



Cabinet Meeting on 18 December 2013

**High Speed Rail 2 (HS2) Phase Two:
Response to the Phase Two Route
Consultation**

**Cabinet Member for Economy and
Infrastructure Mark Winnington**

Quote from Mark Winnington, Cabinet Member for Economy and Infrastructure

“From the very outset we have been opposed to HS2 due to the unacceptable impact it will have on Staffordshire, our communities and on our countryside and the fact it will bring no tangible economic benefits to the county.

“We have continued to champion the cause of residents in Phase One to mitigate the effect of the scheme and win timely compensation and will draw on our experience in putting together a robust response to the consultation on Phase Two.

“The impact of this national transport scheme goes far beyond those living closest to the proposed route and it is a project which everyone in Staffordshire needs to be aware of and show interest in.

“While the decision on the future of HS2 is one for Westminster, we will continue to work closely with local partners, communities and HS2 Ltd itself to get the best possible deal for Staffordshire.

“This means not only influencing the route and winning meaningful compensation, but exploring any further options for economic benefits and improvements to the existing network, should this scheme be imposed on us.”

Report Summary:

High Speed Rail (HS2) is a key government policy designed to develop transport infrastructure in the UK. However, the potential impact on Staffordshire communities, the lack of economic benefits and the potential to damage Staffordshire’s environment has meant the County Council has taken a position in opposition to HS2.

Our opposition to HS2 has meant the County Council has supported local communities to engage with HS2 Ltd to mitigate the proposals, whilst the County Council has directly engaged with both the Department of Transport and HS2 Ltd to push for more mitigation and compensation.

The High Speed Rail (HS2) proposed route through Lichfield District under Phase One (London to West Midlands) of the scheme has already been consulted on and is in the process of being considered by parliament. The impacts of HS2 in Staffordshire are increased further by the proposed Phase Two route (West Midlands to Manchester and Leeds) which includes 33 miles of railway cutting through rural parts of the county.

This report summarises the HS2 Phase Two Route Consultation and seeks approval from Cabinet for the County Council's response to the consultation. A key element of our response will be to continue to support and collect together the views of affected communities and align them with our own response in terms of providing leadership on the issue and putting the people of Staffordshire first.

Recommendation(s)

I recommend that:

- A. Cabinet, in noting the County Council's opposition to Government's High Speed Rail proposals, responds to the consultation questions as set out in the supporting documentation of this report.
- B. Cabinet endorses the submission of the County Council's formal response to the route consultation.
- C. The Cabinet Member for Economy and Infrastructure in consultation with the Deputy Chief Executive and Director for Place, be given delegated authority to take decisions around the scope of the County Council's consultation response, should any changes be required, prior to it being submitted to HS2 Ltd.

Local Members Interest

N/A

Cabinet – 18 December 2013

High Speed Rail 2 (HS2) Phase Two: Response to the
Phase Two Route Consultation

Recommendations of the Cabinet Member for Economy and Infrastructure

- A. That Cabinet, in noting the County Council's opposition to Governments High Speed Rail proposals, responds to the consultation questions as set out in the supporting documentation of this report.
- B. Cabinet endorses the submission of the County Council's formal response to the route consultation.
- C. The Cabinet Member for Economy and Infrastructure in consultation with the Deputy Chief Executive and Director for Place, be given delegated authority to take decisions around the scope of the County Council's consultation response, should any changes be required, prior to it being submitted to HS2 Ltd.

Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director for Place

Reasons for Recommendations:

Background

High Speed 2 (HS2) will be the UK's new high speed rail network. It is being delivered in two separate phases, Phase One which impacts on Staffordshire within Lichfield District, and Phase Two which impacts north of Lichfield up to the county boundary with Cheshire East.

However, the potential impact on Staffordshire communities, the lack of economic benefits and the potential to damage Staffordshire's environment means that the scheme lacks any alignment with our key outcomes for Staffordshire, namely increasing access to good jobs and feeling the benefits of economic growth; therefore the County Council has taken a position in opposition to HS2.

Our opposition to HS2 has meant the County Council has supported local communities to engage with HS2 Ltd to mitigate the proposals. The County Council is also looking to ensure that current rail services are not affected by HS2 particularly any deterioration in rail services between existing Staffordshire rail stations and the north.

On 28th January 2013 the Secretary of State for Transport, Patrick McLoughlin, announced the initial preferred route for Phase Two of HS2. If approved the route will extend the high speed line from Birmingham to Manchester and Leeds, with connections on to the West and East Coast Main Lines to serve the rest of the North of England and Scotland. Intermediate HS2 stations would be built at Manchester

Airport, Sheffield Meadowhall and an East Midlands Hub at Toton. The proposed Phase Two route would be integrated into the existing network, allowing trains to serve destinations such as Crewe and Liverpool.

The consultation on HS2 Ltd.'s proposed routes for Phase Two of HS2 was launched on 17 July 2013 and closes on 31 January 2014. The consultation seeks to obtain views on the proposed high speed rail route, as well as the sustainability impacts of the proposed line of route.

The Phase Two route sets out a further 33 miles of new railway and associated infrastructure in Staffordshire which sees further environmental damage while impacting on additional communities.

The proposed route continues from Phase One in north of Lichfield through the Boroughs of Stafford and Newcastle. There is also a section of the Leeds route within the very southern tip of Tamworth.

The County Council will continue to oppose HS2 whilst engaging with HS2 Ltd to ensure maximum mitigation is achieved while ensuring those affected receive fair and timely compensation.

What is the HS2 Phase Two Route Consultation?

The HS2 Phase Two consultation documentation explains the Government's proposals for HS2 while setting out a series of nine specific questions which include:

- The routes from the West Midlands to Manchester and Leeds with stations at Manchester Airport, Manchester City Centre, in the East Midlands close to Derby and Nottingham, Sheffield and Leeds.
- The connections to the existing rail network and the supporting infrastructure required e.g. depots and maintenance loops
- Views on whether there should be any additional stations on either leg of the proposed route
- An explanation of sustainability impacts of the proposed route
- Ideas on how the rail capacity released on the existing rail network could be used
- How HS2 could integrate with other utilities, such as water or electricity, alongside the line

While formally opposing Government's HS2 the County Council has prepared a joint local authority response to the route consultation. Although all areas of the consultation are crucial, particular attention is drawn to the question of additional stations.

How has the County Council developed its response to the consultation?

In co-ordinating the 'voice of Staffordshire' it is expected that the draft response appended to this report will be adopted by Staffordshire's local authorities who affected by the proposed route so that a joint response can be submitted to HS2 Ltd.

Where possible comments received from parish councils and community action groups along the Phase Two route will continue to be incorporated into the response in addition to responses received to the Staffordshire Rail Strategy questionnaire.

In considering the above, it is recommended that Cabinet endorse the intended submission of the County Council's formal response to the route consultation as appended to this report. The response will be submitted to HS2 Ltd by the close of the consultation period on 31 January 2014.

It is likely that changes to the draft document (appended to this report) will be required following further discussions with partners before the 31st January 2014 deadline. It is recommended that the Cabinet Member for Economy and Infrastructure in consultation with the Deputy Chief Executive and Director for Place, be given delegated authority to take decisions around the scope of the County Council's consultation response, should any changes be required, prior to it being submitted to HS2 Ltd.

What are the next steps?

The decision by the Secretary of State on the route for Phase Two is expected to be announced by the end of 2014. This is likely to be followed by a Hybrid Bill seeking powers to construct Phase Two in the next Parliament following the May 2015 General Election. If Parliament approved that Bill, it would provide the necessary powers to build and operate the Phase Two route.

List of Background Documents:

Staffordshire County Council response to the Phase Two Route Consultation

[HS2 Phase Two Route Consultation Document](#)

[HS2 Ltd.'s Phase Two Route Consultation website](#)

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