



**Report Reference Number: E/18/37**

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**To: Executive**  
**Date: 10 January 2019**  
**Status: Non key decision**  
**Ward(s) Affected: All**  
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**Lead Executive Member: Cllr John Mackman, Lead Executive Member for Place Shaping**  
**Lead Officer: Dave Caulfield, Director of Economic Regeneration and Place**

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**Title: HS2 Working Draft Environmental Statement**

**Summary:**

This report provides the Executive with an update on High Speed 2 (HS2) and specifically the Working Draft Environmental Statement (WDES) which was recently out for public consultation. The WDES details the likely environmental impacts of building and operating Phase 2b of HS2, as well as setting out the proposed ways to avoid, reduce, mitigate and monitor the effects

**Recommendations:**

- i. The Executive notes the contents of this report
- ii. The Executive notes the consultation response which was submitted to HS2 Ltd on 20<sup>th</sup> December 2018 (copy provided at Appendix A).

**Reasons for recommendation**

The Executive is asked to note the comments which were submitted to HS2 Ltd on 20<sup>th</sup> December 2018.

**1. Introduction and background**

- 1.1 HS2 is a new high speed railway proposed by the Government to connect major cities in Britain. It will be built in two phases. Phase one comprises approximately 140 miles between London and the West Midlands. Phase two of HS2 will extend the line to the north west and north east and will be constructed in two phases:

- Phase 2a – the western section of phase two between the West Midlands and Crewe
- Phase 2b – comprising the remainder of phase two, between Crewe and Manchester and between the West Midlands and Church Fenton.

**1.2** Construction of phase 2b is expected to start in 2023 and operation is planned to start by 2033. Officers from Selby District Council and North Yorkshire County Council have had ongoing involvement with HS2 Ltd on the technical development process involved with continuing route design and refinement. North Yorkshire County Council also submitted a response to the WDES relating to this section of the route.

**1.3** The WDES sets out the proposed scheme and its likely significant environmental effects based on a stage in the ongoing design and assessment. The assessment will be updated for the formal ES to reflect the changes following the consultation and further work on the design and assessment between now and when the hybrid Bill is deposited in parliament in mid-2020. Consultation on the WDES was not a statutory requirement, however HS2 Ltd recognises the importance of ensuring widespread engagement on the proposed scheme. The period of public consultation took place between 11<sup>th</sup> October and 21<sup>st</sup> December 2018 and provided Selby District Council with the opportunity to submit formal comments on the scheme.

**1.4** The Council's position on HS2 was formalised by the Executive on 7 June 2018, where it was agreed that if the development of the route goes ahead, Selby District Council should seek to minimise any adverse local impacts as well as maximise the benefits for Selby District's residents and businesses.

## **2. Working Draft Environmental Statement**

**2.1** The WDES is made up of a collection of documents and can be viewed online at <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/hs2-phase-2b-working-draft-environmental-statement>. Volume 1 provides the introduction and methodology and offers an overview of the proposed route and the environmental impact process. Volume 2 sets out community area reports and maps and describes the likely significant route-wide environmental effects of construction and operation, based on the current level of design.

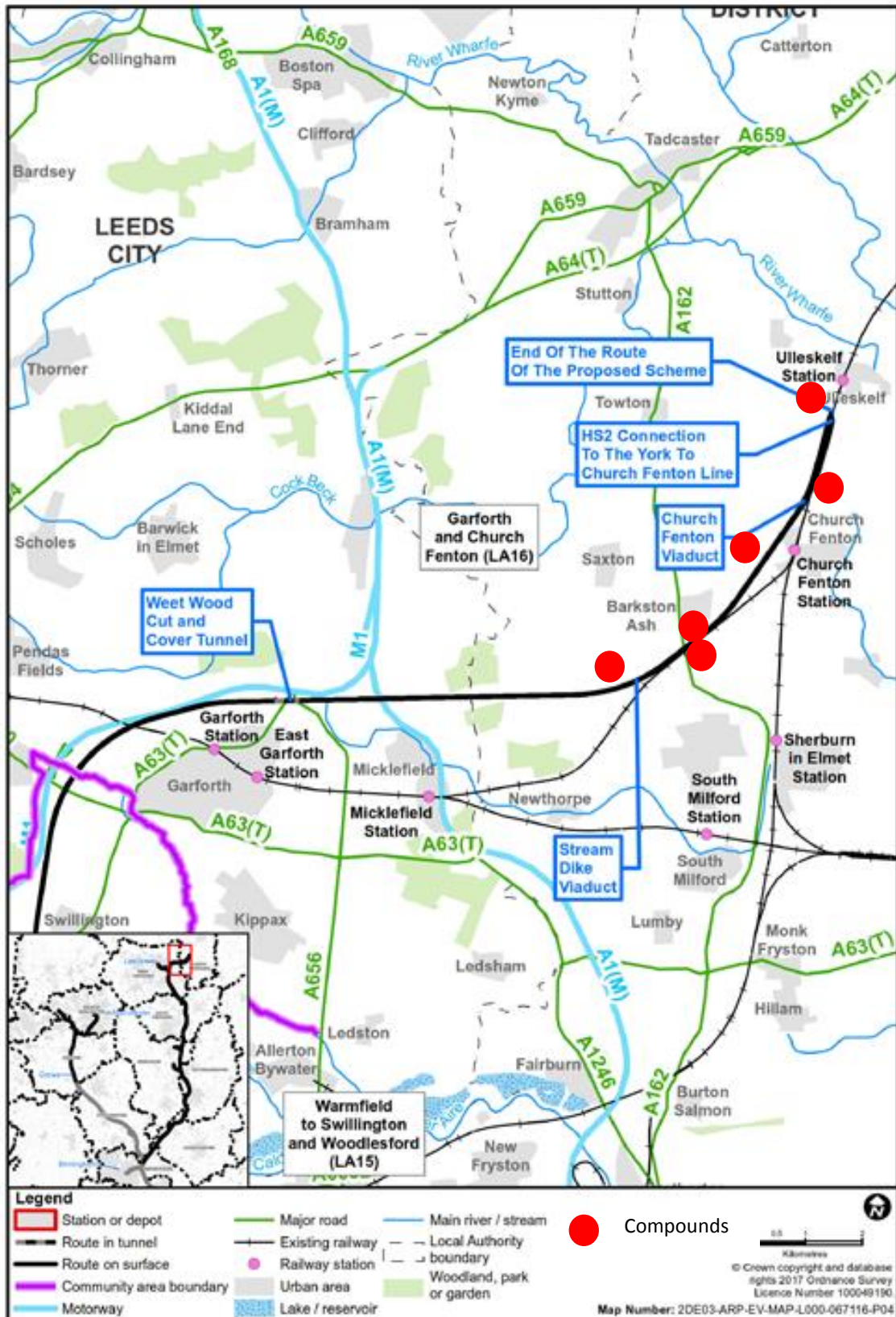
**2.2** Volume 3 sets out the likely significant route-wide environmental effects of the construction and operation, based on the current level of design. Volume 4 details the likely off-route works (where locations are known) and the approach to their assessment.

**2.3** For environmental assessment and community engagement purposes, the proposed scheme has been divided into 28 different community areas. Selby District Council is impacted by the Garforth to Church Fenton community area which is subject to its own community area report and map book, detailing the construction phase and the proposed scheme.

### **3. Community Area: Garforth to Church Fenton**

- 3.1** The Garforth to Church Fenton section of the line is approximately 16 km in length and lies within the local authority areas of Selby and Leeds. Map 1, overleaf, identifies the extent of this part of the route and shows where the route will join the existing York to Church Fenton railway line, just south of Ulleskelf.
- 3.2** The route is proposed to travel east from Micklefield in cutting, passing under the Great North Road and the A1(M) and then into Selby District on embankment. The route is then proposed to cross Stream Dike, north east of Sherburn in Elmet, on a short section of viaduct and then continue north-east on embankment to the south of Barkston Ash. The route is then proposed to move onto viaduct between south west of Church Fenton at Common Road and south of Ulleskelf, where it would continue on embankment and connect to the existing Church Fenton to York line at Ulleskelf.
- 3.3** In addition to the route, there are 6 satellite construction compounds proposed in Selby District at Stream Dike (Coldhill Lane), two close to Barkston Ash (both close to London Road), two at Church Fenton (Common Road and Mires Lane) and one south of Ulleskelf (Wath Lane). Their approximate locations are shown as red dots on the plan overleaf.

Map 1: Garforth to Church Fenton Community Area



#### **4. Selby District Council response**

- 4.1** A copy of the Council's response is provided at Appendix A. A summary of the main issues raised are provided below.
- 4.2** The limestone ridge in this area (stretching from the border with Leeds district to Barkston Ash) is designated as a Locally Important Landscape Area (LILA) in the Selby District Local Plan. The value and sensitivity of this landscape has not been recognised within the WDES and the reason why this section is placed on an 11m high embankment, at the highest point of the ridgeline, is unclear and will inevitably cause significant adverse landscape and visual effects. Furthermore, the significance of Huddleston Hall (a Grade II\* Listed Building on the at-risk register) is not recognised and mitigation is absent. There are serious concerns that if the impact upon the hall is too great, it could preclude efforts to bring the building back into a sound state of repair.
- 4.3** The height, length and scale of Barkston Ash Embankment and Church Fenton Viaduct are substantial and there are likely to be significant adverse landscape and visual effects on the settlement of Church Fenton given the proximity. If these structures are unavoidable, consideration should be given to the quality of aesthetic design and wider community benefits and offsetting that can be achieved. The proposed viaduct passes close to residential receptors at Church Fenton and therefore it is anticipated that a noise barrier will be necessary. However, whilst a noise barrier may provide effective mitigation against noise it may be unacceptable in terms of alternative impacts, such as visual amenity and landscape impact.
- 4.4** Overall, along the length in Selby District there currently appears to be a net loss for biodiversity, as such there is a need to increase the areas of land for mitigation and compensation and to include sufficient enhancement measures to demonstrate that the scheme can achieve a net gain for biodiversity, as required currently by national policy.
- 4.5** The proposed route which passes through Selby District is rural in nature and as such existing residents are likely to enjoy a relatively tranquil soundscape. On this basis, we would request that predicted noise levels are considered against baseline noise data, particularly where baseline noise levels are low. Failure to consider this may lead to a significant impact due to the magnitude of change in noise level, regardless of whether the absolute threshold level is exceeded or not.
- 4.6** The WDES works on the assumption that any heritage assets within land required for the construction of the scheme will be removed or demolished. This approach goes against the standard practice of assessing route options and attempting to design out the most sensitive and significant areas. The basis for this type of pre-assessment is enshrined in the National Planning Policy Framework. In terms of the mitigation of archaeological impacts, the WDES focuses on preservation by record. Opportunities for re-design or re-

location, particularly of off-line facilities, such as site compounds and balancing ponds, should be considered where this can lessen the impact on heritage assets.

## **5. Alternative Options Considered**

Not applicable.

## **6. Implications**

### **6.1 Legal Implications**

Not applicable

### **6.2 Financial Implications**

Not applicable

### **6.3 Policy and Risk Implications**

Not applicable

### **6.4 Corporate Plan Implications**

The Council's Corporate Plan 2015-20 outlines the Council's ambition to make Selby District a great place to do business, a great place to enjoy life and a great place to make a difference. The development of HS2 can have a transformational impact on how local employers do business in the District, and how residents enjoy life. For our businesses, HS2 will improve access to talent, supply chains and markets, whilst residents will benefit from wider employment and skills opportunities, and improved connectivity to some of the UK's major cities. However, it is also important to recognise that the development of the project could have a significant impact on the communities affected by the route and their ability to enjoy life. The Council should seek to minimise any adverse local impacts through this consultation exercise and ongoing officers' engagement with HS2 Ltd.

### **6.5 Resource Implications**

The Council's ongoing engagement with HS2 Ltd and NYCC on technical matters will require continued input from officers.

### **6.6 Other Implications**

Not applicable

### **6.7 Equalities Impact Assessment**

HS2 Ltd have also recently consulted upon a Working Draft Equality Impact Assessment Report which closed on 21<sup>st</sup> December 2018.

## **7. Conclusion**

- 7.1** Construction of phase 2b (Crewe to Manchester and the West Midlands to Church Fenton) is expected to start in 2023 and operation is planned to start by 2033. Officers from Selby District Council and North Yorkshire County Council have had ongoing involvement with HS2 Ltd on the technical development process involved with continuing route design and refinement.
- 7.2** HS2 Ltd consulted on a Draft Working Environmental Statement between October and December 2018, which whilst not a statutory requirement, provided Selby District Council with the opportunity to submit formal comments to the scheme. Comments and ongoing refinements to the scheme will feed into the final Environmental Statement which will be submitted when the draft bill is deposited in Parliament, in 2020.
- 7.3** The Executive are presented with Selby District Council's response to HS2 Ltd which is provided at Appendix A. These were submitted to HS2 Ltd on 20<sup>th</sup> December 2018.

## **8. Background Documents**

[HS2 Phase 2b Working Draft Environmental Statement](#)

## **9. Appendices**

Appendix A: Selby District Council Comments on HS2 Phase 2b Working Draft Environmental Statement

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