

Community Forums are intended to provide an opportunity for local representatives to raise issues of importance to them and to reach consensus on preferred mitigations for HS2 Ltd. Attendance at a Forum does not indicate support by these groups for the scheme.

HS2 Ltd hosts and attends Community Forums, and has undertaken to record and publish issues, actions and requests raised during these events on their website. The matters raised by forum members are their views, and publication by HS2 Ltd should not be construed as acceptance or agreement with the sentiments expressed.

**The Central Chilterns Community Forum**

**Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> November 7.00 – 9.00pm**

**Little Kingshill Village Hall**

**Draft minutes**

**Attendees**

Independent Chair – Andrew Dixon

**Representatives of:**

Chesham Society  
Chesham Town Council  
Chiltern District Council  
Cholesbury Action Group  
Great Missenden Parish Revitalisation Group  
South Heath Resident  
Great Missenden Stop HS2  
Little Missenden Action Group  
Little Missenden PC  
Potter Row Action Group  
South Heath HS2 Action Group  
Speen Area Action Group  
The Lee Parish Council  
The Chilterns Conservation Board  
The Chiltern Ridges HS2 Action Group (CRAG)

Residents x 2

Observer x 1

Martin Wells, Country South Area Stakeholder Manager – HS2 Ltd  
Mark Bailey, Senior Environment Manager (Route Wide) – HS2 Ltd  
Simon Mace, Country South Area Engineer – HS2 Ltd  
Charlotte Brewster, Country South Community & Stakeholder Advisor – HS2 Ltd  
David Meechan, Press Officer – HS2 Ltd

## **1. Welcome and introductions**

The Chair welcomed attendees to the meeting and introductions were made.

## **2. Meeting note and actions**

The minutes of the meeting on 5th July were accepted.

It was noted that the minutes from the meeting of 25<sup>th</sup> September had yet to be agreed between HS2 Ltd and Forum members. Whilst the majority of the points that had been in dispute had been resolved there were still some sticking points-, particularly around actions and comments that were ascribed to HS2 Ltd. General discussion about the manner in which minutes were written and then agreed ensued and during this discussion the following points were made:

- Some members of the forum felt that there shouldn't be further discussion about minutes and that they should be agreed as far as possible outside the meeting.
- Others expressed concern about the length of time it took to get a version that was acceptable to both parties and there was dissatisfaction expressed about the manner in which minutes were being recorded and handled.
- There were a number of requests for verbatim minutes
- Further requests for the recording of meetings

As a result of the discussion it was concluded that a number of points remained unresolved. Therefore, it was agreed that HS2 Ltd and a Forum representative meet outside the Forum to agree amendments.

It was agreed by the Forum that from this meeting, members should provide comments on minutes to HS2 Ltd no later than 2 weeks after they were circulated, with no further comments normally accepted after that date. This was in an attempt to get them finalised in advance, and to avoid spending such a significant proportion of the meeting on this matter in future.

### **Matters arising**

Dr Fletcher read an extract from cited the DfT's August 2012 Webtag guidance which stated states that "The current relationships [between noise and the annoyance it causes] are based on data gathered in past decades and further research is needed to assess the annoyance response to different sources of transport noise such as high speed rail." WebTAG Sub-Objective Noise (paragraph 1.4.7). Dr Fletcher She suggested that this undermined the approach to noise monitoring/mitigation adopted by HS2 Ltd. HS2 Ltd offered to take an action to provide the context for this quote at the next meeting.

Dr Fletcher also referred to HS2 Ltd's Action 20: to provide an outline of how the AONB's status was taken into account in the design of the route. She drew attention to HS2 Ltd's commentary on Action 20 which says "a number of measures have been adopted in recognition of the AONB status of the area. These include lowering of route alignment near Wendover and extension of both the Wendover and South Heath Green Tunnels (Review of Possible Refinements to the Proposed HS2 Route)."

Dr Fletcher drew attention to the fact that this commentary did not reflect the “national treasure” status of the AONB (Natural Environment White Paper). This has not been received. However, Action 20 is indicated as complete. Accordingly, forum members asked for Action Point 20 to be changed to ongoing and it references a website address, ‘review of possible route refinements. Dr Fletcher read an extract from the DfT’s Webtag guidance which stated that “The current relationships [between noise and the annoyance it causes] are based on data gathered in past decades and further research is needed to assess the annoyance response to different sources of transport noise such as high speed rail.” She suggested that this undermined the approach to noise monitoring/mitigation adopted by HS2 Ltd. HS2 Ltd offered to take an action to provide the context for this quote at the next meeting.

A forum member clarified that the work on both noise surveys and visual intrusion were part of a process of determining a baseline.

The Forum reviewed the action log of the previous meeting and suggested the following changes:

**Action 14** – It was queried by a forum member that, given the difficulties over the minutes, whether HS2 Ltd. would respond to proposals/queries from the minutes or was it best to submit these in writing. HS2 Ltd. confirmed that proposals should be submitted in writing as well as including them in the minutes.

**Action 17** – Should be marked as on going

**Action 18** – The technical bilateral meeting – which was held on a separate occasion from the Pan Chilterns meeting - was wider than the Chilterns Conservation Board and should refer to the other members who were in attendance. [CB1]

**Action 19** – on going/not complete [CB3]

**Action 20** – Forum members asked for this action to be marked as “on-going” as Forum members did not accept that HS2 Ltd’s response was sufficient given government statements about the AONB a “national treasure”.

**Action 23** – More information was requested about this action, specifically about the size of construction sites (when known). This action should therefore be marked as on going

During discussions about the actions, a number of points were raised. These included a comment from a forum member that the aim of noise mitigation should be to preserve the peace of the area and therefore visual and noise impacts should be zero.

#### Action

- HS2 Ltd to provide comment on the piece highlighted by Marilyn Fletcher relating to the use of Webtag analysis
- To [CB4] provide more detailed response how HS2 Ltd. took the statutory nature of the AONB in designing the route.

### **3 – Submitted documents requiring a response**

Dr Fletcher outlined how she had only just received a response dated 22 November from HS2 Ltd to a list of questions submitted by email on 12 July. She said it was difficult to effectively engage with HS2 Ltd when delays such as this were encountered. HS2 Ltd explained the reasons for the delay which, in part, related to the way the questions were submitted [FF6] [CB7]

Dr Fletcher posed a question about the extent of tree planting anticipated along the route for screening. HS2 Ltd repeated government statements about the amount of tree planting anticipated, and that the size and type of trees planted along the route were still to be decided. It was not correct to say that the tree planting commitment is only– for screening as there are woodland creation opportunities. The forum stressed that this would be an appropriate discussion to have with the Chiltern Conservation Board at a future bilateral.

Shirley Judges reminded HS2 Ltd that she had forwarded a paper concerning Rights of Way and had no response. HS2 Ltd indicated that this would be covered in the engineering report. Shirley Judges stressed that the network of rights of way were a key feature of the AONB and its recreational opportunities and economic well-being depended on them. She felt that HS2 would devastate the RoW network in the AONB. She described how she was still awaiting details about how HS2 Ltd proposed to ameliorate the damage which could potentially be done. HS2 Ltd clarified that no closures of any rights of way are planned – only diversions and that emerging thinking on this would be described in the engineering talk through in the forum. It was suggested that HS2 Ltd should organise a specific workshop to look at the issues surrounding rights of way with key stakeholders.

Simon Hook described how he had submitted a document entitled Mitigation re: HS2 Central Chilterns Community Forum. He was keen to find out when he would receive a response to the document. HS2 Ltd confirmed receipt of that document and how the information included within it (and other submissions) was informing scheme developments. HS2 Ltd also confirmed that they were in the process of organising a meeting with the Bucks Local Access Forum.

#### **Actions**

- **HS2 Ltd to provide Simon Hook with an update on the Mitigation document**
- **HS2 Ltd to organise a bilateral meeting to discuss rights of way**
- **HS2 Ltd to organise a bilateral meeting to explore further details surrounding planting**

### **4 – Bilateral Meetings**

CRAG provided a summary of a meeting with Atkins that took place to explore in more detail the two proposals for further tunnelling through the Chilterns AONB. CRAG described how the meeting had been useful and how Atkins were making small adjustments to the current alignment to allow a cost comparison to be made. Notes will be circulated when they have received a meeting record note.

Great Missenden Stop HS2 provided a summary of a meeting that was prompted by a response from Alison Munro which, they felt, suggested that the route would have a minimal impact on the community as it was more than 1km from the line. The group felt that unless HS2 Ltd accepted this wasn't the case it would be difficult to have a meaningful conversation during the meeting. Actions from the meeting were that a follow up meeting should be organised to explore in more detail potential mitigation issues for the area.

The forum was given a summary of the Pan-Chilterns meeting held on the 25<sup>th</sup> October which provided an opportunity to explore issues of common concern. Agenda points were led by various interested parties and covered concerns such as design, socioeconomic impacts and impacts on the rights of way network. Members of the forum described how they felt it was a good meeting, but that more dialogue and debate between HS2 Ltd and them needed to take place. Members at this meeting stressed that they wanted to help shape ideas rather than simply respond to them.

Potter Row residents gave a report of a bilateral with HS2 Ltd which had provided a means of gaining further information about the scheme and the potential impacts upon those living in the vicinity.

There was then further discussion about the impacts of HS2 on the local economy and how there was concern that only directly affected businesses were being surveyed. There was concern that the wider impacts of the scheme would not be assessed. The forum requested that wider business should be consulted. HS2 Ltd described how the surveys will look at both positive and negative effects on local businesses directly impacted by HS2 infrastructure and that the methodology proposed is in keeping with all other large infrastructure projects which have taken place in the past.

Dr Fletcher then drew HS2 Ltd's attention to the Government Tourism Policy. She cited the following:

It is "imperative that we protect our communities from being blighted by inappropriate or ugly developments and to preserve important and nationally significant historic buildings and landscapes – which are a vital part of our tourism industry" (paragraph 6.5).<sup>[FF9]</sup><sup>[CB10]</sup>

There was further interest about the nature of the business surveys which had taken place and a bilateral was requested to discuss the impacts on local businesses in more detail. HS2 Ltd also stated that included in their considerations is the potential impact to businesses that would be indirectly affected by HS2 proposals. An example was given of a pony trekking business that was situated away from the route but relied very much on bridle routes that fall on the route alignment.

Paul Gillett who attended the Potters Row meeting felt that the mechanisms utilised by HS2 Ltd to make the wider community aware of the project were insufficient and the manner in which he found out that there might be a construction site on his land was unacceptable. HS2 Ltd reminded the Forum that this was precisely why they were reluctant to release this sort information when it was still subject to change. However, this was a direct result of requests from Forums to have sight of this information early in order to engage effectively.

HS2 Ltd also spoke of how it was important to try to get meeting minutes agreed as soon as possible so they could be uploaded onto the website and used to inform wider interested parties, beyond attendance at the forum, of what was being discussed.<sup>[CB12]</sup>

## Action

- To organise a bilateral meeting to explore socioeconomic impacts in more detail [\(in particular local businesses\)](#)

## 5. HS2 Ltd work progress update

### Engineering update

HS2 Ltd gave an engineering update, where they started by explaining their approach to engagement over the 4 rounds of forums.

HS2 Ltd [CB15] provided an overview of the forum process to date, stating how the project had looked to engage with local communities from an early stage of the process, and to give the opportunity to influence proposals as they developed, rather than after they were worked up.

The first round of forums was soon after the January announcement with further development just starting. As a result, HS2 Ltd's engagement concentrated on gaining an understanding of local issues and concerns. Some forums felt able to engage on this basis, but others asked for more detail proposals on which to comment/consider.

In response to this, during round 2 HS2 Ltd aimed to address concerns by asking for feedback/comments on elements that were easier to understand and would benefit from local knowledge and experience (Road realignments, rights of way etc.). Some useful suggestions came from this, but also a view from some members that they wanted to see proposals before commenting.

In round 3 HS2 Ltd moved to more detailed engineering updates, even though the project was still not at the stage of being able to publish detailed plans. Feedback was generally positive with more information being welcomed, but again some wanted to see the proposals before commenting.

The approach to round 4 has involved continuing to listen to the feedback from forums and consider how HS2 Ltd can respond within the constraints it works under (not least a need to minimise any distress to local people from showing potential impacts to their property where there is a degree of uncertainty). HS2 Ltd produced new plans showing changes to the scheme since January, and the additional elements such as electrical supplies, work sites and construction routes. HS2 Ltd explained how all construction sites in the area were 'secondary' (with the primary sites located elsewhere) and went on to make the following points: The plans were superimposed on an aerial view of the proposed route.

HS2 Ltd explained how all construction sites in the area were 'secondary' (with the primary sites located elsewhere) and went on to make the following points:

- Northern portal at Mantles wood – A construction compound would be needed here which was currently represented by the square black rectangle on the maps. This would be used

for two purposes: the construction of the portal itself and the dismantling of the tunnel boring machine, and could be split into 2 sites if necessary. The shape, size and location(s) of the site(s) were currently subject to change. A permanent balancing pond for track drainage would also be needed in this area.

- Construction access to the tunnel portal is planned to be along the trace [CB17] from Chesham Road (B485). Permanent road access to the tunnel portal for maintenance and emergency services would be via Chesham Road and Hyde Heath road and down the new proposed access as shown.
- Hyde Lane – over-bridge across HS2. The construction compound in this area is currently shown in the vicinity of the existing road but is under review.
- Chesham Road – would need to be locally re-aligned to pass over the top of the green tunnel. This diversion of Chesham Road would allow either the existing road or the new diversion to remain open to avoid severance of local communities.
- North side of Chesham road – there would be a realignment of Kings Lane adjacent [CB18] to Chesham Road to facilitate construction of the green tunnel.

A number of comments and questions were posed about the update. These included:

- Concerns were expressed that the safeguarding maps were out of date as some buildings were not shown. HS2 Ltd explained that existing mapping was used to create the safeguarding plans.

There were requests for further information about construction routes, size of compounds and access etc. In addition there was a query about the size of the intervention shaft and whether this would require road widening. Other queries were raised concerning the temporary nature of haul roads. HS2 Ltd stressed that the route to the emergency access had to be fit for purpose. The maps indicate haul roads and where none are shown, none are planned. [CB19]

The point was made that a tunnel would obviate much of the construction sites. HS2 Ltd. stated that consideration of this had been undertaken and previously discounted. In the view of HS2 Ltd. there were no gain's with the tunnel option. Dr Fletcher stressed the huge impact of the construction sites along the ridge [CB21] and the devastation caused by the cutting north of the Mantle's Wood tunnel portal.

- Questions were asked about the Mantle's Wood portal and the construction sites adjacent to the A413. A question was posed about the road between the Mantles Wood portal and Hyde Heath Road. HS2 Ltd stated that they would feed back further information on this issue when it became available. There was also further discussion about porous portals and their role in reduction of pressure waves and sound change and request for further information re tunnel noise.

A forum member asked if the decision to extend the tunnel beyond Amersham had been due to the steep gradient which would have to be tackled by the trains. HS2 Ltd described at that such inclines are not really an issue for high speed trains, ~~but regardless the correct reasons form the extension and~~ [and](#) pointed members to the report on the tunnelling options that was published following the January 2012 announcement |

[CB23]

- Concerns were expressed that the construction period of the scheme would have a massive impact on the area.
- There was a concern expressed about a local gas holder
- Concerns were expressed whether the footpath which leads down into Great Missenden from Frith Hill and used by school children in the area would still be accessible by foot. [This is a children's safeguarding issue.](#) [CB25] The view was expressed that there was a concern that HS2 Ltd would assume that everybody drives and as a result rights of way were being ignored.
- A member of the Potters Row group explained that the request for the diversion of Leather Lane was to retain/minimise damage to a row of old oak trees
- The forum drew HS2 Ltd's attention to the Chiltern Rail bridge at Deep Mill which crosses the A413. The road under the bridge is single carriageway in both directions. The bridge is on a bend of the A413. The A413 is to be the major route conveying HS2 construction traffic in/out of the AONB.

## **Actions**

- **HS2 Ltd to provide further information about the road between the Mantles Wood Road and Hyde Heath Road**
- **HS2 Ltd to provide further information about porous portals [and tunnel noise.](#)** [CB26]
- **HS2 Ltd to clarify whether there will still be access by foot for the footpath that leads from Frith Hill to Great Missenden.**

## **Environmental Update**

The environmental update covered the following points:

- 106 surveys had so far taken place in this area; the bulk covering ecology and heritage.



- HS2 Ltd described how work was phasing down due to seasonality, but that over the coming months certain activities, for example over wintering bird surveys, would take place. An important piece of work is also the undertaking of verifiable photography which is an important part of the landscape and visual impact assessment and requires deciduous trees, without leaves, to assess worse case views of the proposals.

Further sound monitoring activities would also continue over the coming months. This information would form part of the baseline sound surveys which would be used in noise assessments required for the EIA. HS2 Ltd have offered to engage with forum areas regarding sound monitoring locations and indicated that a methodology and forms were available for this purpose. HS2 Ltd. will be circulating an e-mail re noise monitoring inviting forum members to recommend sites. A number of questions were then posed, covering the following issues:

- Concerns were voiced about aquifers and chalk streams. HS2 Ltd described how these issues were now covered during the River Misbourne Action Group bilateral meeting. HS2 Ltd explained that the Group intended to produce their own note of the meeting for circulation and that HS2 Ltd planned to produce a frequently asked questions sheet which could be used by communities along the route.
- Questions were posed about the maintenance loops which were mentioned at the Dunsmore, Wendover and Halton and Stoke Mandeville and Aylesbury Forums. HS2 Ltd described how a maintenance loop of approx. 800m of track is a project requirement and is needed somewhere between Calvert and London and would allow train maintenance vehicles to park up, as required, for night time operations. The loops would also provide provision for the rescue of a failed HS2 train allowing a train to be pulled off the main line if necessary. Potential sites were difficult to locate as they need to be flat and relatively straight section of track. Two suitable areas have been identified these being South Heath and Stoke Mandeville. Considerations indicate that the most likely site for a loop would be Stoke Mandeville in order to avoid the AONB.
- There were concerns expressed about the impact on Sibley's Coppice as it contains a number of public footpaths which HS2 Ltd are described on their engineering plans, but not shown on the maps. Similar concerns were also voiced for Mantles Wood. HS2 Ltd asked the forum to provide clarification on whether they were describing public rights of way (i.e. definitive map) or woodland rides and asked for forum members to provide the specific footpath numbers. HS2 Ltd also clarified that it was Buckinghamshire County Council's Definitive Map which is being used for the purposes of mapping and their surveys. They are confident that all relevant PRoW are being considered. It was suggested to HS2 Ltd that they obtain copies of the Chiltern Society footpath maps which show all public rights of way.
- HS2 Ltd reiterated that their starting point was not to close public rights of way – although it may be desirable to look to reduce the number of crossings by short lengths of diversion. The forum argued that it should be a requirement that all of the paths/rides and access in the described woodlands be provided with over-bridges. HS2 Ltd questioned this argument and raised their concern about the unnecessary “over provision” of over-bridges and the likely landscape and visual impacts in the context of the AONB designation. [The question of](#)

[tunnel equivalents for RoW was raised. HS2 Ltd. rejected this because then it would have to apply to the 'whole route'](#)<sup>[CB27]</sup>

## **Actions**

- **HS2 Ltd to provide further information about the road between the Mantles Wood Road and Hyde Heath Road**
- **HS2 Ltd to provide further information about porous portals**
- **HS2 Ltd to clarify whether there will still be access by foot for the footpath that leads from Frith Hill to Great Missenden.**
- **HS2 Ltd to provide update on Sibleys Coppice and Mantles Wood, with respect to footpaths, when available.**<sup>[CB28]</sup>
- **HS2 Ltd to provide an update on how it was using the rights of way document submitted by the forum at the first meeting.**
- **[HS2 Ltd to provide information about acquisition of land at the site of Concern about a gas holder in the proximity of Deep Mill Lane.](#)**<sup>[CB29]</sup>

## **6. Engineering & Design Concerns / 7. Property Compensation Consultation**

Because of shortage of time a briefing note providing an overview of the Property & Compensation consultation was circulated.

## **8 AOB**

The Chair went around the room to list individual concerns and allow any outstanding issues to be highlighted. These included:

- A number of questions submitted by Sarah Raffety regarding the Property Compensation consultation
- Further information was requested about the heights of structures and any telecommunication devices needed
- Lack of detail about construction size/timing, access/egress. Construction compound at Frith Hill.
- It was asked why the exit to the Chilterns Tunnel at Mantles Wood was not at ground level
- It was felt that the key to the maps provided was not clear and HS2 Ltd were asked to provide clarification when available on the anticipated routes to be used by construction vehicles
- There was concern expressed about impact of construction traffic on Hyde Heath Road and the B485 as it's used by school buses

- Further information was requested about pylons and how they might be moved
- A Forum member told HS2 Ltd that a proposal would soon to be submitted requesting the lowering of the track bed throughout the AONB
- Secretary of State's statement re environmental impact being key to HS2. 'Must safeguard countryside and local communities.' (MC/57/3725.10.12 to C Gillan)
- Business survey to be as wide as possible
- No recognition of the nature of a protected landscape of AONB – only achieved through a full tunnel
- It was requested that more clarity be provided regarding how comments from forums are fed into the design process
- Little evidence that the forum is influencing anything and as such are a waste of time
- The cumulative effect and impact of proposals
- The view was reiterated that the business surveys currently being carried out seemed very narrow and should be extended to all businesses deemed to be impacted by the route
- Further information about construction compounds was requested, especially those not currently shown on the plans circulated.
- Reassurance that the EIA will contain other options e.g. tunnel even if previously rejected. Specific reassurance was sought on this point and HS2 Ltd agreed that this was the case.[CB30]
- ~~— A question was raised about whether the EIA/ES would consider alternative route options.~~
- Questions were posed about the alternative tunnelling options considered and the documentation available to evidence this
- Further information was requested about the site verification carried out by HS2 of the gas holder at Deep Mill Lane and why the site was being explored
- Concern was expressed by a forum member that the forums were a waste of time, and that nothing useful came from them.
- Meeting Freedom of Information requests; for example, told that decisions taken over reduction in budget and tunnel options were made at a meeting where no notes were taken.[CB31]

HS2 Ltd[CB33]. added a coda to the meeting, picking up on the point that the forum was a waste of time because nothing useful came out of them. A spokesman stressed that a similar point of view had been expressed in the Bucks Planning Forum. He stressed that 'we do not have to have the meetings'. He pointed to the resources provided in the form of staff who attended. He expressed

disappointment that some people did not find the forums ~~useful~~ useful and acknowledged that he too found it difficult to identify much of value that came from discussion. He suggested that if the forum thinks that this is a ticking box exercise then the forum might want to rethink about continuing with them. He stressed that the information that HS2 Ltd. provided was the most up-to-date at this stage.

On this last point Martin Wells from HS2 Ltd responded by mentioning that a similar sentiment had been reported by Buckinghamshire CC at the recent Planning Forum. At that meeting it was suggested that HS2 Ltd had to undertake this form of engagement, but some attendees questioned their commitment to it.

Martin Wells explained that HS2 Ltd were not required to engage through forums and had done so in the hope that they would be found useful by local communities. He pointed to the significant resources provided by HS2 Ltd to each event in the form of the staff that attended (including senior engineers and environmental managers, and their Consultants working on the scheme). He also pointed to the materials produced at forum members request, including the highly detailed plans showing current developments which would not normally be shared at such an early stage .

He expressed disappointment that some people did not find the forums useful, but acknowledged that at this Forum he too found it difficult to identify much of value that came from discussions. He suggested that those present may be finding it difficult to engage at such an early stage of the project. He cited the frequency at which discussions centred on the administration of the forum itself, events leading up to the January decision, or elements of the scheme that would not be subject to detailed work until after Royal Assent of the hybrid Bill.

He regretted that people may be missing an opportunity to influence detailed the scheme development during this forum, and suggested that members may need to wait until there was less uncertainty about the detailed development of the project before they felt able to engage meaningfully

#### · Actions

- To provide further data about Chesham ('no data' in schedules circulated)
- ~~· To provide further info about the route options which will be used to carry out the EIA~~  
[CB35]
- To provide further information about the site verification carried out by HS2 Ltd of the gas holder at Deep Mill Lane and why the site was being explored

#### Action Summary

24. To provide comment on the piece highlighted by Marilyn Fletcher relating to the use of Webtag analysis

25. HS2 Ltd to provide Simon Hook with an update on the Mitigation document

26. HS2 Ltd to organise a bilateral meeting to discuss rights of way

27. Organise bilateral meeting to explore further details surrounding planting
24. To organise a bilateral meeting to explore socioeconomic impacts in more detail
25. HS2 Ltd to provide further information about the road between the Mantles Wood Road and Hyde Heath Road
26. HS2 Ltd to provide further information about porous portals
27. HS2 Ltd to clarify whether there will still be access by foot for the footpath that leads from Frith Hill to Great Missenden.
28. Provide update on Sibleys Coppice and Mantles Wood, with respect to footpaths when available.
29. HS2 Ltd to provide an update on how it was using the rights of way document submitted by the forum at the first meeting.
30. Actions To provide further data about Chesham ('no data' in schedules circulated)
31. To provide further information about the site verification carried out by HS2 Ltd of the gas holder at Deep Mill Lane and why the site was being explored

**Next meeting:**

**Tue 26 Feb, Little Kingshill Village Hall, 7-9pm**

**Appendix A - Grid of over-arching issues and concerns discussed at forum meeting**

Concerns over Roads / Realignment	Landscape	Rights of way	Infra-structure / Safety	Heritage Cultural /	Socio-economic	Environ-ment incl. Biodiversity	Noise & Vibration	Government Policy
Impact of construction on access	Impact of detrimental post consultation changes affecting 9kms of 11kms surface AONB route.	Impact on and bridleways and footpaths	Route alignment Bored tunnelling has been proposed through the AONB	Impact on Chilterns Gateway Project	Impact on tourism	Impact on vistas and viewpoints	Impact of noise at tunnel portals in the AONB	Natural Environment White Paper 2011 says AONBs are “National Treasures” para 4.3.5
Concerns over severance	Impact on landscape of works during construction in AONB very severe	Impact on cycle routes	Optimum Environmental Line Speed	Impact on Grim’s Ditch	Impact on health and wellbeing	Impact on habitats	Noise from classic compatible trains	The DfT’s WebTAG undermines its own use for HS2. WebTAG says its “relationships are based on data gathered in past decades and further research is needed to assess the annoyance response to different sources of transport noise such as high speed rail” para 1.4.7

Impact of construction traffic on Hyde Heath road and the B485 particularly with regard to school buses	Impacts on vistas and viewpoints	Impact on RoW viewpoints	Depth of cuttings		Impact on local businesses and the manner in which business surveys are being conducted	AONB status (and value)		Government Tourism Policy states it is “imperative that we protect our communities from being blighted by inappropriate or ugly developments and to preserve nationally significant .....landscapes para 6.5
	Chilterns AONB is a national resource	Re-routing of RoW in the AONB			Compensation	Government commitment		
Concerns that South Heath and Chesham would be isolated *[FF36]	AONB landscape value has not been taken into account in costing the route. Inappropriate costing methodology has been used	Impact on the Chilterns Gateway Project	Whether trial runs have been carried out considering concerns over train frequency		Concerns that South Heath and Chesham would be isolated from Great Missenden and the A413	Depth of cuttings		

	to reduce land value to strengthen HS2's business case.							
	Law and policies concerned with AONBs have been issued since the Channel Tunnel Rail Link Act (1996). This should result in better protection for AONB land from HS2 than from HS1.				Impact on the AONB affecting businesses over a wide geographic area	Trees to conceal the route in the AONB		

DRAFT



N.B. Concerns have been raised that there will be cumulative effects of the above factors.

DRAF

## **Appendix B –Statement by Forum re opposition to HS2 to be attached to all minutes**

Note for inclusion in all records of the Central Chilterns Community Forum meetings

1. Forum Members are resolutely opposed to HS2
2. Consequently, participation in the Community Forum discussions regarding possible mitigation is not to be taken as any agreement to or acceptance by Forum Members of HS2 or of the current HS2 proposals.
3. If, notwithstanding discussions and objections, HS2 is to proceed along the existing proposed route or otherwise through the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, despite its statutory designation as a nationally protected landscape, then mitigation should be to the highest international standards. Mitigation should be particularly concentrated on and addressed to ensuring the greatest possible protection of the Chilterns AONB; and in particular its tranquillity and natural beauty.
4. The most effective and preferred form of mitigation for this section of the route is therefore considered to be a fully bored tunnel throughout the Chilterns AONB.
5. DfT/HS2 Ltd is reminded that in presenting the HS2 proposals for consultation, the budgeted cost for the section of HS2 between Mantles Wood and Wendover was £250-300 million more than that now budgeted cost for the revised, more damaging, proposals, which were announced only after the consultation; and despite this being a nationally protected area of countryside at the heart of the AONB. This expenditure should be reinstated in the budget and applied to further mitigation, including the full tunnelling option, for this area.
6. Presentations at Community Forums should not be taken as final statements on any topic.
7. Community Forum members will not be able to make decisions on any propositions put forward by HS2 Ltd. Proposals will be referred for discussion to the communities and organisations they represent.

## **Appendix C - AONB Land: Better Protection from HS2 than from HS1 - Statement provided by Chiltern Countryside Group**

"Law and policies of recent years, which now conserve and enhance the nation's Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, must be applied to achieve better protection from HS2 than was achieved from HS1." - CCG 25 September 2012

### **Context:**

The Channel Tunnel Rail Link Act was enacted in 1996. HS1 was accordingly designed and the Channel Tunnel Rail Link Act enacted, before law and Government planning policy statements specifically concerned with AONBs' status, and conservation and enhancement had been issued.

Such law and planning policy statements are the following:

- a) Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000) Part IV.
- b) National Planning Policy Framework (2012) paragraphs 14 (and Footnote 9), 115 and 116. This replaces Planning Policy Statement 7 (paragraphs 21, 22 and 23) which was issued in 2004.

A recent further statement on AONB status is given in the Natural Environment White Paper (2011) paragraph 4.35.

Accordingly, at a similar stage of design some twenty years later, the legislation and policies introduced post HS1 must be applied whilst seeking the conservation and enhancement of the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and seeking protection from the scheme's impacts in all aspects. Such an application must achieve better protection of the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty from HS2 than was achieved for AONB land from HS1.

This statement is endorsed by the Chilterns Conservation Board.

The Chiltern Countryside Group would like to acknowledge the help and expert advice of the Board in preparing the statement.

### **Chiltern Countryside Group HS2 Position Statement**

The Chiltern Countryside Group believes HS2 should not proceed. If HS2 should go ahead, then the Group believes that it should be designed and operated to the highest possible environmental standards in all respects. To satisfy this requirement CCG believes that the route should be designed in a fully bored tunnel under the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

The Chilterns Conservation Board is the public body established to conserve and enhance the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. [www.chilternsaonb.org](http://www.chilternsaonb.org)

The Chiltern Countryside Group is an action group whose aims are to help preserve the tranquillity and beauty of the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. [www.chilterncountrysidegroup.org](http://www.chilterncountrysidegroup.org)

## **Appendix D - CCCF Adverse Changes, submitted by members of the forum**

### Central Chilterns Forum

At the recent meeting of the Central Chilterns Forum we referred to a key HS2 Ltd document entitled "HS2 Consultation and Engagement Programme". The Introduction to this document stated:

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

We went on to refer to the adverse changes resulting from the January 2012 announcement to the section of the proposed line running through the Chilterns AONB from the north end of the Amersham bored tunnel to the south end of the Wendover green tunnel. These changes were largely caused by shallower cuttings necessary to reduce the amount of spoil which had been seriously underestimated in the consultation documents. The changes are said to result in cost savings of £300m compared with the proposals submitted for consultation.

At the Forum meeting Simon White of HS2 Ltd expressed surprise that it was considered that there were any adverse changes. Given that he is the Environment Manager, and therefore presumably conscious of the environmental effects of HS2 on the AONB, the members expressed great surprise that he and HS2 Ltd had not appreciated that these changes would result in a significantly more adverse effect to this section of the line than the deeper cuttings originally envisaged. In this respect, the fact that there is to be an extended bored tunnel at the Amersham and Chalfont end does not detract from or in any way justify the serious adverse effect of the changes between South Heath and Wendover, the section covered by the Central Chilterns and Wendover/Dunsmore Forums.

It is these changes which the meeting referred to. They are:

1. The cutting between South Heath and Leather Lane has been made shallower by 7-8 metres compared with the February 2011 Consultation design. In places the cutting is now planned to be only 2-3 metres deep.

2. The effect of this and the viaduct changes has been to raise the line and therefore also the line of the gantries for the 5 miles between South Heath and Wendover by 7 metres (23 feet) at Leather Lane and 3 metres (10 feet) at Rocky Lane and Wendover Dean.
3. In addition, the shallower cutting has resulted in Leather Lane – a historic landscape feature of the Chilterns AONB – being diverted from its ancient pathway. Instead of being sunken it will be raised on an embankment. In addition, the grubbing up of hedgerows along the lane will result in a severe local loss in biodiversity.
4. Nearer Wendover, the horizontal alignment has been moved 35m closer to the houses in Bacombe Lane, but with no benefit to other houses.
5. HS2 Ltd plans to construct false 'bund' cuttings where the total depth of the 'Deep Cutting' will be 8 metres (FOI11-375). Although the Government has said the bunds would be constructed so as they would be blended into the landscape, we believe that - in practice - this may be very difficult to achieve without marked deterioration of the landscape and additional land purchase. This is a serious consideration in an area which has been designated in law as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

These changes will directly affect the visual impact of the line and the gantries, as well as impacting seriously on the noise interference. To even attempt seriously to mitigate these, as required within the AONB statutory protection guidelines, will cause a major increase in mitigation costs.

Given the above, it is untrue to say that the changes that have been made to the London to West Midlands route "have all been designed to lessen impacts on local communities and the environment"; indeed, in relation to this section of the AONB just the opposite is the case. In the heart of the AONB, which should be given special protection and where the changes will be much more noticeable, the visual and environmental impacts will be worse as a result of the Consultation and these will have a severe impact on this section of the Chilterns AONB.

We again emphasise that the only acceptable mitigation is to continue the bored tunnel throughout the AONB area to beyond Wendover. We have presented to you proposal in this regard by which this could certainly be achieved at a cost well within the original budget, and we believe this is still feasible even within the now arbitrarily reduced budget announced after the Consultation.

We request that this letter be recorded as part of the minutes and records of the Central Chilterns Forum.

#### **Appendix E -Government Tourism Policy 2011**

It is "imperative that we protect our communities from being blighted by inappropriate or ugly developments and to preserve important and nationally significant historic buildings and landscapes – which are a vital part of our tourism industry."  
(paragraph 6.5)2

DRAF