

HIGH SPEED RAIL (WEST MIDLANDS – CREWE) BILL

UPDATE

We welcome the in principle decisions announced by the Select Committee on 24 May¹, namely to not recommend that the Bill be amended to provide for the Whitmore Heath-Madeley tunnel or the moving of the proposed Railhead and Infrastructure Maintenance Base – Rail (IMB-R) to Alderseys Rough.

Having considered the evidence, the Select Committee has decided that in principle the current scheme design, which proposes two short tunnels at Whitmore Heath and Madeley, and a Railhead and IMB-R located near Stone, should not be changed.

The Government will consider the detail of the report and respond in due course as necessary.

Although we will not be amending the Bill to provide for the Whitmore Heath-Madeley tunnel or the moving of the proposed Railhead and IMB-R to Alderseys Rough, we will be amending the Bill for other reasons.

Following commitments we have made to Staffordshire County Council, we will be seeking powers for a lowering of the Kings Bromley viaduct and to make several changes to highways in the county. We expect that there will also be further changes proposed in response to other requests from petitioners.

Separately from these commitments, there are further design development changes to be made as our design continues to develop. We will therefore be seeking powers to make other changes to highways, and also to utilities, at several points along the Phase 2A route.

Finally, we might need to include some minor changes to the Phase 2A scheme at Crewe in order to support the Government's vision for the Crewe Hub, as set out in its Command Paper in March 2018 (Cm 9574²).

To seek the powers to make these changes we will deposit an Additional Provision (AP) and Supplementary Environmental Statement (SES) in Parliament. We expect to do this around the end of the year. The process will be the same as for the first AP and SES, which we deposited in March 2018. It would include:

- publication at the point of deposit of an AP Environmental Statement (ES) and SES, both of which would be subject to a public consultation; and

¹ See <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmselect/cmhs2/1085/1085.pdf>

²See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hs2-crewe-hub-consultation-governments-response>

- following deposit of the AP, a fresh petitioning period for those whose property or interests are directly and specially affected by the changes in the AP.

Between now and depositing the AP and SES, we will issue Land Interest Questionnaires (LIQs) to those whose land may be needed, and this could happen as early as next month.

We will then undertake a full environmental impact assessment of the proposed changes, including a transport assessment, and draw up revised Bill plans and sections.

Once we have done this, we would like to offer people who are affected by the changes the chance to talk to us about them before we deposit the AP/SES. We expect to be able to do that in the Autumn, and will publish details as soon as possible.

Further information on AP/SESSs can be found in HS2 Phase 2A Information Paper B11: Additional Provisions³.

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³ See https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/689668/B11_Additional_Provisions_v1.0.pdf