

## Cabinet Meeting on Wednesday 19 February 2020

### HS2: Trent Sow Parklands and Cannock Chase AONB Design and Environmental Enhancement Plan



**Cllr Mark Winnington, Cabinet Member for Economic Growth said,**

“We see ourselves as custodians of some wonderful countryside, including the Trent Sow Parkland and of course Cannock Chase.

From the outset we have worked hard to ensure the impact of HS2 on our landscape is mitigated.

As part of this the county council, together with the National Trust and others, successfully petitioned for a review group to be established to input into the design and oversee a £1.5m enhancements spending pot.”

#### **Report Summary:**

This report covers the geographical scope and functions of the Trent-Sow Parklands and Cannock Chase AONB HS2 Group, its achievements to date and the completion of its first key piece of work: the Design Guide for HS2 Part 1 – Design Principles.

#### **Recommendations**

I recommend that:

- a. Members note the work to date in petitioning to secure the creation of the Review Group described below.
- b. Members note and endorse the design principles developed to help mitigate the impacts of HS2 on protected landscapes in the project area.

<b>Local Members Interest</b>	
Cllr Alan Dudson	Brereton & Ravenhill
Cllr Paul Snape	Cannock Town Centre
Cllr Johnny McMahon	Cannock Villages
Cllr Derek Davis	Chadsmoor
Cllr Mike Sutherland	Etchinghill & Heath
Cllr Phil Hewitt	Hednesford & Rawnsley
Cllr Bryan Jones	Hednesford & Rawnsley
Cllr John Francis	Stafford Trent Valley

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### **HS2: Trent Sow Parklands and Cannock Chase AONB Design and Environmental Enhancement Plan**

#### **Recommendations of the Cabinet Member for Economic Growth**

I recommend that:

- a. Members note the work to date in petitioning to secure the creation of the Review Group described below.
- b. Members note and endorse the design principles developed to help mitigate the impacts of HS2 on protected landscapes in the project area.

#### **Report of the Director of Economy, Infrastructure and Skills**

##### **Reasons for Recommendations:**

1. High Speed 2 (HS2) Phase 2a crosses 51km of Staffordshire countryside, passing near a notable collection of nationally and locally important landscapes. These include the washlands at the confluence of the rivers Trent and Sow; the historic designed landscapes of Shugborough, Ingestre and Tixall; 18th and 19th century transport infrastructure; the Conservation Areas of The Trent and Mersey Canal, Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal, Ingestre, Tixall, Great Haywood and Shugborough and Colwich and Little Haywood; together with numerous listed buildings and environmental designations. Part of this landscape is within or in the setting of the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), a nationally important protected landscape.
2. The integration of HS2 within this landscape requires careful consideration through design. A high standard is required, especially for substantial structures such as the Great Haywood Viaduct, and mitigation measures which seek the sympathetic integration of the railway within the wider historic landscape.
3. During the passage of the Bill through the House of Commons, the County Council petitioned on this matter, alongside the National Trust and others. These petitions secured assurances that the Trent-Sow Parklands and Cannock Chase AONB HS2 Group (the Review Group) would be established. The group contains representatives from:

- a. HS2 Ltd
- b. Staffordshire County Council
- c. Cannock Chase AONB
- d. Natural England
- e. Historic England
- f. Stafford Borough Council
- g. Canal and Rivers Trust
- h. Inland Waterways

4. The Review Group has two functions:

- a. To work together to develop a set of general and detailed design principles that will be used as guidance by HS2 and its contractors to inform the design of the scheme in order to create a locally responsive, high quality design through this important and environmentally sensitive landscape.
- b. To develop and propose a package of environmental enhancements, which go beyond the mitigation measures provided as part of the Scheme. These will be outside Act limits but within a defined Project Area. A budget of up to £1.5m has been made available for the Review Group to spend on enhancement projects.

5. The group has commissioned landscape specialists to develop a Design Guide (please see Appendices) containing both general and detailed principles for works across the project area. The general design principles cover communities; access, enjoyment and connectivity; landscape; historic environment; and ecology and hydrology. Detailed design principles focus on how key elements of the scheme can be designed to minimise impacts on the landscape and respond to local character. They include the Great Haywood viaduct, bridges and green bridges, noise barriers, transformer stations, ponds, ecological corridors and vegetation.

6. The Review Group is currently developing an Environmental Enhancement Plan for projects located outside the Act Limits. The group will work with contractors, once appointed to ensure that these principles are embedded in the design process.

7. The group will complement the main HS2 Design Panel. This is an independent non-executive advisory body chaired by Sadie Morgan. Members are experts drawn from many industries and design disciplines. The role of the Design Panel is to review and critique outcomes at key stages in the design process. The Design Panel does not make design decisions, but it does offer impartial recommendations and advice.

8. The relationship between the Design Panel and the Group will be two way, with each group providing feedback to the other as appropriate. For the similar groups in Phase 1, (the Chilterns AONB review group and the Colne Valley Regional Park panel), there is a nominated person who attends Design Panel meetings as an observer. The nominated person receives the record of the Design Panel meeting for circulation 'in confidence' to the Group. It is intended that Staffordshire should have the same arrangement.

## **Legal Implications**

9. There are no legal implications arising as a result of this report.

## **Resource and Value for Money Implications**

10. There are no financial implications arising as a result of this report. The work undertaken through this group is fully funded by HS2 Ltd. The funding was secured through the parliamentary petitioning process for the Phase 2a (West Midlands – Crewe) Bill.

## **List of Background Documents/Appendices:**

Appendix 1 - DRAFT: A Design Guide for HS2 – Part 1: Design Principles

## **Contact Details**

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