

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

21 JANUARY 2014

ITEM 10 – HIGH SPEED RAIL (HS2) PHASE 2: CONSULTATION IN RESPECT OF PROPOSED ROUTE FROM WEST MIDLANDS TO LEEDS – RESPONSE OF NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

RESPONSE FROM PACKINGTON NOOK RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

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For online submission

HS2 Phase 2 Consultation Response on behalf of Packington Nook Residents' Association

January 2014

QUESTION 4 - 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 shaft, cuttings, viaducts and depots as well as how the high speed line will connect to the East Coast Main Line.

Answer 4: We disagree that the route chosen in North West Leicestershire near to Appleby Parva, Measham, Packington and Ashby de la Zouch is the best available route. The HSL06 route is the worst possible option that could have been chosen in terms of blight on the local population, particularly with respect to noise, which is already considerable along this length due to A42. The effects on local employment at the Westminster Industrial Estate in Measham and Lounge site north of Ashby de la Zouch are also considerable.

The alternative route HSL08 - Birchmoor (B) to Tonge via Twycross (G) - shown in the initial HS2 Engineering Options Report (HS2-ARP-000RP-RW-007 March 2012) [*Appendix 1 of this response*] distances most of the major habitations on this section and avoids having to realign the A42 and reduce junction remodelling described in paragraph 8.2.1. For much of its length it would cross land previously used for opencast extraction and of limited landscape value.

At the consultation meeting in Ashby de la Zouch we were told that this option was still being considered, but that the A42 was seen as a "Transport Corridor" where residents were "used to noise". This statement is a complete distortion of the current situation since firstly it is not a "Transport Corridor" it is just a Trunk Road connecting into the local network. There is no existing railway to make it a "Transport Corridor". Secondly the current level of noise from A42 is recognised by Environment Agency Maps as being very high over a large part of the built-up area. Adding to it further will only make the current disruption more

unacceptable for properties nearby. Furthermore, the noise simulations at the Consultation Meeting provided levels of background noise from the A42 that were not representative of those in Ashby for which a large part is raised above the road on a hill, nor did they fully represent the expected noise levels from HS2.

Further comments on this are provided in our Question 7 response. The potential effect on Packington is also extremely significant.

The alternative HSL08 route appears to have been overlooked in favour of a route that may give marginal advantage on limited criteria.

Paragraph 8.2.3 of the latest consultation document refers to the options at the River Mease Special Area of Conservation and suggests that the route to the east of Measham, which is not defined but is assumed to be HSL08, would generally have more sustainability impacts. However the Engineering Options Report states that much of this alternative route would be in cutting and would cross land that has been opencast in the past, so must be assumed to have low landscape intrusion. The omission in the report is the environmental effects, particularly of noise on the residents of Appleby Parva, Measham, Packington and Ashby de la Zouch of the preferred HSL06 route and the questionable sustainability.

Therefore we submit that there is no proper comparison of the total effects of the proposed HSL06 route compared with the alternative HSL08, including the total effects on residents.

QUESTION 5 - PROPOSALS FOR STATIONS

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)?

Answer 5c: Yes, We accept the argument that it serves the region better than the alternatives.

QUESTION 6 – ADDITIONAL STATIONS

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

Answer 6: The problem is that short distances between stations will not allow the speed benefits of HS2 to be utilised, however a station for Ashby de la Zouch/Coalville would have high economic benefits for Leicestershire, which is unlikely to benefit in any way from the current proposals.

QUESTION 7 – APPRAISAL OF SUSTAINABILITY

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.

Answer 7: Paragraph 1.3 of the Sustainability Statement proposes 7 themes for the HS2 Sustainability Policy and we comment on some of these as follows:

Growth and Regeneration. The proposed route past Ashby de la Zouch and Measham will have an adverse effect locally because of the effects on local employment areas at Westminster Estate in Measham and Lounge. There are no compensating improvements from the growth generated elsewhere.

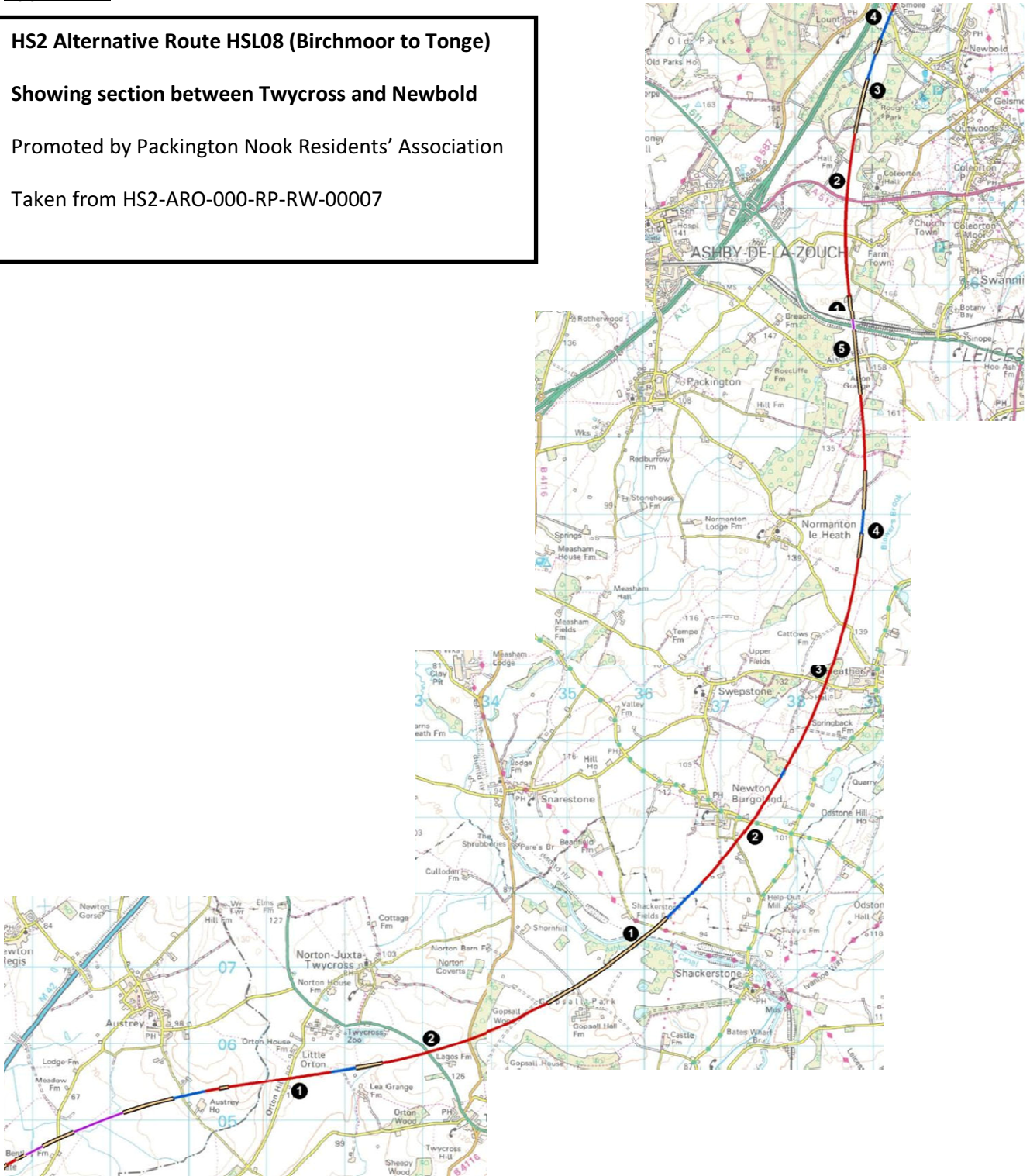
Environmental Change – to avoid significant adverse effects. There are very significant impacts along the route where existing noise levels will be grossly exacerbated by the trains planned every 3 minutes. Proposed mitigation is welcomed, but it was admitted at the Ashby de la Zouch Consultation that the noise effects are not fully known because nowhere else in Europe are trains running at the planned speeds.

Residential Noise Impacts are summarized in Paragraph 6.6.4 and locally the only significant local impact is suggested to be Measham. This ignores the expected noise impact on Ashby de la Zouch and Packington, particularly from the section on viaduct over the Gilwiskaw Brook between Ashby de la Zouch and Packington [*Appendix 2 of this response*]. The significant current noise generated on the raised Gilwiskaw Brook section of A42 is conveniently ignored. We suggest that actual measurements be taken in the A42 corridor as opposed to simulations that seem to underestimate current noise levels.

Paragraph 6.8.1 - Potential Health Impacts - conveniently ignores the WHO advice on health impacts of noise at relatively low levels, which will be relevant over a wider area than suggested by the noise analysis.

Appendix 1

HS2 Alternative Route HSL08 (Birchmoor to Tonge)
Showing section between Twycross and Newbold
Promoted by Packington Nook Residents' Association
Taken from HS2-ARO-000-RP-RW-00007



Appendix 2

The crossing of the Gilwiskaw Brook between Ashby de la Zouch and Packington.

From High Speed Rail: Consultation on the route from: *West Midlands to Manchester, Leeds and beyond Sustainability Statement- Appendix E5 Water* (A report by Temple ERM for HS2 Ltd)

Route section	Watercourse Name	Catchment Size (km ²)	Assumed Crossing Type	Design Informative
HSL06 (Birchmoor to Tonge)	Gilwiskaw Brook (LE0626)	14	Viaduct	<p>As the route passes Packington, a viaduct carries the route over the floodplain of the Gilwiskaw Brook. The viaduct is alongside and downstream of the A42. The southern approach embankment lies very close to the channel of the Gilwiskaw Brook, and the viaduct may need to be extended slightly to the south to avoid adversely affecting the watercourse. At the crossing location, a series of sharp meanders in the river channel increase the likelihood that channel works may be required to prevent viaduct piers from obstructing channel flows.</p> 