

HS2 Northolt Corridor Community Forum 11 Sept. 2012 at Selborne Primary School, Perivale

Agenda

1. **Introductions:**
2. **Community Forum Notes and Actions**
3. **Scheme Development: Progress and next steps**
4. **Environment Update**
5. **Noise**
6. **AOB: Items for Next Agenda and Location & Date of Next Meeting**

Attendees from HS2 Ltd

Caroline Gowing (chair)

Natalie Kirkwood (London Metropolitan Area Stakeholder Manager)

Peter Fry (flip chart scribe)

John (engineer presenting on the route)

Sabina Nizamudin (presenting on the Environmental impact assessment)

Dan (HS2 Ltd contractor presenting on the Code of Construction)

Danny Fumecelli(?) (HS2 Ltd contractor from Temple Group Ltd presenting on noise)

1. Introductions

Talk through agenda meeting notes and actions

2. Notes of last Community Forum and Actions

- Actions and Issues tracker was only presented at the CF – not circulated in advance like the minutes from the previous CF. Many had not received minutes. Natalie Kirkwood (HS2 Ltd) agreed to ensure these were sent out if she received everyone's email address.
- "Northolt Corridor" embraces Northolt, Greenford and Perivale.
- HS2 Ltd confirmed it is undertaking a **comparative study of tunnelling** the Ealing LB section of the HS2 route at the request of Ealing Council and the CF. This is aimed to be completed end of Sept./ early Oct. HS2 Ltd stated that the comparative tunnelling study *'is to be a very comprehensive piece of work that cannot be rushed'*.
- Alex Nieora, Chairman of NEAHS2 asked whether HS2 Ltd would confirm that ALL the bridges in Ealing LB would need to be replaced to accommodate an overground HS2 route, including both Hanger Lane Bridges. HS2 Ltd confirmed that they would. **HS2 Ltd had previously believed it possible to replace only some of the bridges but were told by their contractors that all the bridges in the borough would have to go.** The Piccadilly line, Acton, and Hanger Lane bridges would be phased and programmed (together with the other replacement bridges) and worked in conjunction with Ealing Council. However, it was pointed out that TfL rather than Ealing Council control the A40 and A406 (North Circular Road) and it was suggested they do not understand the implications of the bridge closures.

- Alex Nieora asked whether bridge replacements and associated road closures will be factored into the comparative tunnel study. **HS2 Ltd. answered affirmatively stating that the report will take this into account.**
- **Alex Nieora asked what the likely cost of bridge replacement would be. John (engineer from HS2 Ltd) stated that for the larger bridges the cost would be tens of thousands of pounds.** HS2 Ltd also stated that the temporary structures erected while the bridges were being replaced would be tremendously expensive.
- **Alex Nieora asked whether financial cost of the bridge replacement and associated road closures/ bottlenecks would be factored into the comparative tunnel study. HS2 Ltd confirmed that this would be.**
- There were concerns from the community that the costs of bridge replacement, need for noise barriers and hardship for residents (compulsory purchase, property blight, devaluation and uncertainty) may not be included in the comparative study. **Sabina Nizamudin (HS2 Ltd) assured the community that these factors would be considered. However, HS2 Ltd stated there were no plans to take economic losses to residents and businesses in NW London arising from bridge replacement into account in the comparative tunnelling study.**
- **HS2 Ltd confirmed that after Ealing Council have scrutinised the comparative tunnel study report it will be published on the HS2 Ltd website. HS2 Ltd stated that they have to follow channels – and the DfT will have to consider the tunnel study as well.**
- HS2 Ltd stated that a tunnel through Ealing LB had not been initially considered as there is an existing track that can be used. However, HS2 Ltd did not explain how the situation in Ealing differs from that in Ruislip, where a tunnel has been promised.
- The community also pointed out that the Olympic Lanes had caused major traffic jams and were a forewarning to the impact of road/ lane closures created by bridge replacements – which could be much greater.

3. Scheme Development: Progress and next steps

HS2 Ltd announced three minor amendments to existing plans. John (HS2 Ltd engineer presented on this agenda item):

- Moving the tunnel portal at North Acton – originally just south of Acton cemetery - 200m to the west. HS2 Ltd stated that there is a possibility that that Chase Road *'will not be affected'* as the cutting would be at a depth of 14m at that point. The community pointed out that even at that depth ICE trains – such as those that go through Ealing Broadway – are very loud – and HS2 trains would be travelling at a much higher velocity. HS2 Ltd stated that this amendment had been done for engineering rather than financial reasons.
- Siobhan from Park Royal stated that Hanger Lane residents are still unhappy about existing poor air quality, traffic congestion and noise and pointed out the impact of the recent Olympic and Paralympic diversion routes.

- Route realignment near Carr Road, Northolt – HS2 Ltd stated that the line here had been realigned so that there would no longer be any permanent land take to back gardens, although there might still be temporary land take/ access to the gardens required during the construction phase. HS2 Ltd stated that the line would be in cutting at this point but when pressed said that it would only be 2 or 3m below surface level at this point, so the top of the trains would still be visible.
- Route realignment near Wilsmere Drive/ Cartmell Court, Northolt – (originally some properties in Willsmere Drive were to be compulsorily purchased). **HS2 Ltd stated that as a result of route realignment at this point no houses would be at risk of demolition any longer.**
- Alex Nieora stated that while these route realignments were improvements no route improvements had been offered for Perivale or Greenford. Alex asked whether anyone present at the CF was from Willesmere Drive, but no one raised their hand. Alex also pointed out that the location of this CF was in Perivale and stated that the vast majority of community attendees were from Perivale and would be particularly interested in the impact of HS2 on their area.
- Alex Nieora pointed out that **in Perivale Ealing Park Lodge and the 3rd Perivale Group Scout Hut remain under threat of demolition, and that there are huge questions over the locations of access/ construction sites/ depot locations and their frequency along the route. HS2 Ltd were unable to shed any light on this stating that this detail is yet to emerge.**
- Eddie Pawley (North Ealing Against HS2) raised concerns over Selborne Gardens, Perivale – specifically that while the route would be where an existing railway line is located it is the wrong gauge (as HS2 runs on the wider European gauge) and asked how much extra land will HS2 take, and how far would the embankment need to be widened. John (HS2 engineer) presented a copy of the route detail for inspection and stated that gantries would be present too (supporting the overhead pantographs) but it was still unclear from the maps how far the embankment might be extended into properties. **It was clear there is urgent need to improve presentation of detail at these forums, which was stressed to HS2 Ltd.**
- **Jason Stacey (Greenford Green councillor) stated that progress needs to be made on compensation schemes, pointing out that HS2 has a huge implication for property values. Jason stated that property cannot currently be sold as a result of HS2 and cited Bennets Avenue in Greenford as an example, where properties had devalued by £30 to £40K with some properties such as those on Carr Road, Northolt, unable to be sold at all. Jason reinforced the importance of compensation not only to those subject to CPOs but others suffering from general blight (stating that currently there is NO provision for blight) and people are already suffering now.**
- **Jason and Alex Nieora stated that interim compensation is NEEDED now, and not only for those living a few metres from the line or subject to a CPO. Alex stated that the community wanted to know whether compensation would be available for: a) those living geographically further from the line than 50m b) whether any interim compensation is in the pipeline or would be considered and c) how this information would be promulgated.**

- 'HS2 stated that they are awaiting the latest announcement on compensation from the new Transport Secretary (Patrick McLoughlin).
- Alex Nieora pointed out that the Central Line might have to be immunised (i.e. shut down) to allow work to be carried out on an overground HS2 route through Ealing. HS2 Ltd responded stating that they could not *'believe that TfL would allow a weekday closure'* and stated that TfL are involved in the planning stages of HS2.

4. Environment Update

- Sabina (HS2 Ltd) stated that EIA studies had commenced and were trying to capture information. The EIA Methodology and Scoping report was published last week and is wide ranging and complex, with 28 surveys taking place. This will feed into design process in November.
- Claudine King-Dabbs (North Ealing Against HS2) stated that these documents are highly technical and inaccessible. HS2 Ltd responded stating that when the Environmental Statement is published next year there will be both a short summary written in laymens' terms and a more detailed technical version.
- Alex Nieora asked whether trees on the embankment subject to tree preservation orders by the local authority (Ealing Council) could be felled without permission from the local authority. HS2 Ltd stated that permission from the Secretary of State (for the Environment?) would be needed for this to happen.
- Construction Code of Practice: Dan (HS2 Ltd contractor) presented on the Construction Code of Practice (CCoP). Agreement on the CCoP is scheduled for November and will be on the HS2 Ltd website. A copy of the Construction Code of Practice was circulated to all members of the forum.

5. Noise

Danny (HS2 Ltd contractor) presented on noise:

- Noise defined as 'unwanted sound'
- Environmental Health Officers (EHOs) will be involved in noise assessment
- LpAeqT - 'continuous equivalent sound pressure' – is the specific unit used in quantifying noise
- Currently baseline noise is being established by measuring the levels of local sound/ noise backgrounds. Data is being compiled in four stages: 1) desktop, 2) establishing zones – 'quiet', 'not quiet' and 'noisy', 3) site surveys (one in September 2012 and one in Spring 2013, to get data from different seasons. Some short measurements will be taken (</=30 mns) and some longer (24 to 168 hours).
- Particular attention will be given to places sensitive to noise such as homes, schools, places of worship etc.
- When assessing noise it was confirmed that wind direction would be factored in and it will be assumed that noise is travelling from the track to the receptor, so a worse case bias would be taken vis-à-vis wind direction in noise assessments.

- A sound contour map (extending to 300m of the line for the construction phase of HS2 and 1000m for the operational phase) will be produced
- Danny stated that at 300km/hr aerodynamic noise becomes significant (**HS2 Ltd were unable to quantify 'significant' in this context when asked**) **N.B. at 250kph (the velocity of HS2 trains through North Ealing) aerodynamic noise will be at over 100dB** – and stated that noise comes from four sources on the train: the front, pantograph, gap and bogey and wheels-rail interaction.
- Danny said that there is a hierarchy of mitigation, including tunnelling, earthen bunds 'noise barriers' and local treatment (eg. acoustic glazing). Of course the latter method is only effective when indoors with the windows closed. In the case of acoustic glazing the community was told that either a cash offer would be made or HS2 Ltd would install sound insulation.
- Pictures of 'noise barriers' were shown to the community. **HS2 failed to point out that the sound barriers could only ever mask a very small fraction of the noise, even if made.**
- **Eddie Pawley pointed out that the 'noise barriers' will widen the track and thus move the footprint of the embankment closer to housing.**
- **Alex Nieora pointed out that even if 'noise barriers' were effective against noise they would not traverse over bridges, undermining their effect, they would look unsightly and they would be ineffective against Rayleigh Waves – noise at ground level.**
- **Alex Nieora pointed out that Giles Parker, Managing Director of Sound Barrier Solutions, who shares the British Standards Institute Committee for Noise Barrier Design in the UK and leads the European delegation for noise barriers for Europe has said that the sound barriers would be ineffective and that HS2 should really be tunnelled to avoid the noise impact.**
- **Sylvia Carson (NEAHS2 and North Northolt Neighbourhood Watch) asked about the impact of the noise of HS2 on the Central Line. HS2 Ltd responded that a 'noise barrier' could be built 'very easily' between the Central Line and HS2.**
- **Members of the community present at the CF stated *en masse* that they want HS2 to be tunnelled under North Ealing.**

6. AOB

- **Agenda items for the next CF to include: tunnelling and compensation including property devaluation and interim compensation.**
- **Date and location of next meeting:** Peter Chennels Hall (located junction of Greenford Road and Rockware Avenue opp Westway Cross Shopping Centre) on **5 or 12th November.** (Let Natalie Kirkwood (HS2 Ltd) know of your preferred date)

