

Pan - Chilterns Meeting: Draft Minutes

Date and time:	Thursday 25 th October, 6.00-8.00pm
Location:	Amersham Market Hall, HP7 0DQ

Speaking parts

CB	Charlotte Brewster, Country South Community & Stakeholder Advisor – HS2 Ltd.
DL	David Livingston MP (his representative ..)
ID	Isobel Darby, Chiltern DC
JC	Jim Conboy, Chesham Society
MF	Marilyn Fletcher, Gt Missenden
MW	Martin Wells, Country South Area Stakeholder Manager – HS2 Ltd
NC	Neil Cowie, Country South Area Manager – HS2 Ltd
NP	Nick Phillips (?) (Dunsmore)
NS	Nigel Shepherd, Chiltern DC
P Ch	Patricia Cherrill, Chesham TC
SH	Simon Hook, South Heath
SJ	Shirley Judges, Chilterns CB
SM	Stan Mason, Amersham
SR	Steve Rodrick, Chilterns CB
S Wh	Simon White, Area Environment Manager – HS2 Ltd
??	Everyone else – sorry..

1. Welcome and Introductions

Introduction on the national importance of the Chilterns AONB

S Judges

(See slides 1-15)

The AoNB is of equal value to a National Park, & deserves the best possible mitigation

2. Tunnelling options

Discussion exploring tunnelling options through the AONB

Barnaby

Full tunnel is the best solution; discussed at meeting with HS2 technical director & Chief Engineer in August

Two new options proposed - Tunnels with 'escape' gap – not previously considered by HS2 . A response was promised by the "end of year" (at the last Ctl Chilterns forum ?) .

Given the impact of such a major change on AoNB mitigation, this is too late, & indicates a lack of a serious response

CGillian asked a question in parliament – reply to the effect that tunnelling “was considered” but new proposals were not mentioned in the report cited

- NC** (CRAG) report is with consultants for appraisal.. long tunnel option was turned down earlier. They are comparing the new proposals with the existing scheme - takes time. Also considering impact of openings (the gap)
- SH** Why wont HS2 work to deadlines ?? (at least, not for us)
- MW** DfT did not consult HS2 Ltd before answering CGs question
Tunnel report is waiting on EIA¹
- ??** When will EIA be completed
- SWh** EIA is in progress, completed sometime between next spring & hybrid bill deadline
- MW** Tunnel assessment proceeding in parallel with EIA
- NS** Is this a real assessment ? How is it compatible with SoS²s proposal to 'Fast track' HS2 ?
- ??** Proposal needs wider (environmental ?) assessment
- S M** What is the Environmental managers role - to achieve best environmental outcome, or to reduce the costs ?
- S Wh** Role is to develop mitigation, achieve best outcome within constraints - cost practicalities etc..
- ??** What is the value of AoNB (in business case)
- ??** It isn't included, so no saving to balance any additional tunnel cost
- S Wh** Designated landscape - was valued (pre-Jan) but is not in current Business case
Tunnel recognises significance of AoNB
- ??** Tunnel recognises presence of hills ...
- MF** This is 1st major scheme in an AoNB since (?? year) countryside act
- SJ** More needs to be done to conserve landscape

3. Location and design of visible structures

Current thinking on the situation of visible structures

S Roderick

(See slides 17-34) Cf Brunel bridges, Chiltern Line / HS1

HS1 not good enough Crap viaduct design, clutter, Ugly noise mitigation structures, security fences

What design principles will be adopted ? 10 yr construction, so construction infrastructure also requires mitigation..

How can local people get involved ?

S Wh suggests combining R of Ws, to minimise bridges !! (*not to general approval*)

¹ Environmental Impact Assessment

² Secretary of State (for Transport)

Environmental Statement, (Code of) Construction Statement are being prepared; more detail to follow Hybrid Bill; aim for consistent (uniform) design (*is that what we want ?*)

Attempting to design 'Right' viaducts (e.g. for Wendover) Taking advice from Landscape Architects; .Photomontage to come

SH How do we get involved ??

Ans Through Community Forums (*giggles from the floor..*) Now thinking about construction sites etc; more details to come.

DL Q When will Photos be released ?? **Ans** with Environmental statement (?)

MW Too soon for details; currently looking at roads diversions etc
What is a HQ design ?

N P Potential conflict between design standards and best possible noise mitigation (suitable for location) – e.g. the Wendover Dean viaduct noise could be diminished if it was enclosed in a concrete box.

SH Get the designers here to view the landscape

SR Design principles are being developed without consulting Chilterns board (& others)

4. Location and impact of construction sites

Current thinking on construction sites and associated discussion **SR**

(Slide 35) We want to know (approximate) scale of sites, & their interface to the local transport system.

Barnaby Absence of camps is an indirect benefit of tunnel scheme

S J Forums want input before decisions, not after..
Are (camp) restoration costs in the HS2 budget

MW Cant share latest plans – but can inform regarding HS2 current considerations.

SRod Construction sites (should be) subject to EIA..

S Wh Compounds will be located near each structure
10 or so large (residential ?) sites under consideration,
+ a number of smaller. Larger sites to be revealed at next CFs

NS (Re Bucks CC non-participation in Planning forum , due to restrictive nature of proposed conditions)
There is no partnership or trust between HS2 & the communities

MF Line doesn't run at grade through AoNB, so more construction, bigger camps, & higher density (of works) required

S Wh Line at grade would be worse.(*This was not suggested..*)
“ Large “ camp - to be defined – approx 500m , near Wendover
(Restoration ?) is included in costings
Camps are included in Environmental Statements, & cost in cost estimates.

?? How can we preserve status of AoNB ? Visitors wont come back to a construction site

I D What is the Construction Compound ? What surrounds one ??

28-Oct-2012

Vn 0 JEC

SWh

Contractors base, some workers housed within (larger)
Rest is 'construction site', i.e. the route

5. Impacts on roads network

Discussion about local road networks and information about proposed access routes

6. Traffic management

Discussion regarding the impact of HS2 construction traffic on local roads **SR, again**

(Slides 36 - 38) A413 .. How to keep traffic flowing .. No detail as yet .

- MF** A haul road along the route would be difficult.. Will need to use the local roads.. destructive , & with Traffic management implications
How will this be managed ?? Interruptions to Frith Hill - implications..
- S Wh** A413 is major route, will discuss management with highways agency, avoid peak time disruption
This will be part of the Local environment plan, when formalised..
A413 traffic management required during construction of Smalldean bridge/viaduct (at southern end of Wendover bypass) to minimise impact..
Access will be from the route (& from Chesham Road to Mantles Wood Tunnel portal)
- P Ch** Church Street (Chesham) is not suitable for construction traffic
A413 (Chiltern) Rail bridge will be an obstacle to construction traffic
Will HS2 use rail access ?
- >> Yes, for rails & ballast (*didn't mention spoil here ??*)
How will contracts be specified ?
- S Wh** Environmental statement identifies impacts, provides a benchmark, but allows flexibility
- MW** Hybrid Bill defines land take & impacts; any subsequent variation would be a local planning issue

7. Impacts on the Rights of Way network

Description of survey and assessment practices

- ??** Rights of way are important in Chilterns;
need bridges to protect path networks which are an attraction to visitors, choice of routes is an important asset
when can we discuss crossings & RoWs in proximity to the route ?
- NC** Bucks will (now) talk at local access forum ; & also feed back to CFs
'Local' diversions will aid bridge minimisation..
- NS** Bucks did not attend the Local Planning Forums as no Ccl members were allowed, & information was confidential
Why are Planning Forums - not public meetings
- SR** R of W are a public concern.. not just for the Ccl
- MW** HS2 want to know about usage; Technical discussion with CB
- SR** Will HS2 hold a R of W Workshop ?
(MW – yes)

8. Noise impacts and mitigation options

Discussion about mitigation options

All

7.25

- SH** We require highest standards of mitigation, to preserve existing tranquillity (not possible - MW)
- E.g. During construction, restrict night works
Tunnel exits – designed to absorb exit noise;
Cuttings, noise barriers of sufficient depth & landscaped
Noise measurement locations – are these appropriate ?
Test of (which) noise model
- When will Noise contours & Baseline maps be available
Request answers by next forum ?
[1 month offered (CB)]
- S Wh Noise contours – available for predicted noise only, not the difference (before/after)
- SH Pantograph noise (at 360 km/hr) is not predictable
- S Wh Survey point locations were (will be ?) provided to Local Authority;
Some access problems
Information about research presented at the Amersham Forum
- Q What is the target noise mitigation level
- A No target level
Code of Construction Practice - feedback from consultation being addressed – next Draft end of November

9. Tourism and the local economy

Update on how these factors will be considered in development of the Environmental Statement

- NS How is impact on Tourism assessed in the EIA
- S Wh Socio-economic impact was included , (some).. businesses surveyed.
- NS (EIA is) waffle - unfit for purpose..
e.g. Chiltern Tourism network were not consulted
- MF Very little has been done on impact ; nothing in Assessment of Sustainability between London & Birmingham
- 2012 report - different impacts were not considered.. e.g. along transport corridors
- EIA includes tourism with Agriculture & Soils - ignored & hidden.
Role of AoNBs in Tourism promoted in (Govt Statement)
Tourism will be adversely affected for 60 years or more - why has nothing been published
- S Wh (*doesn't know*)

SR If HS2 can calculate benefits from the 'wider impact' of the line, why cant they balance this figure with local adverse impacts

10. Making the meetings more effective

Discussion about how community forums could be made more effective **ID**

Attendees have conflicting viewpoints. Meeting off to bad start (e.g. Security guards at Amersham) Minutes have been published before approval, & have been inaccurate

Agenda has been "HS2 heavy " .. no details, little discussion, extra information thrown in at last minute.

Will HS2 talk to us before taking decisions. ? We need rough ideas (e.g. about size of construction sites)

Please tell us what is happening (about surveys etc) and make best use of time

MW Minutes are a record of the meetings (??)

Held 'because we have to' - not true; is in the interest of HS2 , to understand opposition to Hybrid Bill

Meetings should be of mutual benefit .. HS2 want constructive meetings

Requests for information in advance ?? difficult, if sensitive information is shared, & then enters public domain..

(**SH** Trust us..)

HS2 heavy ? e.g. Noise.. Offer to take only half (next) meeting..
(Topics – Engineering update + Property consultation.)

JC What mechanisms are in place for forums to influence eventual construction ?.

MW Influence is rather indirect, suggestions are passed on to design team