

## HS2 Update



**28 August 2015**

This E-update looks at the upcoming Buckinghamshire Select Committee hearings and the assurances received by HS2 Ltd

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### Welcome

Over the last couple of months we have added a significant number of people to our distribution list, so we wanted to welcome those people. We distribute this newsletter usually every 3 weeks via email, and hope that it can provide all the HS2 updates which you need. We have a small HS2 team at Buckinghamshire County Council who are available to support you; as well as pursuing the County's petition. If you have any questions about how HS2 impacts you, petitioning, or anything else HS2 related do not hesitate to contact us at [HS2Blueprint@buckscc.gov.uk](mailto:HS2Blueprint@buckscc.gov.uk) or look at our website [www.buckscc.gov.uk/hs2](http://www.buckscc.gov.uk/hs2).

### Select Committee update

The Select Committee is now in recess for the summer. They are scheduled to return on the 7 September 2015 when they will begin hearing from further Buckinghamshire petitioners. The draft schedule for appearances is found [here](#) for September and [here](#) for provisional October and November dates. Please note that David Walker will be contacting individual petitioners or their agents to arrange specific dates.

Some petitioners received a letter from David Walker asking them to let him know by **21 August** whether they wish to associate themselves with another petitioner, be represented by a group or another person or whether they wish to appear individually in person. If you did not respond, ***it does not mean that if you failed to respond you will be denied a hearing.*** This was confirmed via the HS2 Amersham Action Group [here](#).

### Supplementary Environmental Statement

The consultation on the Supplementary Environmental Statement has now been extended to the 18 September 2015. This was due to additional information relating to bat surveys in the Bernwood Forest and Radstone areas which were added two weeks after original consultation began. The details of this can be found [here](#). The additional Technical Appendices on the bats can be found [here](#).

### Buckinghamshire County Council, Chiltern District and the Chilterns Conservation Board Statement on Tunnelling in the AONB

*'We remain disappointed that none of the long tunnel options were supported by the Select Committee in its 21 July announcement, and cautiously welcomed its interim decision to instruct HS2 Ltd to look at extending the current Government-proposed scheme tunnel northwards. We remain dissatisfied with the brief decision announced and will continue to press for more comprehensive*

*reasons as the Council, together with Buckinghamshire County Council and Aylesbury Vale District Council have argued long and hard for a viable alternative that would deliver the scheme and protect the entire Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). We stand by our evidence that the best way to conserve the protected Chilterns AONB is by way of an edge to edge tunnel, such as the Chilterns Long Tunnel (CLT).*

*Therefore whilst the Councils' preferred option remains the CLT, the Councils would welcome CRAG and CCC being given the opportunity to present the T3i case as proposed.*

*On behalf of all our communities, we urge the Select Committee, in its further deliberations into the merits of a long tunnel option under the AONB, to conclude that the additional financial cost of an edge to edge tunnel at the construction stage, would be well worthwhile, particularly when this investment is set against wider savings across the project's whole life. This would more adequately mitigate the impact on the local communities and conserve a beautiful and unique part of the UK's countryside.*

*We will continue to work with all of our stakeholders and partners to lobby for the maximum mitigation possible for all affected and ask our local residents, who have petitioned, to carry on the fight and present their cases to the Select Committee in the autumn.*

### **Select Committee Visit to Buckinghamshire**

On the 10 August the three new members of the Select Committee visited Buckinghamshire. Unlike previous visits the Local Authorities had no input into the itineraries of this visit. The visit was meant to be a much shorter affair, without large numbers of presentations. We are aware that there were a number of stops that were not visited by the MPs due to time constraints. Cheryl Gillan MP has released the following statement on this [here](#). Despite these issues it was felt that the Committee members were certainly left in no doubt about the view of local people and the better mitigation that is required.

### **Assurances received by Buckinghamshire County Council**

The County Council has received three assurances from HS2 Ltd. These have now been consulted on with all County Councillors and Parish Councils where appropriate. These assurances are as follows:

- Colne Valley Transport issues: That the M25 slip roads would be constructed prior to main construction commencing (excluding compound set up) and will be used by all vehicles greater than 3.5 tonnes once open for use. In addition, subject to HS2 carrying out more detailed modelling work, traffic signal upgrades may be required along the A412 corridor; these upgrades will be funded by HS2 Ltd.
- That during construction, impact on Ancient Woodland in the Colne Valley is minimised. Specifically at Battlesford Wood no more than 0.1 hectare is impacted and that at Pinnocks Wood ensuring the placement of underground cabling has as little impact as possible.
- 13 separate location specific Public Rights of Way amendments to ensure shorter more suitable diversions.

All three of these have been subject to local member and appropriate parish council comment. These assurances will be confirmed when they have passed through the County Council's Cabinet Member decision procedure. A link to a schedule of assurances will be provided in future updates.

## **Buckinghamshire County Council Drop-in Sessions**

We will be running drop-in sessions for petitioners ahead of the Select Committee hearings that will take place from September onwards. The purpose of these meetings is as follows:

- Assistance creating a Power-point presentation on a laptop, or
- Going over a Power-Point presentation, or
- Dry-run of appearance including a few mock questions, or
- General Q&A on appearing

All petitioners are invited to these sessions. All sessions will be held in the HS2 Room, Porters Lodge, County Offices, Aylesbury, HP20 1UY

15<sup>th</sup> September 2015 between 15.00 and 18.00

24<sup>th</sup> September 2015 between 15.00 and 19.00

Please confirm your attendance by emailing Sarah at [hs2blueprint@buckscc.gov.uk](mailto:hs2blueprint@buckscc.gov.uk). Please set out your preferred time slot at either the half hour or hour intervals. Please also indicate whether you would like to book half an hour or an hour. We will do our best to give you your preferred time slot. In order to make these sessions productive please also set out in a few bullet points the topics you would like to cover with the team.

These have been very popular and there are only a few spaces left so please book early to avoid disappointment. If demand continues to grow we will consider putting on more events – let us know if you feel this is required.

### **Link to the Chilterns Long Tunnel evidence**

This was the evidence presented by the local authorities and others during July, which you may find helpful. Click [here](#).

### **Buckinghamshire Compensation and Mitigation Panel (BCMP)**

The BCMP meeting planned for 24 June was postponed due to the proximity to the Select Committee visits. At the meeting on 28 July, BCMP members considered the Select Committee's announcement that they did not support the Chiltern Long Tunnel ask. The BCMP decided that we should collectively still petition for an extended tunnel, and that when presenting evidence to the Committee, individual petitioners were advised to explain how HS2 will affect them, their families and their day to day lives.

The next meeting will be held on the 29 September 2015.

Each CFA area has a community representative on the panel who should be feeding back discussions had at BCMP. If you would like to know who your representative is or you are not receiving feedback from these meetings, it is important that you let us know. Local County Councillors are also invited.

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**Buckinghamshire County Council HS2 team:**

Jackie Copcutt [jcopcutt@buckscc.gov.uk](mailto:jcopcutt@buckscc.gov.uk) Tel: 01296 383793

Darl Sweetland [dsweetland@bucksccc.gov.uk](mailto:dsweetland@bucksccc.gov.uk) Tel: 01296 383463

HS2 Blueprint Mailbox [HS2Blueprint@buckscc.gov.uk](mailto:HS2Blueprint@buckscc.gov.uk)

BCC HS2 Webpages: <http://www.buckscc.gov.uk/environment/hs2/>