



High Speed Two Design Refinement Consultation Response

Moving Britain Ahead



High Speed Two: Phase 2b Design Refinement Consultation Response

Presented to Parliament
by the Minister of State for Transport
by Command of Her Majesty

October 2020



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Contents

- Foreword** 4
- The case for HS2** 6
- Update on the working draft Environmental Statement and Equality Impact Assessment Report** 7
- Executive Summary** 8
- Summary of decisions** 10
- 1. Introduction** 11
 - 1.1 Background 11
 - 1.2 Approach to consultation 15
 - 1.3 Methodology and response process used by Ipsos MORI 15
- 2. Response to the Design Refinement Consultation** 18
 - 2.1 Relocation of the Palatine Road tunnel vent shaft, West Didsbury, Manchester 18
 - 2.2 Relocation of the Lytham Road tunnel vent shaft to Birchfields Road, Fallowfield, Manchester 21
 - 2.3 Temporary construction railhead and permanent maintenance facility near Ashley, Cheshire 26
 - 2.4 Passive provision for two junctions at High Legh, Cheshire 30
- 3. Safeguarding and property** 35
 - 3.1 Safeguarding 35
 - 3.2 Land and Property: support to affected property owners 35

Foreword



Today I am announcing the Government's decisions on the HS2 Phase 2b Design Refinements to the Western Leg, between Crewe and Manchester, following the June 2019 *High Speed Two: Phase 2b Design Refinement Consultation*. I would like to thank all those who responded to this consultation, from our partners and major stakeholders to those who will be directly impacted by the railway. Your responses are crucial in developing the scheme and wherever possible reducing or mitigating its impacts.

The Government is committed to taking forward High Speed Two (HS2) to transform our national rail network, bring our biggest cities closer together, boost productivity and level up opportunity fairly across the country. This Command Paper outlines the Government's response and my decisions on the four proposed changes to the Western Leg of the Phase 2b design on which we consulted.

The Government has accepted the recommendation in the report by Doug Oakervee that plans for HS2 and other major schemes need to be brought together in an Integrated Rail Plan (IRP) for the North and Midlands.

While the IRP will set out the form, scope and phasing of the Phase 2b route, we are prioritising development of the Western Leg into Manchester first as part of our overall commitment to improving connectivity to the North as quickly as we can. On the Eastern Leg, the Government is considering the best approach to get the most benefit for Leeds, the North East, and the East Midlands as part of the IRP. I expect to respond separately to the Eastern Leg refinements after the IRP has been published.

As part of our plans to prepare legislation for the Western Leg, I am also announcing a further Western Leg Design Refinement Consultation. This consultation asks for your views on additional design changes to items on the Western Leg and Annandale as well as provisions for Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR) touchpoints. Your responses will inform the design of the railway as outcomes of the consultation form a key part of the development for the Western Leg hybrid Bill.

Restrictions put in place in response to the COVID-19 pandemic mean that we may not be able to hold local information events in the same way that we usually would as part of our formal consultation process. In this case, HS2 Ltd will deliver information events via digital platforms instead. These will allow you the same opportunities to best understand what refinements are being proposed and to ask any questions that you may have to our

representatives. Details will be published separately and circulated to local authorities and those who have previously asked HS2 Ltd to keep them informed about events in their area.

Engagement with affected communities is at the heart of our plans for HS2 and it is our commitment to ensure we listen to those affected by these proposals.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Andrew Stephenson', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Andrew Stephenson
Minister of State for Transport

The case for HS2 – Proceeding with legislation for the Phase 2b Western Leg

The key objectives of HS2 are to:

- Provide sufficient capacity to meet long term rail demand and to improve resilience and reliability across the network
- Improve connectivity by delivering better journey times and making travel easier
- Boost economic growth across the UK.

Following the Oakervee Review, the Government has committed to delivering HS2 and preparing an Integrated Rail Plan (IRP) for the North and Midlands. The IRP will look at how to deliver Phase 2b of HS2, Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR), Midlands Rail Hub and other major rail schemes more effectively and efficiently, maximising the benefits delivered by transport investment in the North and Midlands.

The IRP is being informed by a ‘Rail Needs Assessment’ undertaken by the National Infrastructure Commission. Whilst this work is ongoing, the Government wants to make progress in developing legislation to take the railway from Crewe to Manchester on the Western Leg as soon as possible to avoid unnecessary delay in the event the IRP does not support change. The HS2 route from Birmingham to Leeds is also being considered as part of the IRP, and once that work has concluded we will set out next steps on further legislation for this section of route.

Phase One of HS2 will see a new high speed line constructed from London to Birmingham in the West Midlands, where it will connect to the existing West Coast Main Line (WCML). Phase 2a of HS2 is a 36-mile stretch of track between the West Midlands and Crewe, brought forward as a hybrid Bill ahead of Phase 2b in order to advance HS2’s progress to the North. Phase 2b comprises two parts, the Eastern and Western Legs. The Eastern Leg runs from the West Midlands to Leeds with connections to the Midland Main Line and East Coast Main Line. The Western Leg runs from Crewe to Manchester and will also join the WCML.

The Western Leg of HS2 will provide infrastructure that is critical for NPR. It will help to deliver key NPR outputs such as improved capacity between Liverpool, Warrington, Manchester Airport and Manchester Piccadilly, as well as a faster route between Liverpool, Warrington and London. The opportunity for NPR to utilise parts of HS2 infrastructure will also allow for improved connectivity to the Midlands and the South as well as across the North, and is more effective on a cost and impact basis to building a new line.

Update on the working draft Environmental Statement and Equality Impact Assessment Report

In autumn 2018, HS2 Ltd carried out a consultation on the working draft Environmental Statement (ES). This is the detailed part of the hybrid Bill process which sets out the likely significant effects of building and operating the railway as well as proposed ways to mitigate these effects and monitor performance. This included construction traffic routes and the area of land needed to construct the railway, much of which may not be required once the railway is completed. The working draft Equality Impact Assessment Report (EQIA) was also consulted on during this time. The report considered the potential effects of constructing and operating Phase 2b on groups of people because of their age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion, belief, sex and sexual orientation. The Government intends to publish the results of the consultations as part of the hybrid Bill deposit.

Executive Summary

1. In June 2019, the Government launched a national consultation to seek the views of affected and interested parties to allow the Secretary of State to make an informed decision on 11 proposed changes to the Phase 2b route. The Government's proposals and questions were set out in the *High Speed Two: Phase 2b Design Refinement Consultation*¹ document.
2. The Minister of State is grateful to those organisations and members of the public who responded to the consultation. Some 1,307 responses were received on the proposed refinements to the Phase 2b route across both legs. An independent analysis of responses to the consultation was undertaken by Ipsos MORI and is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/hs2-phase-2b-design-refinement-consultation>.
3. The Minister of State is today announcing his decisions following the review of the responses received on the Western Leg refinements of the consultation. Feedback on the Eastern Leg refinements will be considered as part of the Integrated Rail Plan (IRP) and a separate response to these will be published after the IRP has been finalised. Informed by an assessment from the National Infrastructure Commission, the IRP will look at how to deliver Northern Powerhouse Rail, HS2 Phase 2b, Midlands Rail Hub and other Network Rail programmes more effectively.
4. The Minister of State has confirmed the proposed changes to the Western Leg included in the June 2019 consultation after considering responses to the consultation and HS2 Ltd's recommendations. These changes mark the first step towards integrating HS2 and Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR) while making the HS2 route more efficient and cost effective. The Government remains committed to fully integrating HS2 and NPR, which will improve connectivity across the North and is a key element of the Government's Northern Powerhouse Strategy.
5. The Minister of State has today announced a further consultation: the *HS2 Phase 2b Western Leg Design Refinement Consultation*. This includes further design changes to Phase 2b and additional scope to facilitate the use of HS2 infrastructure as part of NPR. Details of this second consultation are available at www.hs2.org.uk/phase-2b/.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/hs2-phase-2b-design-refinement-consultation>

This Government response document outlines:

- A brief summary of the proposed changes
- The main themes raised in the responses to the consultation
- The Minister of State's decision.

Summary of decisions

The Minister of State has today reached decisions on the proposed Western Leg changes which were consulted on in June 2019. These decisions draw on the evidence prepared ahead of the consultation, on consultation responses, on other input from stakeholders, and on further analysis undertaken in light of these responses.

The Minister of State's decision is to confirm the four changes included in the consultation:

- **Relocation of the Palatine Road vent shaft, West Didsbury, Manchester** – relocating the vent shaft for the Manchester tunnel to an alternative site within Withington Golf Course to reduce the impact on flood storage capacity in the area.
- **Relocation of the Lytham Road vent shaft to Birchfields Road, Fallowfield, Manchester** – relocating the vent shaft for the Manchester tunnel from the playing fields of Manchester Enterprise Academy on Lytham Road to the Fallowfield Retail Park on Birchfields Road.
- **Temporary construction railhead and permanent maintenance facility at Ashley, Cheshire** – introducing two pieces of new infrastructure near Ashley. One is a temporary railhead south of the route to support construction of the new railway. The second is a permanent infrastructure maintenance base – rail (IMB-R), for storage of overnight maintenance trains, at a separate site to the west of Ashley.
- **Passive provision for two junctions at High Legh, Cheshire** – including passive provision for two junctions to enable future use of the HS2 line into Manchester for potential NPR services between Manchester, Warrington and Liverpool and to also allow HS2 services between London and Liverpool to use future NPR infrastructure.

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 High Speed Two (HS2) is the new high speed railway proposed by the Government to connect major cities in Britain. It will be built in phases. Phase One will see a new high speed line constructed from Euston to north of Birmingham, where it will join the existing West Coast Main Line (WCML). New high speed trains will serve Birmingham City centre and an interchange station designed to serve the wider West Midlands. At Old Oak Common in West London, a new interchange will be built connecting HS2 with Crossrail and the Great Western Main Line.
- 1.1.2 In the November 2015 Command Paper: *High Speed Two: East and West, the Next Steps to Crewe and Beyond*, the Government announced its intention to accelerate the delivery of the section of Phase Two between the West Midlands and Crewe (Phase 2a). At the northern end it will connect with the WCML to the south of Crewe to allow HS2 services to join the WCML and call at Crewe Station.
- 1.1.3 In November 2016, the Government published *High Speed Two: From Crewe to Manchester, the West Midlands to Leeds and beyond*. This confirmed the majority of the Government's preferred route for Phase 2b of HS2, completing the full Y network.
- 1.1.4 Following previous public consultation on Phase Two (referred to as the 2013 Consultation), HS2 Ltd had further developed the scheme and recommended a number of refinements to the route in order to respond to concerns raised at consultation, as well as other factors. In most cases these refinements were relatively minor and did not result in impacts on new communities, or have substantially different impacts on communities than the route proposed in the 2013 Consultation. The responses to the 2013 Consultation can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/hs2-phase-two-proposed-line-of-route-from-west-midlands-to-manchester-and-leeds>.
- 1.1.5 In seven areas where the proposed refinements were substantial, the Secretary of State launched a further route refinement consultation in November 2016 to seek the views of communities and other interested parties. The Secretary of State confirmed the full Phase 2b route by taking decisions on the seven areas where proposed route refinements were put forward. The 2017 Phase 2b route decision document can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hs2-phase-2b-route-decision>.

- 1.1.6 In November 2016, the Government also launched a consultation on property compensation schemes, *High Speed Two Phase 2b Crewe to Manchester, West Midlands to Leeds Property Consultation 2016*. The Government's decisions following this consultation are addressed in a separate document.²
- 1.1.7 In October 2018, the Government launched a consultation on the working draft Environmental Statement (ES). The consultation allowed members of the public and organisations to review and comment on preliminary environmental information and evolving design and mitigation to be included in the hybrid bill. The working draft ES summary can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/hs2-phase-2b-working-draft-environmental-statement>.
- 1.1.8 The working draft Equality Impact Assessment Report (EQIA) was also consulted on during October 2018. The assessment considered the potential effects of constructing and operating Phase 2b on groups of people because of their age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion, belief, sex and sexual orientation. The working draft EQIA can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/hs2-phase-2b-working-draft-equality-impact-assessment-report>.
- 1.1.9 The Government commissioned Douglas Oakervee to lead a review of the HS2 project in August 2019. The Oakervee Review was published in February this year and the Government announced its decision to proceed with the project. The Government is committed to Phase 2b of HS2, extending High Speed rail from the West Midlands to the North, ensuring we boost capacity, improve connectivity between our regions and share prosperity. The Oakervee Review report can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/oakervee-review-of-hs2>.
- 1.1.10 Recognising the importance of East-West, the Government has accepted the Oakervee Review recommendation to proceed with an Integrated Rail Plan (IRP) for the North and Midlands by the end of the year. This will be informed by an assessment from the National Infrastructure Commission, and will set out the form, scope and phasing of Northern Powerhouse Rail, HS2 Phase 2b, Midlands Rail Hub and other Network Rail programmes. The IRP terms of reference can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/high-speed-north-an-integrated-rail-plan-for-the-north-and-midlands-terms-of-reference>.

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/hs2-crewe-to-manchester-west-midlands-to-leeds-property-consultation-2016>

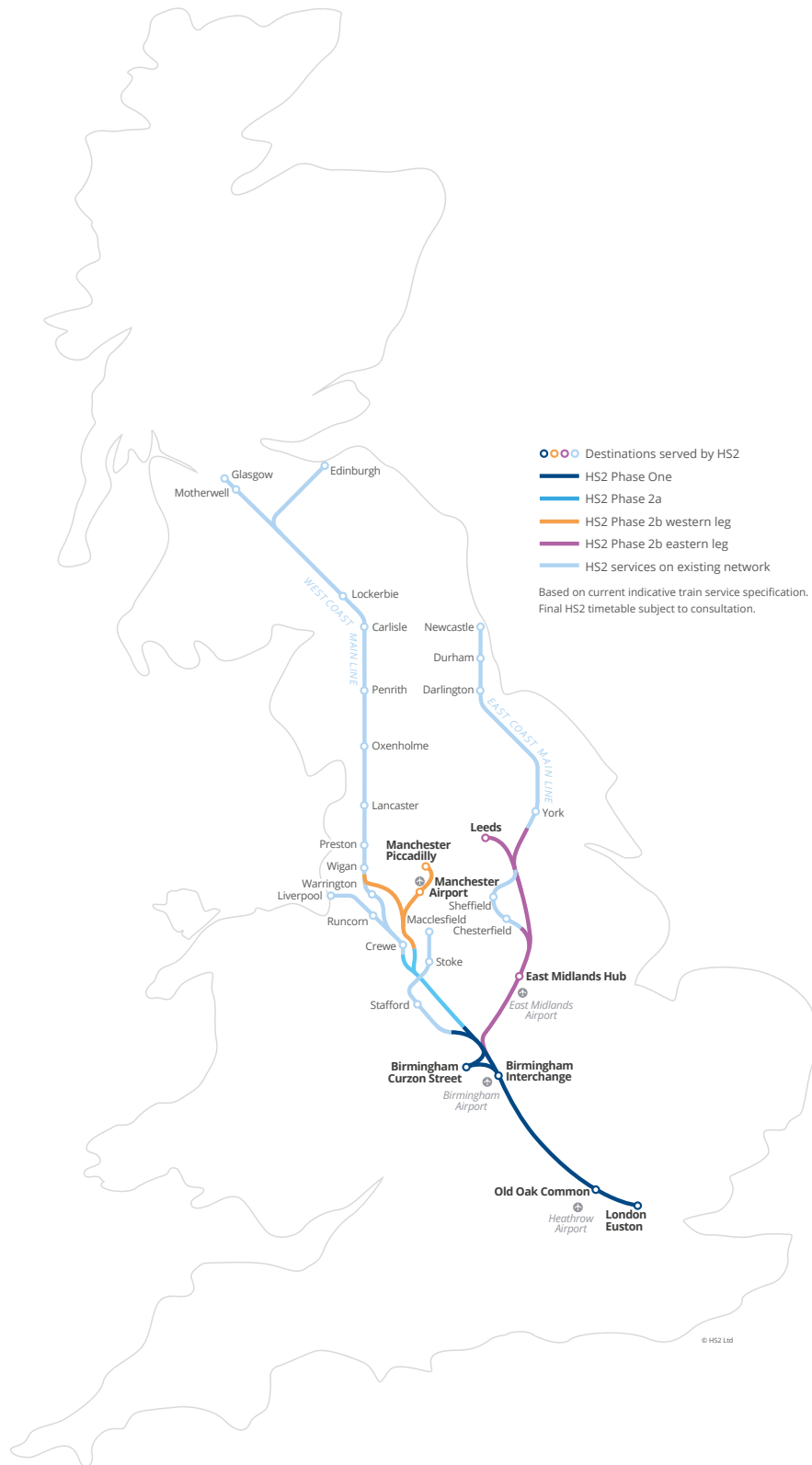


Figure 1: The full HS2 Y network – Existing plans



Figure 2: Map showing location of the proposed Western Leg refinements on the Phase 2b route

1.2 Approach to consultation

- 1.2.1 The consultation was organised and managed by HS2 Ltd on behalf of the Department for Transport (DfT). An independent company, Ipsos MORI, was commissioned by HS2 Ltd to manage and analyse the responses to the consultation and produce a summary report. The Ipsos MORI report is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/hs2-phase-2b-design-refinement-consultation>.
- 1.2.2 The consultation documents and response form were available to download from the [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) and [HS2.org.uk](https://www.hs2.org.uk) websites and hardcopies could be requested for free via the HS2 Helpdesk. In addition, copies of the consultation documents and response form were also made available at nine information points within the vicinity of the proposed refinements enabling access to physical copies of the proposals. These information points were all in accessible public buildings and their addresses were publicised in the consultation leaflet. Copies of the consultation documents were also sent to the relevant local authorities and statutory consultees. A Written Ministerial Statement was laid in Parliament announcing the start of the consultation process and a press release was issued by DfT.
- 1.2.3 A total of four public information events were held in locations close to each of the proposed changes to the Western Leg of the Phase 2b route. These events ran between 21 June and 13 July 2019, with over 700 people attending.

1.3 Methodology and response process used by Ipsos MORI

- 1.3.1 Ipsos MORI received the consultation responses via multiple response channels (web form, email and Freepost) and processed them using the following three stages:
1. Receipt and handling of all responses: to a consistent digital format, with supervision and quality checking of the transcription process to ensure accuracy.
 2. Analysis of responses: based on a system where unique summary 'codes' are applied to specific words or phrases in the text of the response, allowing for systematic analysis of the data.
 3. Reporting: the translation of the analysed data into a report which presents a summary of the issues raised in the consultation.
- 1.3.2 The summary report produced by Ipsos MORI does not: make recommendations or seek to draw conclusions from responses; attempt to respond to comments made by respondents; to verify or pass judgement on the accuracy of comments made by respondents. Its purpose is to organise, analyse and report on the responses received and provide results in a format that is as accessible as possible for the general public, stakeholders and for decision makers in Government.

The Design Refinement Consultation Response

This section sets out the Government's response to the consultation in each of the four areas where a change was proposed to the Western Leg

2. Response to the Design Refinement Consultation

2.1 Relocation of the Palatine Road tunnel vent shaft, West Didsbury, Manchester

Background

- 2.1.1 Further design development, environmental assessment and engagement identified a number of issues with the previous location of the Palatine Road vent shaft.
- 2.1.2 The most important of these issues was the impact of the vent shaft on the capacity of the Didsbury Flood Storage Basin and the flood management zones around the River Mersey. The Didsbury Flood Storage Basin is a key element in managing flood waters from the River Mersey and preventing flooding of properties along the Mersey Valley.
- 2.1.3 In response to the November 2016 Route Refinement Consultation, the Environment Agency and other stakeholders raised concerns about HS2 taking capacity from the Flood Storage Basin by constructing and operating the vent shaft within it. Since then, the Environment Agency has advised that in order to mitigate the increased risk of flooding caused by taking land from the Flood Storage Basin, HS2 would need to provide replacement flood storage capacity in the immediate vicinity of the vent shaft.
- 2.1.4 Although the previous design did not show sites for replacement flood storage capacity, further work has demonstrated that if the vent shaft were to remain in its previous location additional land would be required on Withington and Didsbury golf courses to provide replacement flood storage capacity.
- 2.1.5 To support the construction and maintenance of vent shafts, as well as provide access for maintenance staff and the emergency services, an access road is required from the local highway network. In the previous design this access was provided by a road constructed from Palatine Road, across Withington Golf Course to the vent shaft. Due to the position of the vent shaft this would require further land to be taken from Didsbury Flood Storage Basin, which would also need to be compensated for.
- 2.1.6 As well as the impact on flood storage, the previous design had a negative impact on the operation of Withington Golf Course. The previous design had the potential to

result in the loss of up to three holes from the golf course during the construction phase and up to two once the railway is operational. Although the previous design did not require land to be taken directly from Ashfield Lodge, located to the north of the vent shaft, construction of the vent shaft would cause disruption to residents.

- 2.1.7 As a result of these issues, HS2 Ltd reviewed the design of the route in this area to determine if there are any viable alternatives that address the problems identified with the previous design.

What the Secretary of State proposed

- 2.1.8 In order to reduce the impact on Didsbury Flood Storage Basin and the volume of replacement flood storage capacity required, the Secretary of State proposed to relocate the Palatine Road vent shaft, headhouse and autotransformer station to the identified alternative site within Withington Golf Course, closer to Palatine Road.

Consultation question:

“What are your views on the proposal to relocate the vent shaft, headhouse and autotransformer station within Withington Golf Course, moving it closer to Palatine Road?” Please indicate whether or not you support the proposed change, together with your reasons.

What you said in response to the consultation

- 2.1.9 49 responses to the consultation provided comments about this proposed change. 16 respondents expressed support for the change and 20 opposed it. Others commented on the proposals without specifying support or opposition.
- 2.1.10 Responses were received from a wide range of stakeholders, including: local authorities, statutory and technical consultees, local interest groups, a number of local businesses and members of the local community.
- 2.1.11 The main themes raised in support of the proposed change were:
- that the change would reduce flood risk and avoid the use of additional land for flood storage; and
 - the refinement would reduce impacts on properties near the golf course, such as Ashfield Lodge.
- 2.1.12 Themes of those opposed to, or concerned by, the proposed change included:
- a belief that HS2 would still have too much impact on the local community;
 - concern about the loss of facilities at Withington Golf Course;

- construction traffic;
- concerns about negative ecological impacts, including the potential impact on Marie Louise Gardens; and
- concerns about the visual impact and design of the headhouse and other buildings.

2.1.13 A more detailed summary of the responses to the consultation can be found in the Ipsos MORI consultation summary report, available at www.gov.uk/government/consultations/hs2-phase-2b-design-refinement-consultation.

Government response

2.1.14 Having carefully considered all the points made by respondents during the consultation, the Minister of State has decided to confirm the proposal set out in the consultation to move the vent shaft, headhouse and autotransformer station further south-west within Withington Golf Course, closer to Palatine Road.

2.1.15 The Minister of State considers moving the vent shaft, headhouse and autotransformer station further south-west within Withington Golf Course, closer to Palatine Road, to be the best option as:

- it results in the least land being lost from the Flood Storage Basin and therefore requires the least amount of additional land to be taken in the immediate vicinity to re-provide flood storage capacity; and
- it does not require an access road to be built across Withington Golf Course and provides more convenient access during construction and operational phases.

2.1.16 The Minister of State acknowledges points made in the consultation about the impacts on Withington and Didsbury Golf Courses. In reaching this conclusion, the Minister of State has considered alternative sites for the vent shaft. However, these options were constrained by: the alignment of the tunnel; the requirement for vent shafts to be regularly spaced along the length of tunnels; and the limited availability of underdeveloped sites in this predominantly urban area sufficiently large enough to support construction activities including the extraction of tunnel boring machines from the ground. The Minister of State has instructed HS2 Ltd to continue work with Withington and Didsbury Golf Courses during further design development to work to mitigate these impacts.

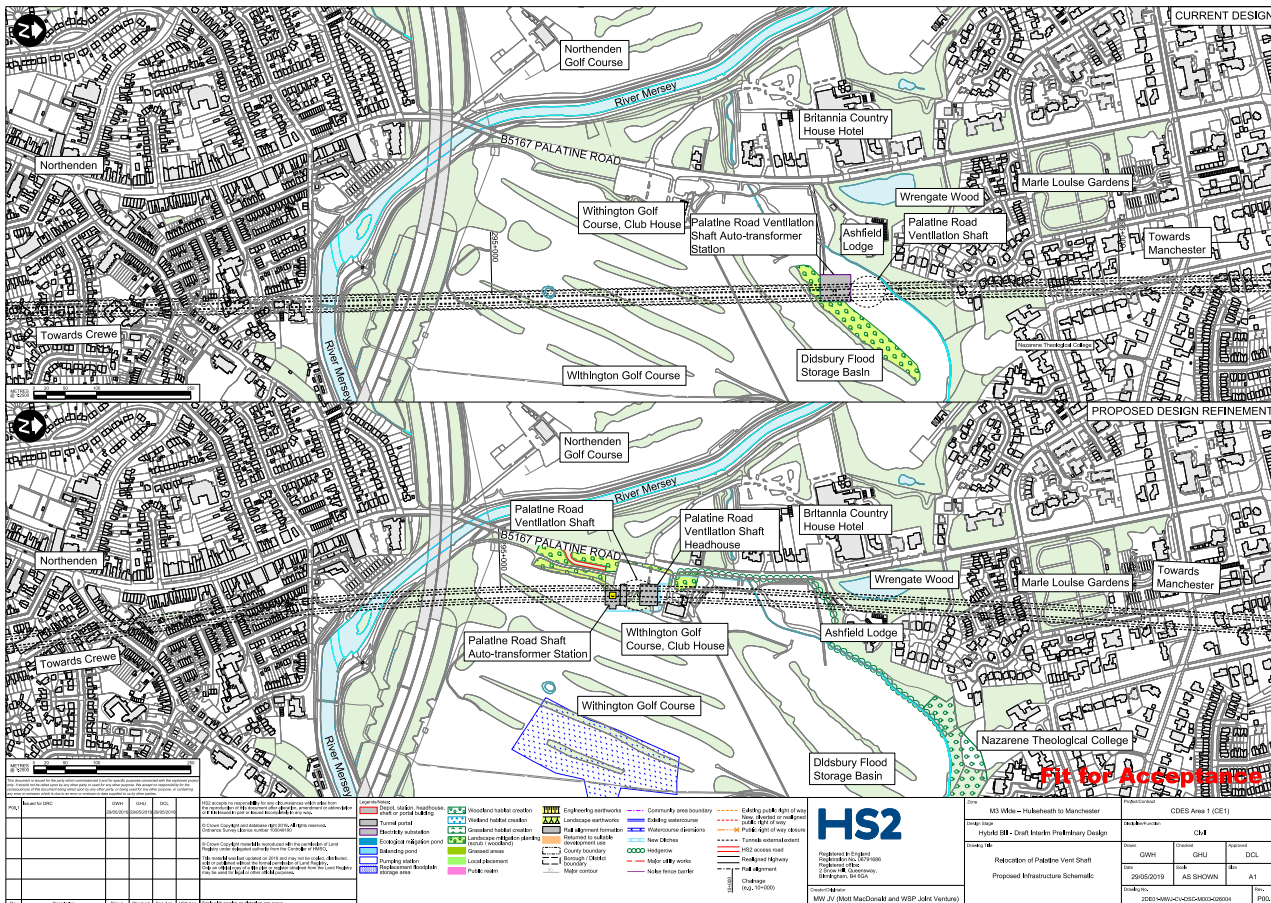


Figure 3: Plan showing the previous design and confirmed relocation of the vent shaft. For more detail see change one in Volume 2: Map book and visualisations.

2.2 Relocation of the Lytham Road tunnel vent shaft to Birchfields Road, Fallowfield, Manchester

Background

2.2.1 The open space off Lytham Road had previously been identified by HS2 Ltd as a suitable location for a vent shaft. At the time this site was originally selected, planning permission for MEA Central school had not been granted. The school has now been built and it opened in 2017. If the vent shaft was kept in the previous location there would be a direct impact on the school including a permanent loss of part of the school playing fields and car park, as well as a significant amount of disruption during the construction phase.

2.2.2 During the construction phase, access would be required to and from the construction compound for the vent shaft and autotransformer station. In the previous design, it was presumed that heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) required for construction would access the site via a right turn off Birchfields Road onto Lytham Road, which is

a narrow, traffic-calmed one-way road. To get construction vehicles from the site would require the removal of this one-way system and the addition of traffic management measures. As well as impacting MEA Central, this would mean construction vehicles travelling past the adjacent Birchfields Primary School along Lytham Road.

2.2.3 Residents and Manchester City Council raised concerns about the suitability of this route and how construction vehicle movements could be safely managed alongside traffic for the school and to the properties on Lytham Road. Once the railway is constructed, access for maintenance and in case of an emergency would still be required. The number of vehicles associated with these activities would be much lower than during the construction phase and be infrequent, however a permanent impact would remain at MEA Central School due to the loss of land from the site.

2.2.4 As a result, HS2 Ltd reviewed the design of the route in this area to determine if there are any viable alternative sites for the vent shaft that addresses the problems identified with the previous design.

What the Secretary of State proposed

2.2.5 In order to avoid a direct impact on the MEA Central school, the Secretary of State proposed to relocate the vent shaft, headhouse and autotransformer station to a site on the Fallowfield Retail Park.

Consultation question:

“What are your views on the proposal to relocate the vent shaft, headhouse and autotransformer station from the playing fields of MEA Central school on Lytham Road to the Fallowfield Retail Park car park on Birchfields Road?” Please indicate whether or not you support the proposed change, together with your reasons.

What you said in response to the consultation

2.2.6 128 responses to the consultation included comments related to this relocation. The majority of these were opposed to the refinement, with only three in support of the change. In addition, several campaigns responded to this question, opposing the refinement, totalling 480 further responses. A petition was also submitted, signed by 282 people, calling for HS2 Ltd not to proceed with the proposed relocation.

2.2.7 Responses were received from the local authority, the owners of the Fallowfield Retail Park, the local MP, statutory and technical consultees, local interest groups and members of the local community.

2.2.8 Those in support of the change believed that the proposal would be beneficial as it would reduce traffic congestion from construction traffic on Lytham Road, and that it would make better use of land than the existing car park.

2.2.9 Themes of those opposed to, or concerned by, the proposed change included:

- the loss of shops at the Fallowfield Retail Park, seen as providing a local service, and the impact on the two nearby schools;
- opposition to the loss of car parking space at the Retail Park and traffic impacts during construction; and
- concerns linked to the traffic impacts including air quality, safety and health – many cited the context of the schools for these concerns.

2.2.10 The campaign responses were similar in nature, objecting to the proposed change for a range of reasons including the loss of the park and stride facility for the schools, concern about increased air pollution outside schools as a consequence of increased traffic congestion, disruption during the construction phase, and loss of shops at the Fallowfield Retail Park.

2.2.11 A more detailed summary of the responses to the consultation can be found in the Ipsos MORI consultation summary report, available at www.gov.uk/government/consultations/hs2-phase-2b-design-refinement-consultation.

Government response

2.2.12 Having carefully considered the points made by respondents to the consultation and given the constraints on suitable alternative sites, the Minister of State has decided to confirm the proposal to relocate the vent shaft, headhouse and autotransformer station from the playing fields of MEA Central school on Lytham Road to the Fallowfield Retail Park on Birchfields Road.

2.2.13 The Minister of State considers the Fallowfield Retail Park on Birchfields Road to be the best option as it:

- removes the potential direct impacts on MEA Central school; and
- provides safer access for construction vehicles to the vent shaft construction site than Lytham Road.

2.2.14 Having reviewed feedback from the consultation, HS2 Ltd did consider alternative options raised by respondents for the vent shaft in this area. These options were discounted because either they:

- required an additional vent shaft above the Manchester tunnel because they were too far from the next portal or vent shaft to satisfy safety requirements. The introduction of a further vent shaft would increase the capital cost of the project and bring disruption at the surface above the tunnel that could otherwise be avoided;
- required additional residential and/or commercial demolitions to construct a vent shaft on the proposed site;
- would bring other environmental impacts, such as construction noise, closer to residential properties;
- increased the length of the Manchester tunnel, adding to the duration of the construction programme and cost of the scheme;
- meant it would be challenging to keep the Manchester tunnel on the current alignment to join up with the planned Manchester Piccadilly High Speed Station without significantly lowering the design speed of the railway; or
- a combination of the above.

2.2.15 HS2 Ltd also considered options put forward by respondents to move the vent shaft onto the University of Manchester Armitage Sports Centre sports pitches. As well as taking open space from the University of Manchester Armitage Sports Centre, these options would bring construction noise and vibration impacts closer to residential properties than is the case with the site at the Fallowfield Retail Park. A vent shaft on Manchester Armitage Sport Centre sports pitches would also have a worse landscape and visual impact than that proposed at the Fallowfield Retail Park. These options were not therefore progressed.

2.2.16 In response to concerns raised during the consultation, HS2 Ltd has refined the location of the vent shaft at the Fallowfield Retail Park. Instead of occupying a site on the north-western corner of the Fallowfield Retail Park, the vent shaft will be moved to the north-eastern edge of the site. This moves the vent shaft further away from residential properties on Birchfields Road and will also allow the space in the north-western corner of the retail park, immediately off Birchfields Road, to be returned to use after the construction phase. Keeping the vent shaft at the north-western corner of the retail park would mean that any land returned in the northern area of the retail park after construction would be less useful as it is sandwiched between the vent shaft and Network Rail's Styal line. This change will not increase the number of commercial demolitions required at the Fallowfield Retail Park.

2.2.17 The Government recognises that relocating the vent shaft, headhouse and autotransformer station from the playing fields of MEA Central School on Lytham Road to the Fallowfield Park will involve the demolition of retail units and impacts on

the car parking at the retail park. For this reason, the Minister of State expects HS2 Ltd to carry out work to understand the level of use of the park and stride facility, and whether alternative arrangements need to be put in place.

2.2.18 Some respondents raised concerns over the ability of Hawthorne Medical Centre to remain open during the construction phase. As the practice is located on the southern half of the retail park, HS2 Ltd expects Hawthorne Medical Centre to be able to continue to operate throughout on its current site with reduced parking spaces.

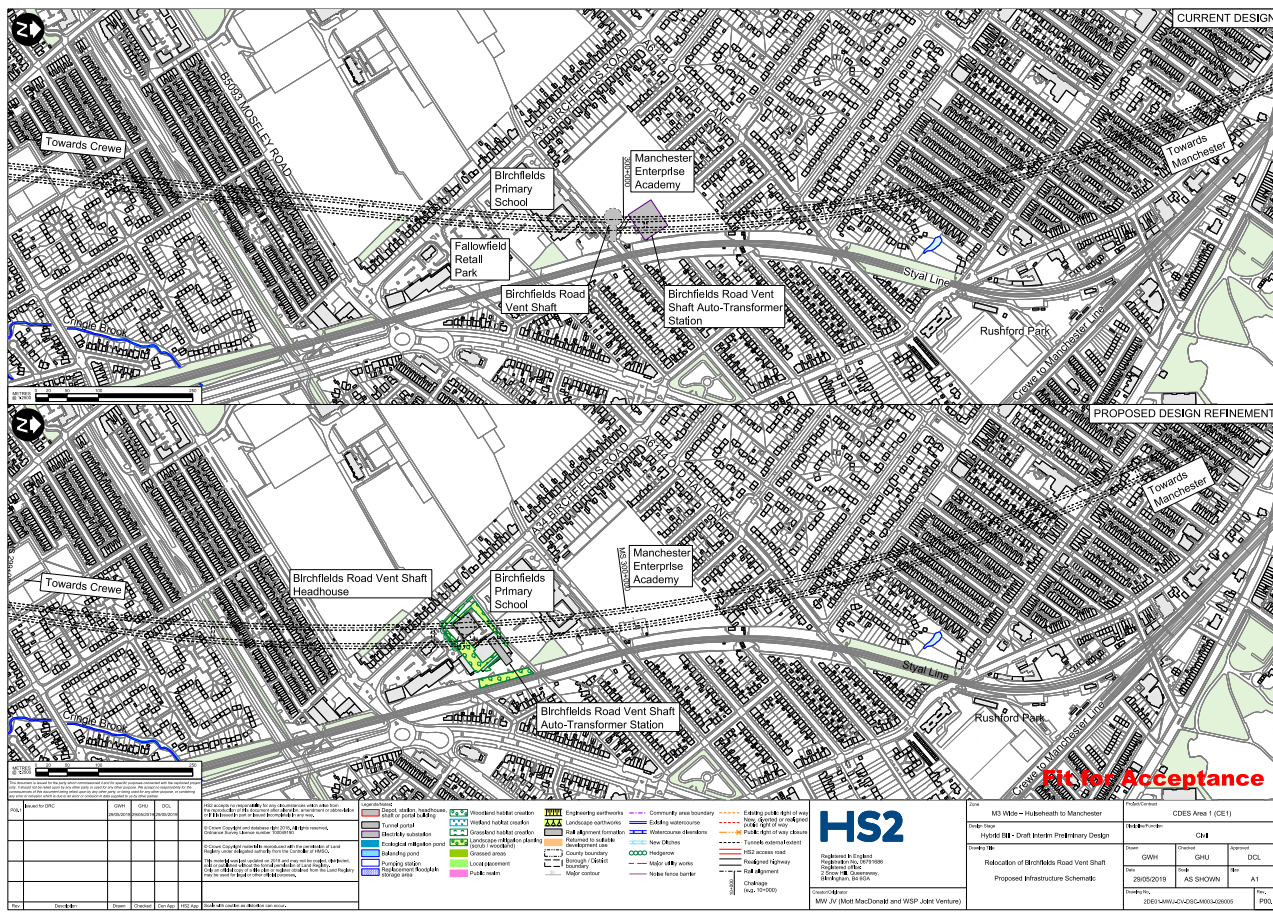


Figure 4: Plan showing the previous design and confirmed relocation of the vent shaft. For more detail see change two in Volume 2: Map book and visualisations.

2.3 Temporary construction railhead and permanent maintenance facility near Ashley, Cheshire

Background

Railhead

- 2.3.1 Further design development identified the need for temporary railheads across the Eastern and Western Legs at strategic junctures to support the construction of Phase 2b.
- 2.3.2 Based on consideration of the construction strategy, HS2 Ltd identified that the most suitable location for a railhead on the Western Leg is between the Manchester Spur and the existing Mid Cheshire Line in the vicinity of Ashley.
- 2.3.3 A railhead in this location would have a connection to the existing railway via the Mid Cheshire Line, is well placed to support rail systems construction activities along the Manchester Spur and has good access to the strategic road network through its proximity to the M56.

Infrastructure Maintenance Base – Rail (IMB-R)

- 2.3.4 On Phase One and Phase 2a of HS2, IMB-Rs have been included in the design of the scheme submitted to Parliament to support the efficient maintenance of the railway in the operational phase. As design development on Phase 2b has progressed, further work has been undertaken to identify suitable sites for an IMB-R.
- 2.3.5 The IMB-R on the Western Leg is proposed at a site approximately 300m south-west of Ashley village. The site will consist of two sidings up to 300m in length to stable maintenance trains, a small amount of storage space and a car park for 10 vehicles.
- 2.3.6 If it had been feasible, this IMB-R would have been placed on the same site as that currently proposed for the temporary railhead. Once the railhead had finished being used for the construction phase, a portion of that site would have been converted into an IMB-R with the remaining area of the railhead site being returned to its former use.
- 2.3.7 However, it has not been feasible to use part of the site proposed for the railhead in this area as an IMB-R. This is due to the inclusion of passive provision for the junction to support a potential NPR Manchester to Liverpool route. The inclusion of passive provision means that a permanent, flat, rail connection from HS2's Manchester Spur into the IMB-R could not be built without also raising this connection onto another viaduct. For this reason, a design with the IMB-R on the site of the temporary railhead was not progressed.
- 2.3.8 The proposed location of the IMB-R is compatible with passive provision for the Manchester to Liverpool junction, does not require a third viaduct over the Blackburn/ Birkin Brooks and allows a connection to Network Rail to be provided.

What the Secretary of State proposed

2.3.9 The Secretary of State proposed to include the temporary railhead and a permanent maintenance facility near Ashley to facilitate the construction and maintenance of the Western leg of the proposed railway.

Consultation question:

“What are your views on the proposed location of the temporary railhead and permanent maintenance facility near Ashley?” Please indicate whether or not you support the proposed change, together with your reasons.

What you said in response to the consultation

- 2.3.10 84 respondents to the consultation provided comments about this change. The majority (59) were opposed to the change, others raised concern without explicitly opposing the project and eight supported it.
- 2.3.11 Responses were received from a wide range of stakeholders, including: local authorities and parish councils, statutory and technical consultees, local interest groups, a local MP, a number of local businesses and members of the local community.
- 2.3.12 Supportive comments included the potential to reduce construction traffic as well as the potential for benefits to the local economy.
- 2.3.13 Themes of those opposed to, or concerned by, the proposed change included:
- a belief that the proposals would negatively affect the local community, especially during the construction period;
 - significant concerns about the disruption caused by construction traffic, diversions and the potential local access for emergency vehicles; and
 - the potential impacts on biodiversity, wildlife and habitats.
- 2.3.14 A more detailed summary of the responses to the consultation can be found in the Ipsos MORI consultation summary report, available at www.gov.uk/government/consultations/hs2-phase-2b-design-refinement-consultation.

Government response

2.3.15 Having carefully considered the points made by respondents to the consultation, the Minister of State has decided to confirm the proposed location of the temporary railhead and permanent maintenance facility near Ashley. This means that:

- the temporary railhead will be built on the proposed site approximately 400m south-west of Ashley; and
- the IMB-R will be built on the proposed site approximately 300m south-west of Ashley.

2.3.16 A number of respondents suggested potential alternative sites for the railhead. Most of these alternatives were previously discussed and the reasons for them being discounted explained in the *High Speed Two: Design Refinement Consultation* paper. New requests for alternative locations for the railhead were also made. A consultee requested that the railhead proposed in the consultation be moved to a site near Manchester Airport where it could also support the construction of the Manchester tunnel for HS2. This option was examined, but has not been progressed as it is challenging to provide a connection from the existing railway network to near where the construction of the HS2 Manchester tunnel will be without incurring additional cost and impacts.

2.3.17 Some respondents also asked for potential alternative IMB-R sites to be investigated, including brownfield sites in central Manchester, near Manchester Airport and in Crewe. These options were discounted as:

- they were either too far to the north or south to replicate the intended function of the satellite IMB-R near Ashley. They would, therefore, not remove the need for an IMB-R in the vicinity of Ashley;
- it would be difficult to provide a permanent rail connection between the possible IMB-R sites in the proposed locations and the HS2 main line, which met HS2 requirements and did not increase the environmental, cost and/or stakeholder impacts of HS2;
- the alternative sites suggested were too small to construct an IMB-R at without additional property demolitions and stakeholder impacts when compared to the IMB-R proposed at Ashley; or
- a combination of the above.

2.3.18 A request was made by Ashley Parish Council to move both the IMB-R and Railhead to Aldersey's Rough, which is located near the Phase 2a route south of Crewe. This option was discounted as both a potential Railhead and IMB-R site. The intent of this proposal from Ashley Parish Council is that an IMB-R at Aldersey's Rough would act

as the IMB-R for the Western Leg of HS2 as a whole. Instead of having two separate facilities on the Western Leg, one main IMB-R at Stone (powers for which are being sought under the Phase 2a hybrid Bill) and the other satellite IMB-R near Ashley on Phase 2b, it is suggested to combine it into one at Aldersey's Rough.

- 2.3.19 However, Aldersey's Rough is not the optimal location for an IMB-R from either a Phase 2a or Phase 2b perspective. The case for relocating the proposed main IMB-R at Stone to Aldersey's Rough on Phase 2a has been heard by a House of Commons Select Committee in detail. The Select Committee did not endorse this proposal and the Minister of State remains of the view that the most appropriate location for the main IMB-R included in the Phase 2a Bill is at Stone.
- 2.3.20 From the perspective of Phase 2b's maintenance requirements, Aldersey's Rough is too far to the south of the Manchester tunnel to be able to make effective use of short overnight maintenance windows to maintain slab track on the Manchester Spur and tunnel. If this location were adopted, there would still be a requirement for a further satellite IMB-R facility on or near the Manchester Spur to support specific maintenance activities to slab track in this area. This means creating an IMB-R at Aldersey's Rough would not remove impacts associated with an IMB-R in the Ashley area.
- 2.3.21 The proposal to move the Phase 2b railhead near Ashley to the same site as an IMB-R at Aldersey's Rough was also not progressed. The purpose of temporary construction railheads is to import large quantities of bulky materials by rail that cannot reasonably be transported by road. It would be challenging to safely and efficiently transport the volumes of bulky construction materials required for the HS2 construction phase from this location to support construction logistics on the HS2 main line (north and south of Hoo Green Junction) and on the Manchester Spur. This means a further railhead would be required on the Western Leg in addition to a railhead at Aldersey's Rough.
- 2.3.22 The Minister of State is aware of the additional impacts on Ashley, particularly the additional land take and construction phase impacts brought closer to the village, and has asked HS2 Ltd to continue to engage with the local community and stakeholders so that further opportunities to avoid, reduce or mitigate impacts are included in ongoing design development.

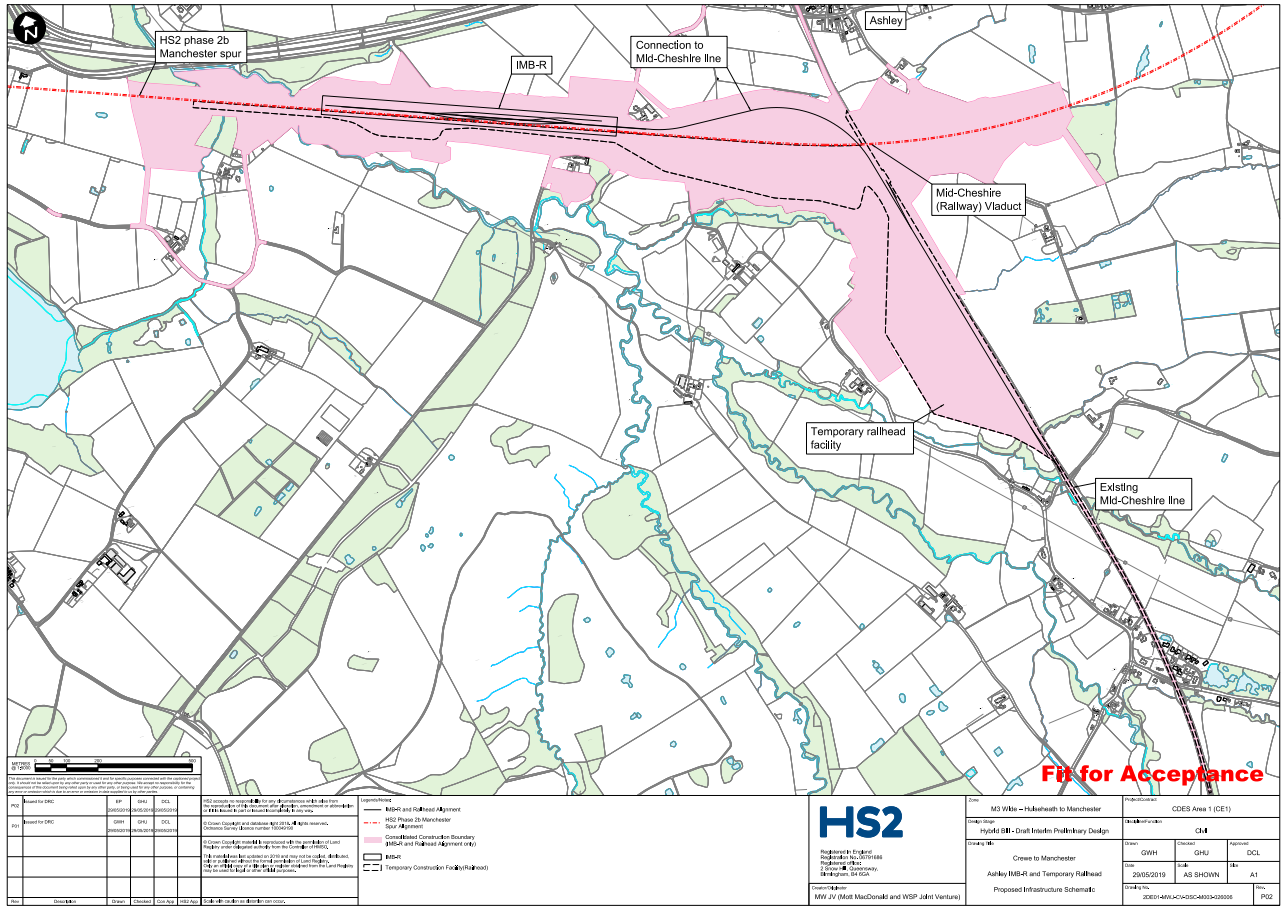


Figure 5: Plan showing the confirmed location of temporary railhead and permanent IMB-R near Ashley. For more detail see change seven in Volume 2: Map book and visualisations.

2.4 Passive provision for two junctions at High Legh, Cheshire

Background

2.4.1 One of Northern Powerhouse Rail's (NPR) key strategic aspirations is to provide improved connectivity between Liverpool and Manchester Piccadilly via Manchester Airport. Using spare capacity on the HS2 line into Manchester would be vastly preferable on cost and impact grounds to seeking to build a further new approach. To do this, a future NPR route to Liverpool would need to connect with HS2 at a point west of Manchester Airport station. Transport for the North (TfN) has provided advice to the Government, in line with their statutory duty to advise the Secretary of State on transport plans for the North of England, that any potential new NPR services between Liverpool and Manchester Piccadilly should use as much of HS2 as possible, including the proposed HS2 tunnel into Manchester.

- 2.4.2 Separately, the Department for Transport (DfT) considers that if there were a new NPR route to be constructed that linked Manchester and Liverpool as set out above, then there would also be merit in creating a connection to that new route for use by London services.
- 2.4.3 In line with the emerging vision for NPR as set out in TfN's Strategic Transport Plan, the Government asked HS2 Ltd to examine options for connections between the planned HS2 line and any potential new route towards Liverpool that might be constructed. HS2 Ltd recommended to DfT and TfN that the proposals described in this chapter are the most appropriate sites for the junctions between HS2 and a potential future NPR route to Liverpool. The selected locations have the benefit of allowing any future NPR route to also serve Warrington, but without at this stage prescribing how that is done.

What the Secretary of State proposed

- 2.4.4 The Secretary of State proposed to include passive provision for the proposed Manchester to Liverpool and London to Liverpool junctions in the design as it provides future proofing for NPR and HS2 services.

Consultation question:

“What are your views on the proposals to include passive provision for Manchester to Liverpool and London to Liverpool junctions near High Legh?” Please indicate whether or not you support the proposed change, together with your reasons.

What you said in response to the consultation

- 2.4.5 175 respondents provided comments about the proposed change. This included 50 respondents who provided supportive comments, and 112 respondents who were opposed. Others raised concerns without explicitly opposing or supporting the proposals.
- 2.4.6 Responses were received from a wide range of stakeholders, including: local authorities and parish councils, statutory and technical consultees, local interest groups, a local MP, a number of local businesses and members of the local community.
- 2.4.7 The main themes raised in support of the proposed change were:
- supporting the future connectivity with NPR; and
 - related comments about the potential to benefit local and regional economies and communities.

- 2.4.8 Themes of those opposed to, or concerned by, the proposed change often assumed or were concerned about the potential impact of a future NPR line indicated by the passive provision. This included:
- significant concerns about the potential impact on communities from traffic, visual, noise and air quality impacts;
 - depreciation in property prices as a result of the ‘virtual line’ created by the junctions;
 - loss of agricultural land and the severance of access to farmland; and
 - concerns about the impacts on biodiversity and habitats.
- 2.4.9 A more detailed summary of the responses to the consultation can be found in the Ipsos MORI consultation summary report, available at: www.gov.uk/government/consultations/hs2-phase-2b-design-refinement-consultation.

Government response

- 2.4.10 Having carefully considered all the points made by respondents during the consultation, the Minister of State has decided to confirm passive provision for two junctions at High Legh, Cheshire. This means that passive provision for these future junctions will be included in a hybrid Bill, which involves the civil engineering and earthworks required within approximately 500m of HS2 infrastructure.
- 2.4.11 The Government believes that future proofing for NPR and HS2 services by including passive provision for the proposed Manchester to Liverpool and London to Liverpool junctions in the design process is worthwhile due to the reduced construction impacts along with cost savings that this will provide.
- 2.4.12 Including passive provision for these junctions in a hybrid Bill also allows for the public to comment on the emerging designs for these connections at the earliest opportunity. In particular, the Minister of State understands that the alignment of future lines to Liverpool will be a particular concern for local residents. If a decision is taken in the future to build a new line between Liverpool and Manchester, this would be subject to a further NPR consultation.
- 2.4.13 The Government is aware of the issues that building a new railway presents to those who live nearby and recognises that communities are concerned about the effects of construction in their local areas. HS2 Ltd is committed to managing these impacts and reducing disruption to communities, businesses and the environment in the ways that reflect best practice used by the construction industry. As the scheme progresses, HS2 Ltd will continue to work with local communities, authorities and other stakeholders as it develops the engineering design to address the local effects of construction in a way which minimises potential impacts.

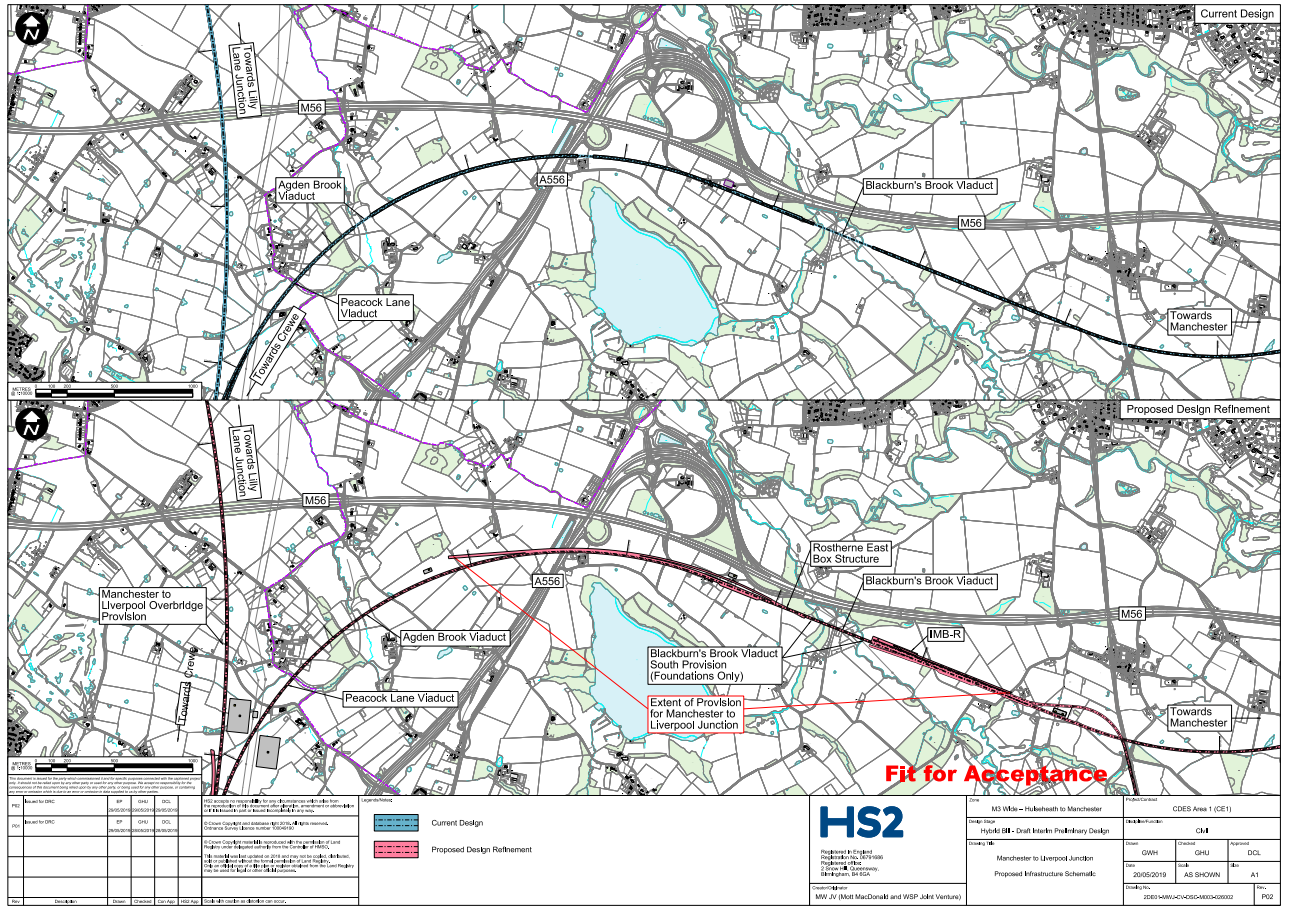


Figure 6: Passive provision for the Manchester to Liverpool junction. For more detail see change 11 in Volume 2: Map book and visualisations.

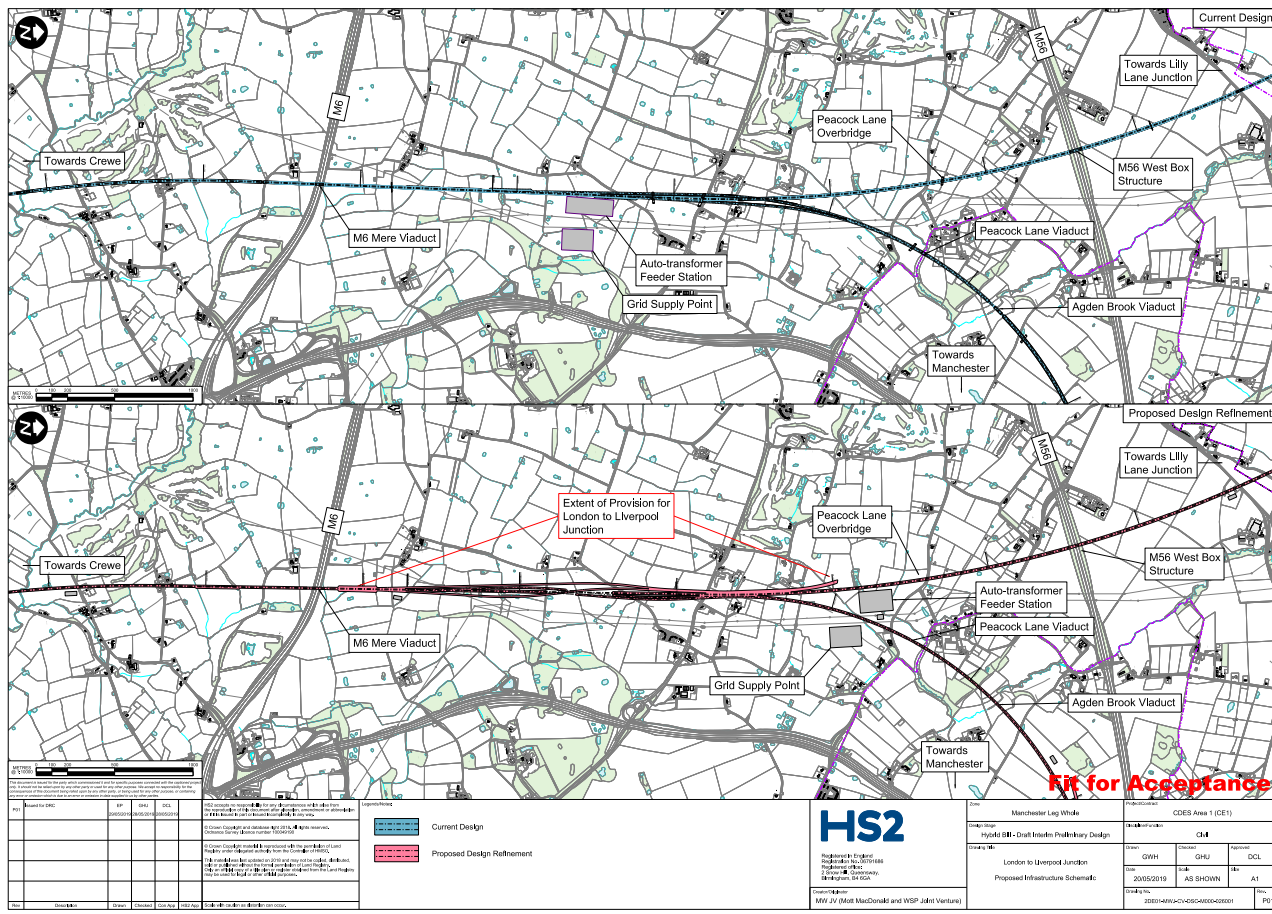


Figure 7: Passive provision for the London to Liverpool junction. For more detail see change 11 in Volume 2: Map book and visualisations.

3. Safeguarding and property

3.1 Safeguarding

- 3.1.1 Safeguarding is primarily a planning tool to help protect the land needed for the HS2 scheme from potential conflicting development. Safeguarding is reviewed throughout the project and is updated periodically to reflect new land requirements.
- 3.1.2 Safeguarding land through the issue of Safeguarding Directions enables the Government to consider potential future planning developments which could otherwise conflict with our plans. Eligible owners of properties that are within an area which is subject to 'surface safeguarding' (i.e. where the route runs on the surface rather than within a deep bored tunnel) have the right to sell their property to the Secretary of State and receive statutory compensation.
- 3.1.3 Safeguarding Directions for the Phase 2b route were first issued in November 2016 and updated in June 2019. Revised Safeguarding Directions were published on 5 October 2020 for the whole of the Western Leg (with the exception of land that may be required in Scotland) and for critical sites on the potential future Eastern Leg.
- 3.1.4 More information on safeguarding is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/safeguarding-information-and-maps-for-hs2>.

3.2 Land and Property: support to affected property owners

- 3.2.1 The Design Refinement Consultation document detailed the potential impacts on nearby properties. Some respondents to the consultation voiced concerns on their property's value over an extended period, and their perception that it would be difficult to claim financial compensation. Some respondents felt that there should be more information made available on compensation.
- 3.2.2 The Government recognises the difficulties that the changes will have on people who were previously unaffected and is committed to reducing and mitigating impacts wherever possible as well as regularly engaging with all affected parties.
- 3.2.3 Wherever an eligible property owner is directly affected by the Phase 2b Western Leg route they are entitled to claim statutory compensation. This comprises the full, un-blighted market rate for the property, a home loss payment equivalent to ten per

cent of the property's market value (subject to minimum and maximum payments set out in law), and reasonable moving costs. Full guidance is published on claiming statutory compensation in advance of construction at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hs2-phase-one-safeguarding-for-property-owners>.

- 3.2.4 The Government also recognises that proposals for new infrastructure can create uncertainty within the wider property market, even where land is not required to construct or operate HS2. A package of non-statutory schemes has therefore been made available to support property owners who live near the proposed HS2 line. The schemes already apply to the Phase 2b Western Leg route where safeguarding has been confirmed. Affected homeowners and small businesses may apply until a year after the railway is open. Schemes will be extended and modified where appropriate to reflect the updated route design at the point updated Safeguarding Directions are issued.
- 3.2.5 The Need to Sell (NTS) scheme was made available in June 2019 on an interim basis to owners of properties affected by the proposed NPR junction locations, subject to engagement with local residents. The NTS scheme enables an eligible property owner who has a compelling reason to sell their property to the Government if they cannot sell it on the open market for its full un-blighted price because of HS2. Following engagement, the Government confirms that the NTS scheme will continue to be offered in these areas and will remain open to applications until a year after the line is operational for HS2 services.
- 3.2.6 At present, the Government does not consider that any alternative property compensation package is needed. It will consider whether any additional support is required for property owners affected by future NPR routes once those potential routes have been identified. More information on HS2 property compensation schemes is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/claim-compensation-if-affected-by-hs2>.
- 3.2.7 HS2 Ltd and the Department for Transport continue to publicise the guidance to all those who may be affected.

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