

**To the Chair and Members of the
Full Council**

**HIGH SPEED TWO PHASE 2B
PROPERTY AND ROUTE REFINEMENT CONSULTATIONS**

| Relevant Cabinet Member(s) | Wards Affected | Key Decision |
|--|--|---------------------|
| Mayor Ros Jones Cllr Chris McGuinness | Conisbrough Mexborough Sprotbrough | Yes |

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. On 15th September 2016, Doncaster Council unanimously approved a cross party Motion objecting to the Government's new proposal for HS2 in South Yorkshire.
2. This followed an announcement by Sir David Higgins in July 2016 that he intended to change his recommendation for the preferred route, which included a high speed rail station at Meadowhall. The new alignment follows a route which passes through Mexborough, to the east of Barnburgh and Hickleton. The proposal includes a spur on to the existing Midland Main Line south of Chesterfield to enable HS2 compatible trains to terminate at Sheffield Midland Station.
3. On 15th November 2016, the Secretary of State for transport launched two consultations on the Government's latest proposals, covering Property and Route Refinement.
4. The Council's responses to these consultations will be finalised for submission by the closing date of 9th March 2017. Set out in this report are the key issues which will be used in the responses. They are:
 - a. Property - The special circumstances of owners of property on the Shimmer Estate in Mexborough are taken into account as they are unable to purchase an equivalent property within the compensation package thresholds on offer.

b. Route – The new proposals:

- uses fewer and shorter trains, providing less capacity and a slower service to the city region
 - provide vastly inferior connectivity to key destinations
 - deliver fewer economic benefits
 - constrain economic growth opportunities; and yet
 - actually cost more when the full cost of delivery is taken into account, contrary to the savings claims made by HS2 Ltd
5. The responses will also cover other important issues, including impact on the environment and local communities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

6. Council is recommended to endorse the Council's approach to its response to the Government's consultations on their new high speed rail proposals, as set out in the report.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE CITIZENS OF DONCASTER?

7. Doncaster believes that the new proposals are an unacceptable and vastly weaker alternative option; delivering worse connectivity, longer journey times and weaker economic growth, not just for Doncaster but for the whole region. These considerations are significant and provide the key principle objection beyond the direct impacts on Doncaster. In addition to these broader effects the physical impact of the Government's new proposals for High Speed Two through the Borough is severe and the Council's principal concerns here focus in two locations. The first is the impact on the existing and developing community between Mexborough and Conisbrough, where the alignment crosses the currently developing Shimmer Estate and existing properties on Pastures Road and Pastures Court. The railway crosses the valley of the River Don and the Sheffield & South Yorkshire Navigation on a viaduct up to 20 metres above existing ground level.
8. The second location is to the east of Barnburgh, where the alignment is on embankments up to 20 metres high, approximately 500 metres from the eastern edge of the village, having a severe visual impact on the landscape and potential noise impacts.
9. Access to the high speed rail network for Doncaster residents will be at Sheffield Midland Station, but citizens clearly need to get to the station to make use of the service, whether by car, bus or rail. However, even if citizens get to Sheffield Midland Station, the proposals do not give direct high speed rail access northwards to Leeds or southwards to Birmingham, but only to Toton (East Midlands) and London. Aggregate journey times to London and Leeds will be worse for Doncaster citizens via HS2, than on the existing East Coast Main Line, and citizens will rely on existing services to Leeds and beyond and to Birmingham.

10. There are references in the Command Paper to a number of possible enhancements to the Government's proposals, but there is no commitment to them. These are principally:
 - the possibility of a parkway station on the high speed line to serve South Yorkshire; and
 - the possibility of the existing railway line north of Sheffield Midland Station to Clayton being upgraded to enable HS2 compatible trains to continue northwards on a "loop" and re-join the high speed line at Clayton.
11. A provision of a 'loop' and a parkway station may have the potential for regeneration and connectivity benefits. However, because there is no commitment to providing a loop or parkway station in the Command Paper, the Council is responding to the route refinement consultation as if they were not included.

BACKGROUND

12. The Government published its original proposals for high speed rail north of Birmingham in January 2013. The Initial Preferred Route through South Yorkshire broadly followed the M1 Motorway corridor northwards to Hoyland and then followed a route through the middle of the Borough of Barnsley towards Crofton and onwards to Leeds. The proposals included a high speed rail station at Meadowhall. A consultation period followed in July 2013 and closed in January 2014.
13. In South Yorkshire, a consensus around the location of the station was never achieved, with Sheffield City Council pursuing a city centre station at Victoria, whilst Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham Councils supported the proposed station location at Meadowhall.
14. Citing this lack of consensus, Sir David Higgins published a report in July 2016: HS2 Sheffield and South Yorkshire Report 2016, in which he recommended a completely new alignment through South Yorkshire. The alignment follows an easterly route alongside the M18 past Bramley, and then turns northwards through the Borough of Doncaster. The route passes between Conisbrough and Mexborough on a viaduct, to the east of Barnburgh and to the east of Hickleton, and re-joins the original Initial Preferred Route alignment near Crofton. The proposal includes a spur off the high speed rail alignment joining the existing Midland Main Line at Clay Cross to enable HS2 compatible trains to run into and terminate at Sheffield Midland Station.
15. The Government accepted Sir David Higgins' July 2016 recommendations in its Command Paper published on 15th November 2016 and a consultation on the Government's new Preferred Route was launched. The Government has also launched a consultation in parallel on their revised property compensation proposals for HS2 Phase 2B. The Council's responses to both consultations are the subject of this report.

A SUMMARY OF THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSES

Property Consultation

16. The Council considers that the overall property compensation scheme on offer for HS2 Phase 2B is fair and reasonable. However the Council is asking for the special circumstances of owners of property on the Shimmer Estate to be noted as they are unable to purchase an equivalent property within the compensation package thresholds on offer. The Government has now commissioned its own study into this following representation to Sir David Higgins by the Council.

Route Refinement Consultation

17. The consultation feedback will be in line with Full Council's resolution of 15th September 2016 and it will be framed around the five factors that Sir David Higgins used in consideration of his recommendations of July 2016 as follows: Demand; Needs of the City Region; Connectivity; Environmental Impacts; and Cost. However, the headlines are that the Sheffield Midland spur option:
 - will mean fewer, slower and smaller trains for the city region;
 - offers vastly inferior connectivity;
 - brings much fewer direct economic benefits;
 - constrains economic growth opportunities; and
 - costs more
18. It should be noted that these impacts may remain true even if the Northern Loop and a Parkway Station are delivered. However, these developments, whilst cited, are not included in the costs of the HS2 project.
19. The Council, in its response will take the opportunity to comment upon the Command Paper's suggestions for enhancements to the proposal: a junction at Clayton to form the Northern Loop; a parkway station; and the possible extension of services from Sheffield Midland station to Barnsley, Meadowhall and Rotherham. These comments will be set in the context of the Council's opposition to the Preferred Route alignment, and its call to the Secretary of State to confirm the Sheffield Meadowhall route as the Government's proposal for high speed rail in South Yorkshire.

DEMAND

20. HS2 Limited's forecasts for demand for HS2 services in the City Region estimate that the majority of demand will arise from south west Sheffield. Demand is dependent upon level of service which is currently very poor in South Yorkshire, so current demand is suppressed as a result. The flawed HS2 logic is illustrated by the existing demand for 4 trains per hour to London from Doncaster, and HS2 Limited's forecast demand for HS2 services from Sheffield Midland to London is only 1 train per hour, or a maximum of 2 trains per hour. There is no logic to this.

21. The Sheffield City Region Growth Areas are predominantly located from Sheffield city centre to the north and east, with the top two priority areas located between Sheffield and Rotherham (Advanced Manufacturing and Innovation District or AMID) and at Doncaster Sheffield Airport. Both of these locations are better supported by Sheffield Meadowhall.
22. The Sheffield Midland spur option gives 71% fewer high speed train seats serving Sheffield City Region than the Sheffield Meadowhall option.

NEEDS OF SHEFFIELD CITY REGION

23. Work undertaken by Mott MacDonald for the Council suggests that the Sheffield Meadowhall option could deliver significantly more economic benefit for the city region. Further details of this work will be provided to Members prior to submission of the consultation response.
24. The Sheffield Midland spur option does not balance conflicting demands within the city region. Doncaster is not served at all by the proposals, but suffers the devastating impact of the line, particularly at Mexborough/Conisbrough and at Barnburgh. The new route alignment has a significant impact on existing high quality housing and potential future housing development sites at Mexborough. The Council rejects Sir David Higgins' assertion that Doncaster "would benefit from the overall proposition".
25. The wider city region is best served by the Sheffield Meadowhall option, which has long standing support of the majority of local authorities in South Yorkshire. It is the optimal solution for the city region. The Sheffield Midland spur option is the solution that nobody asked for, and nobody wanted.

CONNECTIVITY

26. The Sheffield Meadowhall option more closely meets the Northern Powerhouse Rail [NPR] ambitions with 4 high speed trains per hour to Leeds, than the Sheffield Midland spur option which has no connectivity to Leeds. Yet, NPR ambitions are cited as a reason for changing the Government's recommendations. No connectivity is provided to Birmingham, or to stations north of Leeds (York and Newcastle).
27. The only way to equal the NPR ambition with the Sheffield Midland spur option is to construct the Northern Loop (electrification, signalling/line upgrades), the cost of which has not been built into HS2 Limited's figures.
28. There is considerable doubt over the ability of Sheffield Midland station to accommodate the additional HS2 services as well as the NPR aspirations. Sir David Higgins himself points to the lack of space in the station for existing services, high speed through services and NPR ambitions. The site is extremely constrained, and significant investment will be required to accommodate HS2 Limited's proposals, if indeed it is possible. Yet none of this work has been factored into HS2 Limited's figures.

29. Even if the capacity at Sheffield Midland station is found, there will be no ability thereafter to provide additional HS2 services to meet growing demand. This is hugely important given the suppressed demand figures used by HS2 Limited. In contrast, Sheffield Meadowhall station, being on the high speed line, provides an almost limitless ability to respond to a future increase in demand in the region.
30. The Sheffield Midland spur option provides **no** direct HS2 connectivity to Birmingham or to Leeds, or to stations further north (York, Newcastle).

ENVIRONMENT

31. HS2 Limited has identified that the location of Sheffield Meadowhall station is in a flood zone. So is Sheffield Midland station. Issues of poor air quality and road congestion have also been cited. Sheffield Midland station sits at the heart of Sheffield's Air Quality Management Area, and as a city centre location, suffers from chronic congestion at peak times.
32. The route has a devastating impact on a brand new quality rural riverside residential development at Mexborough. Whilst the estimated number of direct demolitions is low (<20 properties), there is a severe impact on all 220 properties, having a 20m high viaduct with 18 trains per hour (~3 minute intervals) travelling at 360kph, less than 200 metres away.

COST

33. HS2 Limited's published cost saving figure of £1bn for the Sheffield Midland spur option over the cost of the Sheffield Meadowhall option does not take into account the cost of:
 - remodelling Sheffield Midland Station [uncosted]
 - further rolling stock costs for providing the Northern Loop [uncosted]
 - the electrification of the Midland Main Line (this is fundamental to being able to run classic compatible high speed trains into Sheffield Midland station) [£0.5bn]
34. In addition the following projects are consistently cited in relation to the M18/Eastern Route proposal, yet they are not included in the costs outlined by HS2:
 - the upgrading and electrification of the Northern Loop (this is fundamental to provide connectivity to Birmingham, Leeds and beyond) [£0.3bn]
 - the parkway station [£0.2bn to £0.3bn]
 - the electrification of the lines to Barnsley and/or Rotherham to enable the extension of services from Sheffield Midland station
35. This suggests that capital costs of the Sheffield Meadowhall option will be no more expensive than the Sheffield Midland spur option.
36. Furthermore, HS2 Limited has estimated that the additional operating costs of the spur route to Sheffield Midland will be £1.7bn.

OPTIONS CONSIDERED

37. Given Full Council's unanimously agreed resolution on 15th September to object to the Government's proposals, the Council remains supportive of the previous proposal with its high speed station at Meadowhall.
38. The Council has engaged Mott MacDonald to undertake economic appraisals of the new proposed alignment with the spur to Sheffield Midland station versus the previous proposal for a high speed station at Meadowhall. Sheffield City Region has also engaged a consultant to look at the new Preferred Route to assess the potential for reducing the environmental impact of the route by adjusting the alignment in locations where the impact is worse.
39. Both studies are ongoing and the study findings will be included in the Council's final consultation responses. Any observations on potential route adjustments arising from the SCR study will be added as comments separate to the formal Command Paper responses.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION

40. The severe impact of the Government's high speed rail proposals in the Borough and the Council's desire for the government to get their proposals for high speed rail right for the citizens of Doncaster and for the City Region as a whole, means that positive engagement in the consultation process is essential.

IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL'S KEY OUTCOMES

41. The Council's responses to the government's consultations on high speed rail have no impact on the Council's Key Outcomes

| | Outcomes | Implications |
|--|---|---------------------|
| | <p>All people in Doncaster benefit from a thriving and resilient economy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Creating Jobs and Housing</i> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Be a strong voice for our veterans</i> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Protecting Doncaster's vital services</i> | None |
| | <p>People live safe, healthy, active and independent lives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Safeguarding our Communities</i> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Bringing down the cost of living</i> | None |

| | | |
|--|--|------|
| | <p>People in Doncaster benefit from a high quality built and natural environment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Creating Jobs and Housing</i> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Safeguarding our Communities</i> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Bringing down the cost of living</i> | None |
| | <p>All families thrive.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Protecting Doncaster's vital services</i> | None |
| | <p>Council services are modern and value for money.</p> | None |
| | <p>Working with our partners we will provide strong leadership and governance.</p> | None |

RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

36. There are no risks associated with the Council responding to the two consultations on the Government's proposals for high speed rail.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

37. The Council has a series of legal powers and duties in relation to its Borough and residents. It is appropriate that the Council respond to this Consultation in pursuance of those duties both as a Local Authority and a land owner itself. If further work is commissioned externally in relation to this matter that work should be commissioned in accordance with Council Contract Procedure Rules and EU Procurement Regulations. Further bespoke and specific legal advice will be required as this matter progresses further.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

38. The resources to provide an appropriate response to the two consultations on the government's proposals for high speed rail have been considered by previous decisions and met from the Investment & Major Projects budget or partner organisations. Any future outcomes arising from the consultation will need to be assessed for financial implications in their own right.

HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

39. There are no human resources implications associated with the Council responding to the two consultations on the government's proposals for high speed rail.

TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS

40. There are no technology implications associated with the Council responding to the two consultations on the government's proposals for high speed rail.

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

41. There are no equality implications associated with the Council responding to the two consultations on the government's proposals for high speed rail.

CONSULTATION

42. No consultations, other than those above, have been carried out.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

43.
 - i. Command Paper – High Speed Two: From Crewe to Manchester, the West Midlands to Leeds and beyond Moving Britain Ahead November 2016
 - ii. High Speed Two Phase 2b Crewe to Manchester West Midlands to Leeds Property Consultation 2016
 - iii. High Speed Two Phase 2b Crewe to Manchester West Midlands to Leeds Route Refinement Consultation 2016

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