

To: RAE SLOAN

Sent: Wednesday, 22 August 2012, 10:51

Thank you for your enquiry to High Speed Two Ltd.

I would like to apologise for the delaying in responding to your queries. Please see the response to your queries below.

Where mitigation will be granted?

There is a commitment in HS2 proposals to reduce community/environmental impacts and the route announced by the Secretary of State already incorporates a range of mitigation measures. We will now work with communities to consider how the route might be able to be improved or better mitigated at a local level to avoid impacts. Mitigation covers a broad range of environmental topics (see Draft EIA Scope and Methodology) and relates to making provision to avoid or minimise significant environmental effects.

Exactly what mitigation will be provided?

The type of mitigation that could be provided relates to the type and level of impact. For issues relating to operational sound for example, this may include the provision of sound barriers or other, natural, landscaping such as earth bunds. For visual impacts this may include the use of bunds, tree or hedge screening or woodland creation

Who will decide on the design of the mitigation measures?

The design teams on HS2 based on objectives calculation of effects and the effectiveness of mitigation measures. They are taking into account the knowledge and views of both bodies such as Natural England and of local communities along the route to assess the most appropriate solution at any particular place.

Who will decide on the specification of mitigation measures?

On the back of local consultation and decision, HS2 Ltd will develop considerations as to how mitigation could be best employed or designed for the local situation. Depending upon the type and cost of mitigation, these proposals might need to be elevated to the Department for Transport for consideration.

Where mitigation can be incorporated in the the actual structure will this be costed against construction or mitigation?

This depends upon the type and cost of the mitigation. The reduction of both visual and noise impacts, for example, form key principles for delivering HS2. Thus the construction and operation of the railway will need to incorporate, within its costs, suitable levels of mitigation as required by relevant legislation. HS2 Ltd has already described that it expects to plant over 2 million trees as part of the mitigation to help integrate the railway into the landscape. The costs relating to this type of mitigation are included within the costs for constructing HS2.

Also during construction who will decide where mitigation should be supplied and what mitigation measures will be provided.

This will be informed through the Environmental Impact Assessment and Environmental Statement. The ES will incorporate the HS2 Code of Construction Practice (CoCP) which sets out the Objectives and Measures to be applied to the construction activities and provides the mechanism to manage and control construction activities to minimise impacts upon people and the environment. The Code ensures that “best practicable means” is applied to construction to ensure work is undertaken economically and in accordance with the Act(s) of Parliament that would authorise HS2 and will require compliance with environmental legislation prevailing at the time of construction. HS2 Ltd will be consulting with Community Forums and local Authorities on a Draft CoCP this summer.

If there are complaints during construction to whom should they be addressed.?

The CoCP sets out the approach to community relations and would also require the railway contractors to prepare a Community Engagement Strategy. The approach would include the provision of a ‘Community Helpline’ to deal with local issues and queries. In addition, the Secretary of State would put in place a Complaints Commissioner to deal with complaints that are not dealt with appropriately.

Thank you for your patience and please do not hesitate to contact me for further assistance.