



26 February 2014

FREEPOST RTEC-AJUT-GGHH
HS2 Phase One Bill Environmental Statement
PO Box 70178
London
WC1A 9HS

Dear Sirs

By email

RE: HIGH SPEED TWO (HS2): ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT

Thank you for giving the Canal & River Trust (the Trust) the opportunity to comment on the Environmental Statement which accompanies the HS2 Phase One Hybrid Bill 'High Speed Rail (London - West Midlands) Bill 2013-14'. The Trust is responding both in its capacity as statutory consultee for planning applications in England and Wales and in its capacity as navigation authority and landowner.

Key objective for the Trust

It is critical that the Canal & River Trust protects its assets and interests and ensures that any impacts are mitigated from the Proposed Scheme that are in, on, over or under its inland waterways or affecting third party restoration projects.

Background

The Trust is a company limited by guarantee and registered as a charity. The Trust is the guardian of 2,000 miles of historic waterways across England and Wales. The Trust is amongst the largest charities in the UK and it maintains the nation's third largest collection of listed structures as well as museums, archives, navigations and hundreds of important wildlife sites. Under the transfer of functions from British Waterways and the Waterways Trust in 2012:

1. all the operational and investment property of British Waterways is vested in the Trust; and
2. all the statutory duties of British Waterways in England and Wales have been transferred to the Trust - to maintain the safety and structural integrity of waterway infrastructure, water supply, discharges and drainage, waterway management and maintenance operations, including maintaining water levels for navigation purposes; to protect and safeguard the natural environment, landscape character and built heritage of waterways; as well as to encourage public access to and recreation use of the inland waterways.

The Trust is responsible for a unique form of physical, social and green infrastructure (canals, rivers, docks and reservoirs) that will be affected by HS2 Phase One. It is therefore critical that HS2 infrastructure does not adversely affect the canal network or the Trust's ability to carry out its statutory duties and its charitable objects to secure the best possible returns (financial and non-financial) from its investment and operational property.

The Trust has made representations at every stage of the consultation process and these comments should be read in conjunction with those representations. For the purpose of this consultation response, the Trust has adopted the same approach as that used for the consultation on the draft Environmental Statement (see Trust's letter dated 11 July 2013).

Key comments

Attached at **Appendix 1** is a schedule of detailed comments on the impact of HS2 Phase One on the canal network. The schedule has two sections – Routewide and Community Area Forums – which set out the Trust's detailed comments on the relevant issues, actions and degrees of significance. In summary:

Critical interfaces:

1. **Fradley Junction** – The Trust has major concerns regarding the potentially severe adverse impact that the proposed HS2 rail crossings, including the Phase 2 junction spur, would have upon the high quality landscape setting of this very popular and quiet section of the canal network, the listed Woodend Lock and Lock Cottage and the Trent and Mersey Canal Conservation Area. The Trust and the Inland Waterways Association (IWA) have therefore commissioned Hyder Consulting (UK) Ltd to undertake an Alternative Alignment Study to review the various impacts of the proposed HS2 alignment and to prepare a comparative outline appraisal for a reduced impact alternative alignment that seeks to conserve the rich rural, historic and cultural assets of this section of canal. The Study concludes that the HS2 route design speed of 230 km/h for the proposed alignment is not achievable and that an alternative alignment is feasible with an achievable speed of 230km/h, greatly reduced engineering requirements and visual impacts, neutral environmental effects and, importantly, it has the potential to deliver c£54m cost savings. It should be noted that the Study reaches a different conclusion to para 2.6.43 of Volume 2, CFA 22 in terms of both line speed, impact on the potential operation of HS2 and impact on the canal (a copy of the Hyder Study is attached at **Appendix 2**);
2. **Curzon Street** - The Trust has major concerns regarding the potentially severe adverse impact that the proposed viaduct and associated infrastructure would have upon the Birmingham and Fazeley Canal (Digbeth Branch), on the opportunity to unlock the multi-functional potential of the canal within the emerging 'Birmingham Curzon HS2 Masterplan' and the consequential wider impact upon the Birmingham Canal Network. In order to address these concerns, the Trust has worked closely with Birmingham City Council (BCC) to ensure that the canal corridor is integrated into the redevelopment vision for the City around HS2. To enable this vision to be delivered, both BCC and the Trust require that the current HS2 proposal is amended to remove both the proposed sub-station and the proposed canalside roadways that would blight the future regeneration of the canalside. In addition, the Trust wish to review and amend the design of the proposed HS2 'tunnel' to

generate an appropriate architectural solution that will reflect the characteristics of waterway crossings and will not adversely affect the use of the canal corridor;

3. **Curdworth** – The Trust has major concerns regarding the potentially severe adverse impact that the proposed viaduct would have upon the Birmingham and Fazeley Canal (see photomontage LV-01-252 in Map Book CFA 20). The proposed design solution is unacceptable to the Trust and a high quality design solution is required to mitigate the skewed nature of this canal crossing. The Trust will work with the HS2 design team to develop the detail of the appropriate crossing design. In light of the skewed nature of the crossing, the length of the span, and the highly visible nature of the crossing, the Trust believes that the design of this particular crossing should be undertaken by the HS2 lead bridge architect as a special project; and
4. **Cappers Lane** – The Trust is working closely with the Inland Waterways Association, the Lichfield and Hatherton Canals Restoration Trust and the Lichfield Cruising Club to ensure that the restoration project and the existing moorings and associated essential boating facilities are not prejudiced by the Proposed Scheme. It is important that any facilities lost are replaced with ‘like for like’ facilities in suitable locations, e.g. the affected moorings (including compensation for lost income), the slipway and the car park for the Lichfield Cruising Club.

Critical issues

1. **Noise** – the Trust is very disappointed that the canals are not being treated as ‘noise sensitive receptors’ and that the Environmental Statement has concluded that due to “*the transient nature of the route, there will be no significant noise effect and therefore no incombination effect*”. The Trust considers that this fails to understand the proper function and purpose of the canal network as quiet corridors for people and wildlife to enjoy and as the primary residence for continuous cruisers on casual moorings for periods of up to 14 days along the network;
2. **Bridges/viaducts** – the Trust has major concerns regarding the impact of HS2 Phase One on the landscape of the canal network. The Trust considers that the design and construction of the HS2 bridge and viaduct structures should showcase the best in contemporary 21st Century architecture and engineering, creating structures that contribute positively to the multiple layers of transport history that are evident along the canal corridor. The Trust will work with HS2 Ltd to agree design solutions for all bridges and viaducts crossing the waterway network. The Trust has developed specific HS2 crossing principles to assist in the generation of appropriate structures for the waterway in association with Knight Architects (a copy of the Knight Architects’ Canal & River Trust HS2 Design Principles Document will be forwarded on a CD due to memory size as **Appendix 3**);
3. **Landscape** – the Trust considers that the early implementation of soft landscaping measures are required to reconcile the new crossing structures into the waterway corridor, and the wider landscape, and mitigate the visual impact of any new structures, prior to the completion of the HS2 route. The specification of landscape planting should be carefully developed to respond to and support the local landscape character, and to promote local biodiversity;

4. **Water management** – the Environmental Statement is still unable to assess the likely quantitative impacts of surface water discharges to our waterways directly or indirectly from the scheme. In addition, the Environmental Statement is still unable to assess the quantitative impacts of the scheme on streamflow to our canals/reservoirs and groundwater yield from our boreholes. Consequently, mitigation of impacts to prevent flooding, structural damage, reductions in water supply and environmental harm cannot be confirmed at this stage and this remains an issue of concern for the Trust. We maintain our position that no altered surface water discharge will be accepted by the Trust without it being assessed and mitigated in accordance with our Code of Practice for works affecting our waterways to ensure flood prevention, protection of waterway assets and water quality and conservation of the waterway environment; and
5. **Stoppages** - the Trust will not accept any lengthy stoppages of the canal network during the construction phase and will expect to be consulted on a detailed construction programme to minimise any disruption to the canal network.

Opportunities

The Trust considers that HS2 Phase One also presents opportunities for the canal network to contribute towards reducing costs and impacts of the Proposed Scheme and delivering economic, social and environmental benefits for local communities. For example, it is estimated that the Trust helped the Olympic Delivery Authority deliver approximately £150 million of project cost savings through efficient and collaborative working practices.

Please note that the Trust also supports the representations submitted by the Inland Waterways Association (IWA), the Lichfield and Hatherton Canals Restoration Trust (LHCRT), the Lichfield Cruising Club (LCC), the Association of Waterways Cruising Clubs (AWCC) and the Royal Yacht Association (RYA) in relation to this consultation.

The Trust hopes that the above comments are helpful and looks forward to further constructive dialogue with HS2 Ltd to ensure that the Environmental Statement addresses the impacts on the canal network and third party restoration projects.

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely



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