient time to outweigh the disadvantage of changing.

We have not identified aspirational journey opportunities to add to those captured at the external stakeholder workshops (recorded in Appendix 3). As indicated above, we believe that more discussion is needed beforehand on the network philosophy. Furthermore, the methodology previously deployed needs to engage with all stakeholders, not just those listed in Appendix 2 (ie additional workshops need to be organised). It is not sufficient to expect other stakeholders to generate aspirations without access to the information previously provided to those listed in Appendix 2.

## APPENDIX 3

### Glossary of terms in Appendices 1 and 2

HSL	High Speed Line
HS1-HS2 link	Line to be built connecting High Speed 1 and HS2 (through north London)
WCML	West Coast Main Line
ECML	East Coast Main Line
MML	Midland Main Line
ICEC	Intercity East Coast