

EXISTING PROPERTY MEASURES AND NEW PROPOSALS

July 2014

In order to provide assistance to people directly affected by Phase One of HS2, we are offering a range of measures so individuals can make decisions that best suit their circumstances. We are now consulting on two further proposals for people and communities close to the route.

This factsheet is in two parts. "Available now and coming soon" sets out the assistance which is already available or has been announced for owner-occupiers in specific areas near the proposed route. "Open for consultation" explains the proposed new measures that we announced in April 2014, on which we would welcome your views.

AVAILABLE NOW AND COMING SOON

Express purchase

This scheme is now available to owner-occupiers in what is known as the 'surface safeguarded area', which is land above ground that is designated in safeguarding directions (and which may be required for the construction and operation of HS2).

In addition, those owner-occupiers whose property fell wholly or partly within the surface safeguarded area in the October 2013 Safeguarding Directions (but no longer does in the June 2014 Safeguarding Directions) may also be eligible for express purchase. These properties are now included in the Extended Homeowner Protection Zone. Owner-occupiers within this zone will remain eligible to submit a Blight Notice for five years – until 25 June 2019.

Under the express purchase scheme, owner-occupiers can apply to sell their property to the government, if they wish to do so, at its unaffected and realistic market value (ie, its value as if HS2 were not being built), plus 10% (up to £47,000) as a 'home loss payment' and reasonable moving expenses (including stamp duty). There is full guidance on this scheme on the HS2 Ltd website.

Rent back

If the government agrees to purchase your property through one of the HS2 schemes, you can ask them to rent it back to you if you would like to continue living there. Rent back is designed to provide flexibility and reassurance, and to benefit both individual homeowners and the wider community.

All homes that the government agrees to purchase can be considered for rent back, provided that:

- the costs associated with maintaining the property for rent would be a reasonable use of taxpayers' money; and
- the government is able to follow its regulations on rented properties being safe and suitable for tenants.

Voluntary purchase offer

As announced in April 2014, the government has decided that a voluntary purchase scheme will operate in rural areas outside the 'surface safeguarded' area and up to 120m from the centre of the railway line. Eligible owner-occupiers would be able to ask the government to buy their property for 100% of its un-blighted market value, as assessed by two independent valuers. This scheme will be opened to applicants by the end of 2014.

Need to sell

Under the need to sell scheme, owner-occupiers will be able to ask the government to purchase their home for its full un-blighted market value. An independent panel will consider each application on a case-by-case basis and recommend whether the property should be purchased. This scheme will be available in urban and rural areas at the same time as the voluntary purchase offer. Applicants could be asked to submit evidence against five criteria:

- property type – applicants are asked to demonstrate that the property in question is owner-occupied or that they are acting as a 'reluctant landlord', needing to rent the property as a result of HS2.
- location – to ensure that the impact of HS2 on a property is taken into account, although there will be no fixed outer boundary to the need to sell scheme.
- effort to sell – applicants must have marketed their property without success for at least three months.
- no prior knowledge – applicants must have bought their property before the initial preferred route of Phase One was announced on 11 March 2010.
- compelling reason to sell – a variety of different circumstances would be considered, but some scenarios where we consider applicants would be able to make a strong case that they have a 'compelling reason to sell' include: unemployment; relocation for a new job; dividing assets as part of a divorce settlement; ill-health; and the need to release capital for retirement.

Until the need to sell scheme is introduced for Phase One, the exceptional hardship scheme will continue to apply.

For further details, please see www.hs2.org.uk

Residents' Charter

By the time all of these schemes are operational, we will publish a residents' charter, setting out clearly what you can expect from HS2 Ltd. This will include:

- providing individuals with a single named case officer;
- explaining property compensation packages in plain, non-technical language; and
- responding to all property compensation-related questions in a reasonable time.

An independent commissioner will make sure that we abide by our standards, and that we share information with residents fairly and openly.

OPEN FOR CONSULTATION

These two supplementary cash payment schemes are intended for residential owner-occupiers, in rural areas near Phase One where the railway will be above ground.

Alternative cash offer

The government proposes to offer an alternative cash offer to people who qualify for the voluntary purchase offer (see "Available now and coming soon"), but do not wish to sell. Under the proposal, they could receive a lump-sum payment equal to 10% of the full, un-blighted market value of their property (from a proposed minimum of £30,000, to a maximum of £100,000). This scheme would be launched by the end of 2014 and last until one year after the trains start running.

Homeowner payment

Although we expect that all areas will receive an economic boost from the proceeds of growth from HS2, the most concentrated economic benefits will be for areas near stations (largely urban areas).

We are therefore consulting on a homeowner payment for properties in rural areas between 120m and 300m from the railway (with the exception of those in deep bored tunnel areas). The proposal is that the scheme would offer a lump-sum cash payment to owner-occupiers. The payments could be from £7,500 to £22,500, depending on how close the route is to the property. The Government would start to make payments upon Royal Assent to the High Speed Rail (London-West Midlands) Bill and this scheme would end one year after the railway becomes operational in that area.

Responding to the consultation

We hope that you will contribute your views on the measures available to property owners near the route of the new railway.

The consultation closes at 23:45 on **Tuesday 30 September 2014**. You can:

- complete a response form online at <https://HS2PropertyConsultation2014.dialoguebydesign.net>
- email your response to HS2PropertyConsultation2014@dialoguebydesign.com
- complete a paper response form by downloading it from <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/hs2-property-consultation-2014> or by calling 0300 123 1102 to request a form
- post your response to the address below. You do not need a stamp.

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HS2 Property Consultation 2014

PO Box 70178, London WC1A 9HS

Useful documents and information

You can find further information about the property compensation proposals at: www.gov.uk/government/policies/developing-a-new-high-speed-rail-network

If you have any further questions about this consultation, please contact our Community Relations Helpdesk on **020 7944 4908** (from 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday) or by email at hsenquiries@hs2.org.uk. This team will be supported by specialist staff to provide an expert response to questions about this consultation.

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