

**NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**CABINET – 14 JANUARY 2014**

Title of report	<b>HIGH SPEED RAIL (HS2) PHASE 2: CONSULTATION IN RESPECT OF PROPOSED ROUTE FROM WEST MIDLANDS TO LEEDS – RESPONSE OF NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</b>
Key Decision	a) Financial Yes/No b) Community Yes
Contacts	Councillor Trevor Pendleton 01509 569746 <a href="mailto:trevor.pendleton@nwleicestershire.gov.uk">trevor.pendleton@nwleicestershire.gov.uk</a>  Director of Services 01530 454555 <a href="mailto:steve.bambrick@nwleicestershire.gov.uk">steve.bambrick@nwleicestershire.gov.uk</a>  Head of Regeneration and Planning 01530 454782 <a href="mailto:david.hughes@nwleicestershire.gov.uk">david.hughes@nwleicestershire.gov.uk</a>
Purpose of report	To outline the Government's proposals for HS2, the potential implications for communities in North West Leicestershire and to agree the Council's response to the current proposals.
Reason for Decision	To establish the Council's position in respect of the HS2 proposals
Council Priorities	Homes and Communities
Implications:  Financial/Staff  Link to relevant CAT  Risk Management  Equalities Impact Assessment  Human Rights  Transformational Government	In the event of HS2 being given the go-ahead it is likely that future more detailed consultations by HS2 and the government will have staffing resource implications on an ongoing basis. These will be managed as far as possible within existing staffing resources but there may be a need for specialist input  None  Failure by the Council to respond to the current consultation would potentially result in local concerns not being considered to the detriment of local communities along the proposed route of HS2.  Not applicable  None discernible  Not applicable

Comments of Head of Paid Service	The report is satisfactory
Comments of Section 151 Officer	The report is satisfactory
Comments of Monitoring Officer	The report is satisfactory
Consultees	Leicestershire County Council HS2 Executive Various affected landowners
Background papers	<p>The Strategic Case for HS2 (Department for Transport)  The Economic Case for HS2 (Department for Transport)  HS2 Regional Economic Impacts (HS2)  Sustainability Statement – Volume 1: main report of the Appraisal of Sustainability (A report by Temple-ERM for HS2 Ltd)  Sustainability Statement – Volume 2: maps (A report by Temple-ERM for HS2 Ltd)  Options for phase two of the high speed rail network (HS2)  Route engineering report (West Midlands to Leeds) ( Department for Transport)  Better Connections – Options for the integration of JS2 (Network Rail)</p> <p>All available at <a href="http://www.hs2.org.uk/phase-two/route-consultation/document-library">www.hs2.org.uk/phase-two/route-consultation/document-library</a></p> <p>Impact of HS2 on the development of Measham Waterside and the associated regeneration of Measham – Moss Naylor Young  <a href="https://www.nwleics.gov.uk/files/documents/moss_naylor_young_limited_report_hs2/Moss%20Naylor%20Young%20Limited%20Report%20-%20HS2.pdf">https://www.nwleics.gov.uk/files/documents/moss_naylor_young_limited_report_hs2/Moss%20Naylor%20Young%20Limited%20Report%20-%20HS2.pdf</a></p>
Recommendations	<p><b>THAT CABINET:</b></p> <p><b>(I) AGREE THE COUNCIL’S RESPONSE TO THE CONSULTATION HAVING REGARD TO THE COMMENTS SET OUT IN SECTION 6 OF THIS REPORT AND;</b></p> <p><b>(II) ASK COUNCIL TO ENDORSE THE RESPONSE AT ITS MEETING OF 21 JANUARY 2014.</b></p>

## 1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Members will be aware that the Government is promoting the construction of a new High Speed rail link (known as HS2) from London to the West Midlands (Phase 1) and then on to Leeds and Manchester (Phase 2).
- 1.2 On 28 January 2013, the Secretary of State announced the initial preferred route for Phase Two. The preferred route for the eastern branch connecting Birmingham with Leeds passed through this district with new stations at Toton (the East Midlands Hub) and Sheffield.

- 1.3 In response to this announcement Council at its meeting of 26 February 2013 agreed the following motion *“North West Leicestershire District Council objects to the proposed HS2 route on the basis that there is no positive impact on the district, its residents and businesses and we urge the Secretary of State to reconsider the proposals and look again at following a route along the A38 to Derby”*.
- 1.4 Following the announcement in January 2013 the Government carried out a period of informal engagement where Ministers met with Members of Parliament affected by the proposed Phase Two route, station and depot options to give MPs an opportunity to raise any initial concerns ahead of the public consultation. The results of these engagement opportunities lead to two changes to the preferred route. One of these is located in this district and proposed to extend the tunnel under East Midlands Airport to minimise the impact on land to the north of the airport which is a potential site for a Strategic Rail Freight Interchange (known as the Roxhill site).
- 1.5 Formal consultation on the proposed route (which reflected the preferred route announced in January 2013 subject to the changes referred to above) commenced in July 2013.
- 1.6 More recently on 25 November 2013 the Government published a Hybrid Bill for phase one of HS2 from London to the West Midlands. The bill sets out in detail the proposed route and once approved will enable the Government to acquire the necessary land to proceed with the project. It is currently anticipated that it will be 2015 at the earliest before the Bill is approved by Parliament.
- 1.7 The purpose of this report is to formulate the Council’s response to the consultation on the proposed route of HS2.
- 1.8 Under the Council’s constitution this is a matter that falls to be determined by Cabinet. However, in view of the significance of this issue it is also proposed that Council be asked to endorse the response agreed by Cabinet on behalf of the Council at its meeting on 21 January 2014.
- 1.9 This report is structured as follows:
  - the current consultation
  - an outline of the route and key facts as they relate to North West Leicestershire
  - justification for HS2
  - what are the likely impacts of HS2 and
  - suggested response to the consultation

## **2.0 THE CONSULTATION**

- 2.1 The current consultation runs until 31<sup>st</sup> January 2014 and seeks views on the proposed Phase Two high speed rail route. The consultation sets out a number of questions upon which responses are sought. Those most pertinent to the eastern branch are set out at Appendix 1 of this report.
- 2.2 Views are also sought on the accompanying Sustainability Appraisal (SA) which describes how the proposed route of HS2 would support objectives for sustainable development and how sustainability issues have been considered.
- 2.3 In addition to the Sustainability Appraisal a number of other reports have also been published including a Strategic Case for HS2 and a detailed Economic Case. All of these documents can be viewed at the HS2 website as identified above in the section on background papers.
- 2.4 As part of the consultation, HS2 held a series of information events at locations close to the proposed Phase Two route between October 2013 and January 2014.

- 2.5 Events in the district were held at Measham Leisure Centre on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2013 (12pm-8pm) and in Ashby at Hood Park Leisure Centre on 5<sup>th</sup> December (12pm-8pm). Based on information provided by HS2, it is estimated that 550 people attended these two events.
- 2.6 Following the consultation the Government is expected to announce its chosen route for Phase Two by the end of 2014 following which detailed engineering designs, an Environmental Impact Assessment and preparation of the Hybrid Bill for Phase Two will commence. The Hybrid Bill is expected to be introduced in 2015, after the next general election.
- 2.7 It is understood that a number of groups and organisations across the district have or will be responding to the current consultation. For members information a summary of those that officers are aware of is provided at Appendix 2 of this report. In the event of additional responses being brought to Officers attention a verbal update will be provided at the meeting.

### **3.0 THE ROUTE**

- 3.1 The preferred route through this district largely follows the route of the A42 as far as Tonge and then cuts under East Midlands Airport before crossing the floodplain of the rivers Trent and Soar and northwards towards Long Eaton.
- 3.2 The preferred route, from south-west to north-east, is described below;
- The HS2 preferred route (identified as HSL06) crosses from Warwickshire into Leicestershire in a cutting alongside the M42 passing to the west of Appleby Parva and Appleby Magna. It then approaches Measham on an embankment, crossing the River Mease on a 17m high viaduct and passing through the Westminster Industrial estate.
  - Continuing in a cutting close to the north side of Measham, it takes the alignment of the existing A42, which is consequently realigned 95m to the north-west.
  - Beyond Measham, the line closely follows the A42 on its south-east side to the north west of Packington, Newbold and Worthington before crossing the A42 and A453 south of Tonge.
  - From its crossing of the A453 near Tonge, the line continues as HSL09 as it approaches Diseworth which is passed in a cutting to the north-west.
  - The line enters a tunnel some 1.9 miles (3km) in length beneath East Midlands Airport and the adjacent site of the proposed strategic rail freight interchange. It emerges to the north east of the proposed strategic rail freight, climbing onto a new embankment as it approaches the M1 just to the north of Junction 24.
  - The A50 and M1 are then crossed to the north-west of Kegworth as the line continues on a 2.1 miles (3.3km) viaduct across the flood plain of the rivers Trent and Soar towards Long Eaton and the proposed station at Toton. The first 1.2 miles (2km) of this viaduct are in Leicestershire, before it crosses the River Soar into Nottinghamshire.
- 3.3 The following key facts provide more information regarding that part of the route that passes through the district (it should be noted that the distances quoted are not exact and may not add up due to rounding up and down):
- The overall length of the preferred route through the district is about 19.5 miles (31 km) which is about 17% of the Birmingham to Leeds leg;
  - The route includes 15 new bridges, 10 over the HS2 and 5 under, 4 viaducts and 1 tunnel.

- The majority of the route through the district is in cuttings (about 9.8 miles or 15.8km) but with 4.5 miles (7.3km) on embankment. A further 2.7 miles (4.4km) is on viaduct, 2.1 miles (3km) in tunnel and the remaining 1.4 miles (2.3km) is at grade (ie at existing ground level).

## 4.0 JUSTIFICATION FOR HS2

4.1 This section of the report considers the justification, as set out in the consultation documents, for HS2 in general and also the proposed route that affects this district.

### General

4.2 A key aim of the Government is to build a balanced and strong economy. The strategic case made by Government is that the development of HS2 will have four overall benefits to the economy:

- Increased capacity on the rail network – i.e. the ability for more people to travel on rail by not only providing a range of new services on HS2, but also releasing capacity on the existing network as a result of passengers diverting to HS2;
- Increased connectivity – i.e. reduced journey times to and from London and other major cities such as Birmingham and Manchester;
- Job creation – primarily jobs associated with the construction of the new railway and associated facilities such as stations and depots. In the long term it is suggested that additional jobs will be created in the manufacturing and maintenance of rolling stock;
- Regeneration – by attracting inward investment along the route of HS2, for example around new stations and existing airports along the route of HS2.

4.3 The economic case involves undertaking a cost-benefit analysis using the Department for Transport's standard cost-benefit analysis framework. The cost-benefit analysis compares the cost and benefits against each other to generate a 'benefit-cost ratio': i.e. the value of benefits that would result from every £1 that the scheme costs.

4.4 The cost-benefit analysis projects that a benefit-cost ratio of 2.3 (i.e. a return of £2.30 for every £1 spent) for the full Y network (Phase One and Two combined) and 1.7 (i.e. a return of £1.70 for every £1 spent) for Phase One on its own. Under the government's assessment system the full Y network would therefore deliver what is termed 'high' value for money, with Phase One on its own will delivering 'medium' value for money. These figures could increase to between 2.8 (i.e. a return of £2.80 for every £1 spent) and 4.5 (i.e. a return of £4.50 for every £1 spent) if assumptions regarding when demand will stop growing (assumed to be 2036) occurs later in 2040 or 2049 respectively.

4.5 A separate regional economic impact study report was published by HS2 in September 2013. This takes a different approach to the cost-benefit analysis by focussing on the potential impact of investment in HS2 on the structure of regional economies. Within the East Midlands the report focuses upon the Derby-Nottingham city region (i.e. excluding North West Leicestershire). The study's overall conclusion is that HS2 could generate £15 billion of additional output per year for the British economy by 2031 (at 2013 prices). For the Derby-Nottingham City Region it is estimated that there will be an increase in labour connectivity of 14.7% and 23.2% in business connectivity. The latter figure is the highest of any City region assessed, including that of Greater London, whilst the labour figure is the third highest.

- 4.6 The overall result of this improved connectivity for both labour and businesses is that the Derby-Nottingham economy would benefit to the tune of between £1.1 billion and £2.2 billion per year, equivalent to between 2.2% and 4.3% economic output.

### **The preferred route**

- 4.7 In determining the most appropriate route for HS2 it was determined that any solution must:

- minimise disruption to the existing network;
- use proven technology that can deliver the desired results;
- be affordable and represent good value to the taxpayer; and
- minimise impacts on local communities and the environment.

- 4.8 In addition, a number of key design principles were factored in to the design of the preferred route including:

- HS2 will be a two track railway (one northbound and one southbound track);
- up to 18 trains per hour could run in each direction on the opening of the full Y network;
- the line of route design seeks to follow existing transport corridors where practicable; and
- the route was to be designed for speeds up to 250mph (400kph). This has implications for the detailed route as to maintain such speed consistently requires the line be kept as straight as possible.

- 4.9 In arriving at a preferred route HS2 examined a number of strategic alternative routes for the West Midlands to Leeds leg followed by more detailed alternatives along the strategic corridor chosen.

- 4.10 More information about these alternatives and the process of determining the preferred route is set out at Appendix 3 of this report. In summary HS2 considered that Toton was the most appropriate location for a station to serve the East Midlands and that the A42 corridor was the preferred strategic corridor. Within this corridor three alternatives were considered and it was determined that a route to the north of Measham was preferable due to less noise impact, although it was more expensive.

## **5.0 WHAT ARE THE LIKELY IMPACTS ON NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE?**

- 5.1 There are a number of potential impacts on North West Leicestershire in terms of the environment, the community and the economy. HS2 have produced factsheets for small sections of the route which accompany the consultation and detail how the proposed route would affect each area. There are two factsheets relevant to North West Leicestershire; these are Birchmoor to Tonge and Tonge to Trowell. Using these factsheets and the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) the implications that have been identified for North West Leicestershire are outlined below.

### **Potential Environmental Impacts**

#### **Landscape and Townscape**

- 5.2 As noted in paragraph 3.3 the majority of the proposed HS2 route through the district would be in cuttings. Whilst this will reduce the impact on the environment there will still be impacts on the landscape. Such impacts include the associated infrastructure such as overhead power lines, gantries for over head lines, viaducts and bridges.
- 5.3 HS2 state that the design of the route, following a transport corridor would keep potential landscape and visual impacts to a minimum and that the design of the line

would seek to reduce impact by introducing landscaping, such as earthworks and the planting of trees, hedgerows and shrubs.

- 5.4 The SA suggests that the eastern leg of the proposed route would have no direct or indirect impacts on any nationally designated landscapes and that there are no areas within the district where HS2 is identified as having a high impact on landscape character.
- 5.5 There are however, two areas within the district where the impacts on landscape character are judged to be moderate. These areas are south of Tonge, where the embanked route would affect the landscape setting of the village and Conservation Area and land to the east of the junction 24 of the M1, where the railway would be an intrusive new landscape element crossing the flat River Soar floodplain, parallel to but separate from the existing (embanked) A453.

## **Wildlife and Habitats**

### **River Mease Special Area of Conservation**

- 5.6 Members will be aware that the River Mease is designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC), a European level designation, because of its valued (mainly aquatic) species. In selecting the proposed route HS2 notes that one of the main drivers for route selection between Water Orton and Toton was how to avoid or minimise any impact on the River Mease SAC. The proposed route crosses the River Mease SAC at Measham.
- 5.7 The SA considers that the route to the north of Measham is more favourable than the other options considered as it crosses a narrower part of the floodplain and so reduces the shadowing affect on the river from any bridge structure and makes a more direct crossing of the river with a shorter viaduct structure.
- 5.8 HS2 are working with Natural England and the Environment Agency and have undertaken a Screening Opinion and a draft Appropriate Assessment, the provisional conclusion of the latter was that the River Mease crossing would not have an adverse effect on the SAC. Natural England has agreed with this provisional conclusion.

### **Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)**

- 5.9 The River Mease is also a SSSI designated for similar reasons to the River Mease SAC. The SA states that the effects on the River Mease SSSI from the proposed crossing would be negligible, as they are for the SAC.
- 5.10 The proposed route passes in close proximity to Lount Meadows SSSI where some areas would be at potential risk from changes in hydrology. As the proposed route passes Lount Meadows it is on an embankment and HS2 state that this would need to be designed in order to allow the free-passage of surface-water beneath the proposed route. HS2 identify that effects on the site are likely to be major adverse but mitigable through detailed design.
- 5.11 During the construction of HS2 the SA also identifies that there is limited potential for disturbance of birds at Lockington Marshes SSSI as the proposed route crosses a branch of the Hemington Brook.

### **Heritage**

- 5.12 In terms of heritage assets the proposed route would potentially result in the demolition of the Grade II Listed Meer Bridge at Measham. The proposed route is on a viaduct at this stage and as a result it is possible that the bridge might be

preserved. The SA states that impacts on the setting would be minor. If the feature is demolished the impact would be moderate.

- 5.13 There are also another 15 Listed Buildings within 100metres and 450 metres of the proposed route, although not on it. There are two Grade II\* Listed Buildings which lie further afield and where the parks associated with these are identified as Registered Historic Parks and Gardens (Coleorton Hall and Staunton Harold Hall). In both cases the SA suggests that the impact on the buildings and associated parks would be negligible.

### **Potential Community Impacts**

#### **Noise**

- 5.14 Within the SA, noise impact on dwellings has been assessed over an 18-hour daytime period (i.e. 6am to midnight when it is expected that services would largely operate). A number of areas are predicted to suffer from residual noise impacts which are categorised as areas where there will be a noticeable increase in noise experienced or areas where noise insulation may be required. Based on information in the factsheets it is estimated that some 1,201 dwellings in North West Leicestershire will be affected by noise, of which 162 will potentially require noise insulation and 1,039 would be affected by a noticeable increase.
- 5.15 Those dwellings requiring noise insulation are concentrated in Measham whilst other settlements where there will be noticeable noise increases include Appleby Parva, Packington, New Packington, Ashby, Lount, Newbold, Worthington, Breedon on the Hill and Tonge.
- 5.16 The SA notes that a more detailed impact regarding noise will be undertaken when a decision on the final route has been made.

#### **Construction**

- 5.17 HS2 expects the route would be open to passengers in 2033 although there is no information at this time in respect of any time frame for construction. There will inevitably be disruption during construction including noise and air pollution and roads and other access routes temporarily affected whilst new infrastructure is constructed. The exact impact and implications are not clear at this stage.

#### **Physical Impacts**

- 5.18 There are a number of communities that would be in close proximity to the preferred route including Appleby Parva, Appleby Magna, Measham, Packington, New Packington, Ashby, Worthington and Tonge. High speed rail is not a means of transport that many residents will have experience of and it will take some time to obtain a clear idea of the visual, noise and atmospheric impacts and the potential effects of land and community severance.

#### **Visual Impacts**

- 5.19 In terms of visual impacts, the SA identifies that the area around Tonge would be one of seven areas along the eastern branch which would be subject to major impacts. This is due to the high level crossing of the A42 which would intrude into the foreground of distinctive views from local roads to Breedon on the Hill.
- 5.20 Visual impacts that are considered to be more than slight are identified as follows:
- Appleby Parva (around 300m from the proposed route) minor or moderate impact.



- Worthington (around 350 metres from the proposed route) minor visual intrusion
- Breedon on the Hill (700m from the proposed route) and Tonge (200 metres from the proposed route) moderate or locally major visual impacts
- North of the A453 at Kegworth moderate impact (although limited impact from Kegworth itself)

### **Community Facilities**

- 5.21 There is no evidence that any community buildings in the district would be directly affected by the proposed route.

### **Community Severance**

- 5.22 HS2 have highlighted that the route could result in the isolation of the residential communities at Worthington. It is presumed that this refers to the fact that there are a number of residential properties to the west of Worthington which would be located between the routes of the A42 and HS2 and so would be physically separated from other settlements.

### **Potential Economic Impacts**

#### **Agriculture**

- 5.23 The proposed route would pass through a number of areas of Grade 2 Agricultural Land (which together with Grade 3a represents the best and most versatile agricultural land) within the district. This would not only result in the loss of agricultural land but would also result in severance issues for the management of the agricultural holdings. The remainder of the route largely crosses Grade 3 Agricultural Land together with Grade 4 land.

#### **Tourism and Recreation**

- 5.24 The proposed route cuts through the National Forest which is a tourism and recreation destination of vital importance to the economy of the district.

#### **Transport Networks and Access**

- 5.25 Several roads will require permanent or temporary re-alignment. These include:
- A444 at Appleby Magna,
  - A42 west of Measham
  - Tamworth Road, Rectory Lane, Huntingdon Way, Burton Road, New Street at Measham
  - the B4116 near Packington
  - Ashby Road, Leicester Road and the A511 at Ashby;
  - The A512,
  - Melbourne Road, Long Hedge Lane, Breedon Lane, Stocking Lane near Breedon-on-the-Hill

- 5.26 HS2 intends that the effect on cycle routes and footpaths will be addressed as more detailed planning work is done.

#### **Property and Business**

- 5.27 The proposed route would result in the demolition of commercial properties at the Westminster Industrial Estate in Measham. In total it is estimated that within 60 metres of the proposed route there are 16 business properties (some of which are currently vacant) which would potentially need to be demolished. The most

significant of which would be Plastic Omnium an international company with its only UK research and development centre located at the plant in Measham.

- 5.28 In addition, it would also be necessary to realign the access to the Westminster Industrial Estate from Burton Road.
- 5.29 The preferred route would also result in the loss of two major hotels, the Best Western Appleby Park Hotel at Appleby Magna and the Hilton hotel at junction 24 of the M1.
- 5.30 There is no evidence in HS2's publications that the route will result in the demolition of any residential properties within the district. The proposed route runs close to properties along Amersham Way, Measham (within about 50 metres) and a retaining wall is proposed at this location to reduce visibility and noise impacts on nearby properties.
- 5.31 In order to provide assistance to people whose properties may be affected the Government has introduced a discretionary Exceptional Hardship Scheme (EHS).

### **Development at Measham Waterside**

- 5.32 The proposed route would run through the western extent of land to the west of Measham which had been included in the Council's now withdrawn Core Strategy as a Broad Location and where the Council has resolved to grant planning permission on the site for the development of up to 450 residential dwellings to include the reinstatement of 0.6 miles (1.1km) of the Ashby Canal (known as Measham Waterside). As currently proposed the sites capacity would be significantly reduced to about 250 dwellings if the proposed HS2 route were to go ahead in its current form.

## **6.0 SUGGESTED RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION**

- 6.1 A project of the scale of HS2 will inevitably have significant impacts, both positive and negative. In considering the Council's response to the current consultation it is important to recognise that it is difficult for the Council to comment upon the principle of HS2 as a proposal as it does not have the available expertise to assess the proposals in the minutiae. However, the District Council does have a responsibility to ensure that the interests of the district and its communities are adequately addressed.
- 6.2 Therefore, in responding to the consultation it is suggested that the Council restrict itself to those questions set out at Appendix 1 of this report each of which is considered below.

(iv) Do you agree or disagree with the Government's proposed route between West Midlands and Leeds as described in Chapter 8? This includes the proposed route alignment, the location of tunnels, ventilation shafts, cuttings, viaducts and depots as well as how the high speed line will connect to the East Coast Main Line.

- 6.3 Para 4.10.2 of the Strategic Case notes that "*The proposed line of route has been carefully designed to avoid or reduce local environmental effects wherever possible by seeking to avoid the most significant impacts on centres of population*".
- 6.4 The SA suggests that most of the identified impacts are capable of being mitigated. However, it is still the case that there will be an impact upon local communities close to the preferred route. For example the SA acknowledges that there will be a moderate impact upon the landscape in the vicinity of Tonge; moderate visual impacts upon Appleby Parva, Breedon on the Hill, Tonge (possibly rising to major)

and Kegworth; a loss of best and most versatile agricultural land as well as various economic impacts.

- 6.5 In addition, there are concerns that some of these impacts have been underestimated. Of particular concern is that of noise which has used an 18-hour assessment period. Such an approach fails to adequately take account of significant individual noise episodes which occur, such as the passing of a train. Therefore, each train may cause significant short-term disturbance without having a noticeable effect upon the time weighted average.
- 6.6 Furthermore, it is difficult to see how the principle set out at paragraph 4.10.2 of the Strategic Case has been complied with in the case of Measham. The preferred route goes through the middle of an important employment area and passes within less than 50 metres of existing dwellings.
- 6.7 The SA has also failed to take proper account of the National Forest which although not a national landscape designation, is of significance to the environment and economy of the district.
- 6.8 The Strategic Case for HS2 identifies four key benefits for the economy that it is suggested would result from the construction of HS2 (i.e. increased capacity, increased connectivity, job creation and regeneration). An assessment of each of these demonstrates that none of these will be realised in North West Leicestershire.

*Increased capacity and connectivity*

- 6.9 In terms of connectivity an assessment has been made of the journey time from Coalville to London both with and without HS2. This is done to illustrate the potential time saving that residents could potentially benefit from as a result of HS2 based on the current proposals. Travel time by car to the respective stations is based on information from the RAC Route Planner website so as to ensure a consistent comparison.
- 6.10 It currently takes 29 minutes to travel by car from the Council Offices to Leicester train station (the nearest mainline station with the best direct connections to London). The current journey time by train from Leicester to London is 1 hour 9 minutes. Therefore, the total journey time from Coalville to London is currently 1 hour 37 minutes.
- 6.11 The journey time (by car) to Toton where the East Midlands hub would be located is 28 minutes. Figure 4.7 of Strategic Case identifies a journey time from Toton (East Midlands Hub) to London of 51 minutes. Therefore, total journey time from Coalville would be 1hr 19 minutes.
- 6.12 The introduction of HS2 would, therefore, represent a saving of 18 minutes over current times. However, a report from Network Rail (Better Connections Options for the integration of High Speed 2) suggests that as result of HS2 there will be opportunities to "*deliver a faster, more frequent service from Leicester into London*". In addition, the Midland Mainline through Leicester is to be electrified which will result in a journey time of about 1 hour, reducing the time saving to less than 10 minutes. It is considered, therefore, that in terms of journey times that a saving of 10 minutes would not represent a significant advantage to the residents of the district.
- 6.13 Furthermore, as there are no passenger services which directly serve North West Leicestershire any additional capacity that results from HS2 will have limited impact.
- 6.14 Therefore, it is considered that the increased capacity and connectivity that would result from HS2 would not be of direct benefit to the district or its residents. The

Council would seek that some of the additional capacity that would be realised in the existing rail network would be invested in the former passenger railway routes such as the National Forest line from Leicester to Burton.

#### *Job creation*

- 6.15 Any jobs created as part of the construction of HS2 will be of a temporary nature albeit over a reasonable period of time. Unless there is any specific commitment to employ people from the locality through which the HS2 line is proposed to pass, there will be no guarantee that residents of the district will benefit from such employment opportunities. It is, however, likely that there would be some benefits as a result of construction workers spending money within the local economy – for example for food, drink and accommodation. But once again these will be of a temporary nature and of an uncertain amount. In terms of other job creation benefits such as maintenance of rolling stock, there are no plans to locate any depots within the district.
- 6.16 The preferred route rather than creating jobs will actually result in the loss of both existing and potential jobs. In terms of existing jobs it is estimated that some 425 jobs will be lost as a result of the demolition of the Plastic Omnium factory on the Westminster Estate. Plastic Omnium have indicated that their only option will be to relocate out of North West Leicestershire. Therefore, these 425 jobs will be lost in Measham. In addition, a number of jobs will also be lost as a result of the demolition of two units at Huntington Court also on the Westminster Estate.
- 6.17 Furthermore, 800-1,000 potential jobs will be lost as a result of the preferred route going through the site of the former Lounge Disposal Point to the east of Ashby de la Zouch where planning permission has been granted for a 1million square foot distribution centre.

#### *Regeneration*

- 6.18 As there are no stations proposed in North West Leicestershire, there are no regeneration benefits associated with HS2. In fact from a regeneration perspective the preferred route will have significant negative consequences on the regeneration of Measham as a result of passing through a proposed housing site to the west of Measham (Measham Waterside). It was envisaged that this development would act as a catalyst for both the restoration of the Ashby Canal through to the centre of Measham and the regeneration of the High Street area of Measham. Consultants (Moss Naylor Young) engaged by the site promoter (Ideal Country Homes) to estimate the impact on Measham's economy, taking account of the impact upon Measham Waterside, including the ability to deliver the restoration of the Ashby Canal and the loss of jobs at Plastic Omnium estimate the loss to Measham's economy to be in the order of £130million between 2015 and 2034.
- 6.19 Although not specifically a regeneration issue the preferred route also impacts upon a number of potential housing sites (not just Measham Waterside) included in the Council's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment which will affect the ability of the Council to deliver its housing requirements and also conflicts with the Government's stated aim of increasing the supply of new housing.
- 6.20 On the basis of the above it is concluded that the preferred route of HS2 will not provide the benefits to North West Leicestershire which the government has identified will result from HS2. Indeed, for the reasons set out above, there will be significant negative impacts upon the communities of the district with no benefits in return. Whilst the alternative routes through the district would lessen some of these impacts, for example by avoiding existing and proposed development at Measham, it

is still considered that any route through the district will not deliver the benefits identified by the government and therefore, the Council should **object** to the preferred route.

6.21 In coming to a view on the final route it is important that the Government and HS2 takes full account of all the comments and suggestions made by various organisations and individuals from across North West Leicestershire, including those summarised at Appendix 2 of this report.

6.22 Notwithstanding the above objection, in the event that it is decided that the current proposed route is to be taken forward the Council would wish to engage constructively with Government and HS2 in respect of compensatory measures designed to minimise and offset the impact upon local communities. This would include, but is not limited to, details of landscaping and attenuation measures to minimise the impact of noise and visual intrusion along the route of HS2 and to agree financial compensation for local communities.

(v) Do you agree or disagree with the Government's proposals for:

c. An East Midlands station to be located at Toton as described in Chapter 8 (sections 8.3.1 – 8.3.6)?

6.23 Locating a station at Toton would necessitate the preferred route coming through North West Leicestershire. In view of the response to question (iv) it is considered that the Council should oppose a station at Toton and instead support the provision of a new station at Derby. This would avoid the need for the proposed route to come through North West Leicestershire and could also help to deliver regeneration benefits to Derby.

(vi) Do you think that there should be any additional stations on the eastern leg between the West Midlands and Leeds?

6.24 In order to provide direct , tangible benefits to the local communities in North West Leicestershire it is considered that there should be a new station located within the district.

(vii) Please let us know your comments on the Appraisal of Sustainability (as reported in the Sustainability Statement) of the Government's proposed Phase Two route, including the alternatives to the proposed route as described in Chapter 9.

6.25 See comments under (iv)

(viii) Please let us know your comments on how the capacity that would be freed up on the existing rail network by the introduction of the proposed Phase Two route could be used as described in Chapter 10?

6.26 As outlined in response to question (iv) in the event that it is decided to go ahead with HS2 (whether along the preferred route or an alternative) the Council would want to see consideration be given to re-opening former passenger rail routes such as that between Leicester and Burton-upon-Trent. This would help to improve the connectivity of the district and would, in the event that the route goes through North West Leicestershire, help to offset some of the negative impacts that results for the communities of the district.

**CONSULTATION QUESTIONS IN RESPECT OF THE EASTERN BRANCH OF THE PROPOSED ROUTE FOR HS2 FROM BIRMINGHAM TO LEEDS**

- (iv) Do you agree or disagree with the Government's proposed route between West Midlands and Leeds as described in Chapter 8? This includes the proposed route alignment, the location of tunnels, ventilation shafts, cuttings, viaducts and depots as well as how the high speed line will connect to the East Coast Main Line.
- (v) Do you agree or disagree with the Government's proposals for:
  - a. A Leeds station at Leeds New Lane as described in Chapter 8 (sections 8.8.1 – 8.8.5)?
  - b. A South Yorkshire station to be located at Sheffield Meadowhall as described in Chapter 8 (sections 8.5.1 – 8.5.8)?
  - c. An East Midlands station to be located at Toton as described in Chapter 8 (sections 8.3.1 – 8.3.6)?
- (vi) Do you think that there should be any additional stations on the eastern leg between the West Midlands and Leeds?
- (vii) Please let us know your comments on the Appraisal of Sustainability (as reported in the Sustainability Statement) of the Government's proposed Phase Two route, including the alternatives to the proposed route as described in Chapter 9.
- (viii) Please let us know your comments on how the capacity that would be freed up on the existing rail network by the introduction of the proposed Phase Two route could be used as described in Chapter 10?

## **SUMMARY OF LIKELY RESPONSE FROM OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES**

### **Ideal Country Homes for the Measham Waterside Development (Moss Naylor Young Ltd Report)**

The Report identifies the adverse economic impacts of the proposed route on Measham's economy. The Report states that it would result in the loss of over £130 million to the Measham economy between 2015 and 2034, including the loss of 425 existing jobs at Plastic Omnium.

The Report promotes the advantages of the route to the south of Measham. This route (identified by HS2 as HLS07) leaves the A42 corridor south of Appleby Parva and travels on the southern side of Appleby Parva, Appleby Magna and Measham and realigns with the A42 to the north of Packington, as it reaches Ashby. This route would avoid both the Plastic Omnium unit and the Measham Waterside development site.

### **Tonge and Breedon HS2 Action Group (TABAG)**

The Tonge & Breedon HS2 Action Group (TABAG) represent 57 member households in the villages of Tonge and Breedon on the Hill.

TABAG opposes the construction of HS2 for all the reasons which have been set out by the national opposition groups (including HS2 Action Alliance and STOP HS2). TABAG's objections include the following;

- the economic case for HS2 is flawed,
- increasing costs of the project;
- consider that there are more cost effective ways of increasing capacity on existing railway lines;
- consider that there is no global evidence that High Speed Rail generates returns and;
- they consider, as many authorities suggest, far greater economic benefit would be gained by investing the same amount of public money in rail, road and internet infrastructure across the country.

In terms of the proposed route TABAG profoundly disagree with the proposed route between Ashby de la Zouch and Toton on the grounds that there are alternative routes which would save some £ ½ billion and could use the existing East Midlands Parkway as an alternative to Toton (an alternative route has been proposed by TABAG which departs from Ashby veering North Easterly until it reaches the area of the A42 / M1 interchange where it veers more Northerly to pass West of Kegworth before re-joining the HS2 Preferred Route to the West of Ratcliffe Power Station).

TABAG offer an alternative route that completely avoids the need for the extended tunnel under the Airport and Roxhill site. TABAG states that if an alternative route was unacceptable an alternative approach would be to lower the proposed route by 8 metres in the area of Tonge and Breedon to reduce the environmental impact of HS2 on those communities and improve the overall sustainability of the whole HS2 project.

### **East Midlands Airport**

The proposed route includes a 3km tunnel under East Midlands Airport. It is understood that the Manchester Airport Group (owners of East Midlands Airport) will be submitting comments in response to the consultation.

## **Lounge Site, Ashby**

The 34.80ha site has planning permission for the development of a rail connected distribution building and associated works. This site sits adjacent to the A42 and A511 and the proposed HS2 route runs through the western extent of the site. It is understood that the site owners (Haworth Estates and Gazeley) have/will be submitting an objection in view of the impact upon their site.



## SUMMARY OF ALTERNATIVE ROUTES AND LOCATIONS FOR STATIONS CONSIDERED IN THE EAST MIDLANDS

The following strategic corridors to serve the East Midlands were considered:

- East from Birmingham/West Midlands to Leicester and then north to Nottingham or north-east to Newark – rejected due to longer journey times than to stations at Derby or Nottingham and likely extra cost;
- Along the A42 corridor to Nottingham;
- Along the A38 corridor to Derby – rejected due to construction issues through Burton Upon Trent and noise impact on National Memorial Arboretum;
- Initially along the A42 before diverting to the A38 corridor;
- Route to the east of Coalville and north-west of Leicester – rejected due to additional time and cost that would result

Having sifted through the various alternatives the A42 corridor route to a station at Toton and the combined A42/A38 route to a station at Derby were taken forward for more detailed assessment.

In terms of the A42 corridor (within North West Leicestershire) the River Mease Special Area of Conservation (SAC) was recognised as a specific issue which would need to be addressed. The three options around the Measham area considered were:

- cross the River Mease SAC to the north of Measham
- cross the River Mease SAC to the south of Measham
- avoid the River Mease SAC and Measham by running further to the east.

In determining which route to follow, the initial key determinant was where the station to serve the East Midlands was to be located. This also involved a sifting process to arrive at the preferred choice, which included the consideration of three possible sites in North West Leicestershire (at East Midlands Airport, at Kegworth and at Lockington) all of which were rejected.

Consideration was also given to have a station at East Midlands Parkway but this was rejected due to cost and the fact that it is located within the Green Belt which was taken to mean that development “*would not be supported*”.

Stations in the centre of Derby and Nottingham were also rejected on the grounds of insufficient demand to justify more than one service per hour.

It was concluded therefore, that Toton was the preferred location for a station to serve the East Midlands, although on the advice of Network Rail it is recognised that further work would be required to consider the likely impact upon existing services as in this respect East Midlands Parkway performed better.

Having chosen Toton as the site for a station it follows, therefore, that the A42/A38 corridor option to Derby was not appropriate and so the Preferred Route would follow the A42 corridor.

There remained the question of which of the three options should be followed. It was concluded that the route which avoided Measham and the River Mease SAC performed worst in terms of sustainability. Of the two options via Measham, the performance of the options would be generally similar with the route via the north of Measham having a slightly higher cost. However, it was highlighted in the Appraisal of Sustainability options that a larger number of people would be potentially affected by noise from the route via the south of Measham. It was, therefore, concluded that the route to the north of Measham was preferred.