

**Report of Head of Transport Planning
Report to Chief Planning Officer**

Date: 20th December 2018

Subject: Leeds City Council response to the HS2 Phase 2b Working Draft Environmental Statement and Working Draft Equality Impact Assessment consultations

Are specific electoral wards affected?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, name(s) of ward(s): All with specific impacts on Beeston & Holbeck, Burmantofts & Richmond Hill, Garforth & Swillington, Hunslet & Riverside, Kippax & Methley, Rothwell.	
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for call-in?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, access to information procedure rule number:	
Appendix number:	

Summary of main issues

1. HS2 Ltd as the scheme promotor are preparing an Environmental Statement (ES) for the Phase 2b part of the scheme, as part of the EIA regulations, which will be submitted to Parliament in support of the Hybrid Bill. This will cover a range of issues including: agriculture, forestry and soils; climate change; community; cultural heritage; ecology and biodiversity; health; landscape and visual; socio-economic issues; noise; traffic and transport; waste; and flood risk. It will assess the likely route-wide and off-route effects of the scheme and its effects on particular communities during the construction and operational periods.
2. The HS2 Phase 2b Working Draft Environmental Statement (WDES) is a non-statutory stage of consultation, not carried on the HS2 London to Birmingham route. This runs from 11th October to 21st December 2018 and provides an important opportunity for the Council to feedback on the ongoing design of the proposed scheme and the assessment undertaken to date. HS2 Ltd will consider responses to this consultation in developing the scheme and undertaking the EIA,
3. The Council's WDES consultation response builds on formal responses to previous HS2 Ltd consultations submitted by the council. These include the **HS2 Phase 2 route from Birmingham to Leeds and Manchester (2013)**, which supported the principle of a strategic station location, but requested HS2 Ltd revisit the detail of the Leeds spur especially in the area of the Woodlesford junction where the impact of the engineering

would be very substantial and unacceptable to local residents. It also identified concerns about the impacts of the Aire Valley viaduct. The **HS2 Phase 2b route refinement consultation (2017)** response identified four key areas of focus.

- 3.1. The amended line of route at Woodlesford to place it in tunnel where the concerns were about the short length of the tunnel, the tunnelling process in relation to previous mining processes and the village environment.
- 3.2. The impact of the Main Line route and Aire viaduct on the environment and local communities.
- 3.3. Completing plans for the integrated Leeds Station and future proofing with a spur linking between Hs2 and the classic station.
- 3.4. The impacts and planning of the future construction then causing uncertainty to the communities and businesses along the route and within the city centre
4. The proposed Council response to the WDES continues to welcome the principle of HS2 Phase 2b. It is recognised through the Leeds City Region Growth Strategy that HS2 can be a major contributor to the Vision for Leeds, Best City and Council Plans where its economic and investment impacts have great potential. At the same time the Council is clear and committed to careful planning to ensure that greater attention is paid to all the project's impacts on communities and the environment.
5. The council therefore welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the preparation of the Environmental Statement that will accompany the Hybrid Bill and asks for further engagement with HS2 Ltd as they develop the Phase 2B design and prepare the formal ES that will accompany the Hybrid Bill. An ES which addresses the adverse impacts identified by the council in the WDES should reduce the need for the council to seek changes to the Hybrid Bill by petitioning at a later date.
6. It is noted that the WDES is based on the currently published design of the scheme. The development of the design of the station and surrounding area has benefit from close partnership working and alignment with the Leeds Station Integrated Master Plan and South Bank Regeneration Framework Supplementary Planning Document.
7. The council's strategic aim with regard to the WDES response and our wider Hybrid Bill Strategy is to secure from the government an optimum HS2 final design that delivers the benefits set out in the Leeds City Region Growth Strategy, which is as sensitive as possible to local concerns and issues - through the appropriate type, level and quality of mitigation. It is recognised that securing the best possible environmental provisions from the government and HS2 is integral to achieving a successful scheme.
8. Supporting those affected by the HS2 infrastructure proposals is imperative in protecting communities and sustaining economic growth. Understandably local communities are greatly concerned about impacts the scheme will have on their localities, both in the period leading to construction where blight is their concern; during construction where there is increasing concern about the disruption and potential dislocation to the community; and subsequently the quality of the final scheme and the legacy that will leave the communities on and adjoining the route, in Oulton, Woodlesford, Swillington and Garforth especially.
9. The council has several concerns and issues about the impacts set out in the WDES. Given the preliminary nature of the WDES, there are likely to be more as Phase 2B is refined further, but the main concerns identified so far include:
 - Support for those affected by the proposals;

- Network Management during construction;
- Woodlesford tunnel;
- The River Aire viaduct
- Noise mitigations; and
- Inadequate bridleway and footpath division

10. As a key stakeholder the Council continues to press HS2 Ltd for the highest standards of construction planning and coordination and the development of detailed plans to minimise construction disruption and impact both for the line of route and the new station with the necessary mitigation at the highest levels of quality. In particular this should have regards to
- Detailed and timely engagement throughout with communities and business with established and enduring points of contact which are available throughout the development and construction.
 - Attention to landscaping and mitigation during the construction period to minimise the impacts.
 - Clear and well defined access plans with traffic management in place and proposals which avoid construction traffic travelling through residential and local communities.
 - Noise and environmental mitigation.
 - Where business displacement or impacts form part of the project early action to support and ensure that such disruption is kept to a minimum and allows the uninterrupted continuation of their trading.
 - Early and detailed engagement with the local planning, environmental and highways authority which must go beyond statutory requirements to ensure at all stages the best possible outcomes are achieved.
11. HS2 Ltd are also consulting on a working draft of the Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) alongside the WDES to ensure that due regard is given to the Equality Act, 2010. The consultation focuses on the potential direct or indirect impacts of the scheme on the 9 protected characteristics. The EQIA identifies a number of potential site specific impacts in Leeds but provides limited information on the actual impact and how these will be mitigated. The report also notes that stakeholder consultation has started but does not provide any details of local engagement at this stage.
12. In the absence of more detailed information, the proposed council response is focused on noting the sites impacted by the scheme which are likely to have an impact on protected characteristics and requesting that HS2 Ltd provide further information to understand proposed mitigation and what local consultation has taken place.

Recommendations

13. The Chief Planning Officer is requested note the information in this report and the proposed full response to the HS2 Phase 2b WDES and working draft EQIA in appendix 1 and 2, and to;
 - I. authorise the submission of the Leeds City Council response to the HS2 Phase 2b Working Draft Environmental Statement Consultation and Working Draft Equality Impact Assessment; and
 - II. authorise the publication of the Leeds City Council response to the HS2 Phase 2b Working Draft Environmental Statement Consultation and Working Draft Equality Impact Assessment.

1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 This report provides an overview of the HS2 Phase 2b Working Draft Environmental Statement (WDES) consultation process as part of HS2 Ltd's Environmental Statement preparation which will accompany the Hybrid Bill. The report provide a summary of the proposed Council response to the HS2 WDES and highlights the key issues the Council wishes to make representations to HS2 Ltd on.
- 1.2 HS2 Ltd are also consulting on a working draft of the Equality Impact Assessment (EQAI) for the scheme. A summary of the proposed Council response is set out in this report.
- 1.3 The report seeks authorisation for the submission of the Leeds City Council response to the HS2 Phase 2b WDES and working draft EQIA consultation, and the publication of both these responses on the Councils website.
- 1.4 The HS2 Phase 2b WDES proposed Council response can be found in Appendix A. The Councils proposed response on the HS2 Phase 2b Working Draft EQIA can be found in Appendix B.

2. Background information

- 2.1 HS2 Ltd are preparing an Environmental Statement for the scheme, as part of the EIA regulations, which will be submitted to Parliament in support of the Hybrid Bill. The Environment Statement will provide:
 - a description of the environment as it is at the moment;
 - an evaluation of the anticipated environmental impacts of the scheme, and
 - the measures proposed to avoid or reduce these impacts.
- 2.2 This will cover a range of issues including: agriculture, forestry and soils; climate change; community; cultural heritage; ecology and biodiversity; health; landscape and visual; socio-economic issues; noise; traffic and transport; waste; and flood risk. It will assess the likely route-wide and off-route effects of the scheme and its effects on particular communities during the construction and operational periods.
- 2.3 The WDES is a non-statutory stage of consultation which runs from 11th October to 21st December 2018. This provides an important opportunity for the Council to feedback on the ongoing design of the proposed scheme and the assessment undertaken to date. HS2 Ltd will consider responses to this consultation in developing the scheme and undertaking the EIA. The Chief Planning Officer has delegated authority to co-ordinate and submit the Environmental Statement response on behalf of the Council.
- 2.4 The HS2 route proposals in the WDES enter Leeds from the south close to M62 J31 with the line of route splitting to the south east of Oulton. The Leeds spur enters a (twin bore) tunnel under Woodlesford continuing in a cutting adjacent to the alignment of the existing Network Rail Hallam line through Stourton and Hunslet before it continues into the city centre on a viaduct to a T-shaped integrated station connected to the classic station by a common concourse. The mainline continues north between Woodlesford and Swillington, including a 2km viaduct over the River Aire, and then to the north of Garforth before continuing to Church Fenton. Much of the mainline is constructed on embankments in this area.
- 2.5 A rolling stock depot (RSD) is proposed on the Temple Green development site to the north of the river immediately adjoining the western side of the M1 covering a

distance of 1.6km and linked to line of route via a short viaduct over the River Aire at Stourton.

- 2.6 The HS2 consultation material includes four separate community area reports and sets of maps relevant to Leeds. Each set of maps includes one showing the area taken by the construction phase of the scheme (including compounds and material storage areas) and another for the operational scheme including landscape mitigation, balancing ponds etc. Four Community Areas are wholly or partly in the Leeds District:
- LA15: Warmfield to Swillington and Woodlesford (partly in Wakefield);
 - LA16: Garforth to Church Fenton (partly in North Yorkshire);
 - LA17: Stourton to Hunslet; and
 - LA18: Leeds Station
- 2.7 The Council has made formal responses to previous HS2 Ltd consultations on the route proposals which are publically available. To provide background to the Council's WDES response a summary of the key issues raised in these consultation responses is provided below – further detail is available in section 1.4 of the main document contained within Appendix 1.
- 2.8 **HS2 Phase 2 route from Birmingham to Leeds and Manchester (2013)** - The council supported the principle of a strategic station location in Leeds but recognised the need for further development to secure a fully integrated transport interchange. As far as the line of route is concerned the council requested HS2 Ltd revisit the detail of the Leeds spur and proposals especially in the area of the Woodlesford junction where the impact of the engineering would be very substantial and unacceptable to local residents. It also identified concerns about the impacts of the Aire Valley viaduct.
- 2.9 **HS2 Phase 2b route refinement consultation (2017)** - The consultation response identified four key areas of focus.
- (a) The amended line of route at Woodlesford to place it in tunnel where the concerns were about the short length of the tunnel, the tunnelling process in relation to previous mining processes and the village environment.
 - (b) The impact of the Main Line route and Aire viaduct on the environment and local communities.
 - (c) Completing plans for the integrated Leeds Station and future proofing with a spur linking between Hs2 and the classic station.
 - (d) The impacts and planning of the future construction then causing uncertainty to the communities and businesses along the route and within the city centre.

3. Main issues

- 3.1 The proposed council response to the WDES continues to welcome the principle of HS2 Phase 2b. It is recognised through the Leeds City Region Growth Strategy that HS2 can be a major contributor to the Vision for Leeds, Best City and Council Plans where its economic and investment impacts have great potential. At the same time the Council is clear and committed to careful planning to ensure that greater attention is paid to all the project's impacts on communities and the environment. The council therefore welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the preparation of

the Environmental Statement that will accompany the Bill and asks for further engagement with HS2 Ltd as they develop the Phase 2B design and prepare the formal ES that will accompany the Hybrid Bill. An Environmental Statement which addresses the adverse impacts identified by the council in the WDES should reduce the need for the council to seek changes to the Hybrid Bill by petitioning at a later date.

3.2 The council has previously welcomed plans for creating a domestic high speed rail network and has supported the Government's initial proposals for the High Speed Rail Phase 2 (HS2) route from Birmingham to Leeds, which were announced in January 2013 and subsequently given in principle support at the 15 February 2013 Executive Board. The Leeds City Region Growth Strategy sets out how the Leeds City Region will work with Government, business, schools, colleges and universities to maximise the benefits of HS2 through the following key themes, reflecting the priorities in the Government's Industrial Strategy. The council expects HS2 Ltd and DfT to take account of the Growth Strategy in developing Phase 2B further

3.3 The council's strategic aim with regard to the WDES response and wider Hybrid Bill Strategy is to secure from the government an optimum HS2 final design that delivers the benefits set out in the Leeds City Region Growth Strategy, which is as sensitive as possible to local concerns and issues - through the appropriate type, level and quality of mitigation. It is recognised that securing the best possible environmental provisions from the government and HS2 is integral to achieving a successful scheme

HS2 delivering the benefits for inclusive growth.

3.4 The response outlines the potential benefits of the arrival of high speed rail for the city and the city region as well outlining how the eastern leg of HS2, HS2 East, will reshape the economic geography of the UK. The response references our 'HS2 Growth Strategy' which sets out how Leeds City Region will work with Government, business, communities, schools, colleges and universities to maximise the benefits of HS2 in transforming the city region economy. It will provide a step change in connectivity for the city region, creating a world class gateway at Leeds Station and a catalyst for regeneration.

3.5 HS2 in combination with Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR) is expected to help transform the economy of the North of England by significantly improving the capacity, frequency and journey time of rail links between the region's main economic centres. We need to ensure that the benefits from both HS2 and NPR are realised by utilising spare capacity on HS2 infrastructure. The council, alongside the West Yorkshire Combined Authority considers it is important that the touchpoints between the two networks are delivered in full. These include Clayton, Stourton and Garforth touchpoints.

Key issues for the scheme design and construction in Leeds

Leeds Station

3.6 The WDES is based on the currently published design of the scheme. The development of the design of the station and surrounding area has benefit from close partnership working. The Leeds Station Integrated Master Plan (LISM) sets a compelling vision for the major transformation of Leeds Station, already the busiest transport hub in the North of England. It works alongside the South Bank Regeneration Framework Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), which sets out

our exciting proposals for the future development of the South Bank. Our response to the WDES takes the opportunity to emphasise the changes to the design of the scheme discussed so far between the council and HS2 Ltd, which it is expected should be incorporated into the final design.

Rolling Stock Depot (RSD)

- 3.7 The council welcomes the location of an RSD in the Aire Valley Enterprise Zone. It is expected that the depot will bring skilled jobs to the Leeds City Region and be a key part of our ambition to be an international centre of excellence in high speed rail skills, we are seeking to maximise the benefits of this investment. However, the depot configuration and land take shown in the WDES is not supported. Discussions have taken place with HS2 Ltd and it is understood that the latest designs are as per the land take set out in the Secretary of State's announcement of July 2018. This later configuration is welcomed by the Council as it would accommodate Leeds University's new technology campus on adjoining land the north of the site, including the Institute of High Speed Rail and Systems Integration. There will still however be a need to ensure that developments on the remaining employment land in the area brought forward prior to HS2 can still be appropriately accessed following delivery of the RSD.

HS2 line of route

- 3.8 Supporting those affected by the HS2 infrastructure proposals is imperative in protecting communities and sustaining economic growth. Understandably local communities are greatly concerned about impacts the scheme will have on their localities, both in the period leading to construction where blight is their concern; during construction where there is increasing concern about the disruption and potential dislocation to the community; and subsequently the quality of the final scheme and the legacy that will leave the communities on and adjoining the route, in Oulton, Woodlesford, Swillington, Garforth and Hunslet especially
- 3.9 The council has several concerns and issues about the impacts set out in the WDES. Given the preliminary nature of the WDES, there are likely to be more as Phase 2B is refined further, but the main concerns identified so far include:
- Support for those affected by the proposals;
 - Network Management during construction;
 - Woodlesford tunnel;
 - The River Aire viaduct
 - Noise mitigations; and
 - Inadequate bridleway and footpath division
- 3.10 Where it is necessary to relocate businesses, we recommend in our response that this should be done sensitively to minimise adverse local impact and ensure business rate growth continues and therefore the council seeks release of resources from the Community and Environment Fund Safety Improvement Fund, Business and Local Economy Fund prior to the submission of the hybrid bill to begin and properly plan support to those impacted by the scheme. The council also seeks release of highway safety monies ahead of hybrid bill submission to enable road safety improvements which will help protect pedestrians and cyclists along the route of the railway, ensuring the city is ready for HS2 construction.

- 3.11 As a key stakeholder the council continues to press HS2 Ltd for the highest standards of construction planning and coordination and the development of detailed plans to minimise construction disruption and impact both for the line of route and the new station with the necessary mitigation at the highest levels of quality. In particular this should have regard to:
- Detailed and timely engagement throughout with communities and business with established and enduring points of contact which are available throughout the development and construction.
 - Attention to landscaping and mitigation during the construction period to minimise the impacts.
 - Clear and well defined access plans with traffic management in place and proposals which avoid construction traffic travelling through residential and local communities.
 - Noise and environmental mitigation.
 - Where business displacement or impacts form part of the project early action to support and ensure that such disruption is kept to a minimum and allows the uninterrupted continuation of their trading.
 - Early and detailed engagement with the local planning, environmental and highways authority which must go beyond statutory requirements to ensure at all stages the best possible outcomes are achieved.
- 3.12 The council recognises the challenges and complexities of the construction of a high speed line of route approach to the city centre. It has considered the severance and reduced network resilience caused by the existing infrastructure constraints of the classic railway, the M621 and other parts of the strategic road network. The council is therefore fully committed to working in partnership with HS2 Ltd to help ensure the delivery of a quality design solution for the city. It needs to achieve the optimum balance of a final design with level of mitigation deemed acceptable by the council that is also deliverable.
- 3.13 Given the scale, location and duration of the proposed construction works, the council recognises there is the potential for these works to have a significant impact on both the capacity and resilience of our local and wider transport network. Based on the level of qualitatively assessed information presented in the WDES, and the extent of the expected road closures and diversions, the council remains concerned about the current level of risk for significant disruption during the HS2 construction period.
- 3.14 However, it is requested to work in partnership with HS2 Ltd to quantitatively evaluate and plan for the mitigation of this. In particular, the council notes that the construction impacts and associated disruption, while potentially significant for the city, are also temporary, and should be weighed against the potential long term infrastructure legacy of a constructed scheme of this size and scale. The council has put forward the following Network Management principles for construction as a platform for our engagement with HS2 Ltd going forward;
- **Support for off line construction solutions at strategic locations on the road network where practicable** - The construction methods should focus on the delivery of off line solutions in areas which have the potential for the

greatest severity on the road network, with the closure of the strategic road network main carriageway avoided where possible.

- **Planning for effective phasing of road closures** - This is particularly important for mitigating the level construction impact on the network. A partnership approach with HS2 Ltd, Highways England, West Yorkshire Combined Authority and Network Rail is needed to deliver a comprehensive network management plan.
- **Mitigation according to hierarchy of impact** - The acceptability of a proposed road closures will depend on the location, duration and severity of the impact. The sequencing of road closures should consider the hierarchy of the road network, with the impact of potential closures above an agreed threshold should be modelled in the appropriate software package.
- **Maintaining Network Resilience** - The resilience of the road network should be preserved with the closure of no more than two bridges during the same time period with sufficient separation between the locations, alongside the closure of no more than one key adjacent radial or parallel route during the same time period.
- **Managing the cumulative network impact** - Given the proposed duration of the construction period the cumulative impacts of the road closures on the local network will need to be evaluated in order to mitigate prolonged periods of disruption for local communities and businesses.
- **Maintaining public transport and local accessibility** - Where public transport routes require diversion, the alternative route should offer a comparable journey time and level of accessibility. The citywide park and ride level of service will need to be maintained, given the importance of this infrastructure in removing traffic from the city centre network.
- **Maintaining provision for walking and cycling** - Provision for non-motorised users should be maintained across all routes and should seek to minimise the length of diversions where needed.

3.15 The council fully supports the proposals for the High Speed Rail line of route to approach the Leeds Station terminus in a cutting through the main urban area because of the environmental mitigation offered by this approach. This “Leeds cutting” is the preferred design option in principle for the Council. The level of landscape and visual mitigation provided by the WDES design option in this location is found to be largely acceptable, albeit it is recognised that further detailed resolutions may be needed.

3.16 The Woodlesford tunnel remains a crucially important issue for the local community. It is in an area with a long coal mining history which exacerbates concerns that further underground works could cause problems relative to this legacy of earlier workings below the surface. This requires continuing and sensitive engagement with the community to address their concerns and provide reassurance as to the robustness of the plans. The process for safely and efficiently delivering a modern 21st century railway tunnel needs to be outlined clearly, both in terms of construction and operation. The council remains of the opinion that further development and refinement of the design is essential to bringing it closer to an acceptable final scheme in the village.

- 3.17 The WDES proposal includes the River Aire Viaduct, which will be a large structure at around 2.2km in length and 28m high. It will be highly visible in long distance views across the rural landscape and from residential areas in Woodlesford and Swillington. The revised scheme as presented in HS2 Phase 2b route refinement consultation has taken on board to some extent concerns the council raised in the 2013 consultation response, however, the Main Line to the North in both this and the WDES remains on largely the same alignment both horizontally and vertically with only minor changes as it crosses the railway, canal and River Aire. This results in associated impacts of a high viaduct and the environmental intrusion of the rail services high above the valley floor and therefore needs to be looked at again.
- 3.18 It is the council's view that HS2 Ltd as the scheme promotor is responsible for establishing the costs and benefits vis-à-vis routing, efficiency, mitigation and their requirements for a high speed rail functioning railway. The alternative route report outlines a complex process under taken over many years which highlights a board range of alternatives and their associated impacts. Whilst it is acknowledged that HS2 Ltd has looked widely at alternatives during the option development stage, it remains the view in the community that not enough has been done to seek alternatives. If the Main Line remains on the current alignment as proposed it is therefore essential that mitigation is provided alongside the highest quality and sensitivity of design is provided to safeguard the environment and the communities of Woodlesford, Swillington and Garforth The council therefore expects to see fuller alternatives considered and the details of these set out in the formal ES that accompanies the Hybrid Bill.
- 3.19 Securing an acceptable level of noise mitigation for residents whose properties are impacted upon by HS2 operational noise is imperative for the council. Without the inclusion of measured environmental baseline data, which the council understands will be provided in the ES, the council is unable to comment at present if the mitigation provided in the WDES is acceptable. The council is pressing HS2 Ltd through partnership working to agree an acceptable environmental baseline at the earliest opportunity.
- 3.20 The council is also concerned that several proposed bridleway diversions, involving long accommodation overbridges where HS2 will be in a very wide and deep cutting, need significant alteration in order to be effective for equestrian and pedestrian users. In some areas, the council proposes that a cut and cover tunnel or similar design approach to create a wider "green bridge" would be necessary instead. Some proposed diversions of footpaths are unacceptably long, and the council would like to see additional crossings of HS2 for non-motorised users to avoid severance.
- 3.21 The above is a high level summary of the main concerns identified so far. In addition to this the council's full response contained within in Appendix 1 which highlights potential impacts and suggests appropriate mitigation in the following areas: historic environment, health, land quality and water resources and flood risk.

4. Corporate considerations

4.1 Consultation and engagement

- 4.1.1 The Council Leader and Executive Member for Regeneration, Transport and Planning have been consulted as part of the preparation of the Councils response to the HS2 Phase 2b Working Draft Environmental Statement Consultation.
- 4.1.2 All members were invited to attend a briefing meeting (8th October 2018) on the HS2 Hybrid Bill, the scheme development and petitioning process. Members whose wards are impacted upon by the HS2 line of route contained within the WDES proposals have been provided with the draft executive summary of the technical response.

4.2 Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration

- 4.2.1 HS2 Ltd are also consulting on a working draft of the Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) alongside the WDES to ensure that due regard is given to the Equality Act, 2010. The consultation focuses on the potential direct or indirect impacts of the scheme on the 9 protected characteristics.
- 4.2.2 The Council's response to the HS2 Phase 2b EIA assessment can be found in Appendix B. The report considers the likely significant effects of building and operating phase 2 of HS2 and proposed ways to avoid, reduce, mitigate and monitor the effects, and also for this to inform the proposed scheme. The purpose of this consultation is partly to ensure that due regard is given under the Equality Act 2010. Comments are also to be used to inform decision making in respect of the proposed scheme. In particular to inform the design of the scheme, the identification of potential equality effects arising from construction and operation of the proposed scheme, the enhancement of potential beneficial equality effects of the proposed schemes and the development of measures to avoid or mitigate potential adverse equality effects.
- 4.2.3 The purpose of the Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) Report is to provide the public and other stakeholders with an opportunity to comment on the draft information for Phase 2b. The consultation may identify issues that result in changes being made to the design of the proposed scheme or to mitigation. The consultation states that any changes and any associated effects will be reflected in the formal EQIA Report.
- 4.2.4 It is also important that due regard to equality be considered throughout HS2 development. Whilst the areas which are likely to have an impact on the protected characteristics are identified, and shown on a map, what is not identified is the actual impact and how this will be mitigated. Further information is welcome to understand mitigation and local consultation.
- 4.2.5 The stakeholder consultation states that 'the assessment will continue to identify further potentially sensitive resources along the route of the Proposed Scheme'. It also states that 'it is intended, as far as possible, to engage with representatives of the owners/operators of these resources in order to develop a full understanding of the impact of the Proposed Scheme and the potential for equality effects. At this stage of the assessment it has not yet been possible to engage with all relevant stakeholders but the process has commenced and will continue through to and

beyond the publication of the formal ES and formal EQIA. Information gathered from these will be used to inform the assessment and to help identify reasonably practicable mitigation measures.’

- 4.2.6 Whilst stakeholder consultation has started, the EQIA Report does not provide any details of local engagement at this stage. Local stakeholder consultation is an important part of ensuring due regard is given and also important in providing appropriate mitigation.
- 4.2.7 In considering due regard has been given a number of factors need to be considered in particular are there any equality impacts, and if so what are they and can the impact of these be mitigated. Given the information provided in the equality impact assessment at this stage, Leeds site specific impacts as listed below have been examined and comments made, these are contained within Appendix B
- Water Haigh Woodland Park (Warmfield to Swillington and Woodlesford, LA15)
 - Swillington Park, Organic Farm and fishing lakes (Warmfield to Swillington and Woodlesford, LA15)
 - Health and social care centres- Leeds Specialist Autism Services (Stourton to Hunslet).
 - Hunslet Parkside Amateur Rugby League Football Club Pitch 1 (Stourton to Hunslet, LA17)
 - Hunslet Community Sports Pitches (Stourton to Hunslet, LA17)
 - Mecca Bingo Club (Stourton to Hunslet, LA17)
 - Life Church Leeds (Leeds Station, LA18)
 - Gypsy and Traveller site, Kidacre Road (Leeds Station, LA18)
- 4.2.8 The impact of proposals both temporary and permanent are identified, along with those which have a general impact and a local nature. Proposals are also set out for stakeholder consultation. There is limited information available at this stage of the EQIA, some of which is sensitive at this stage in terms of stakeholder consultation. Whilst a positive process is identified in considering due regard to equality going forward it is important that appropriate mitigation is identified and undertaken to ensure that equality is integral to the development of HS2, both for impacts at a general level and also for those areas directly impacted.
- 4.2.9 It is also important that due regard to equality be considered throughout HS2 development. Whilst the areas which are likely to have an impact on the protected characterises are identified, and shown on a map, what is not identified is the actual impact and how this will be mitigated. Further information is welcome to understand mitigation and local consultation

4.3 Council policies and best council plan

- 4.3.1 It is recognised through the Leeds City Region HS2 Growth Strategy that HS2 can be a major contributor to the Vision for Leeds, Best City and council Plans where its economic and investment impacts have great potential.

4.4 Resources and value for money

- 4.4.1 The response to the HS2 Phase 2b Working Draft Environmental Statement consultation has been met through existing resources in Highways and Transportation and Planning Services. This resource will be reviewed in line HS2

Ltd.'s approach to the formal Environmental Statement submission and the Council's HS2 Hybrid Bill strategy development moving forward.

4.5 Legal implications, access to information, and call-in

4.5.1 This report is not eligible for call in.

4.6 Risk management

4.6.1 HS2 Ltd as the scheme promotor is responsible for managing the risks of an infrastructure project of this size and scale. Currently the risk areas identified by the council are real risks in the longer term. Once construction is underway it is accepted that there will be many issues and risks that the council will have to deal with.

4.6.2 In the shorter term any risk is more specifically for HS2 Ltd, and any mitigating action is through their engagement with us during the environmental statement and hybrid bill development, one of the key components in the development of the Environmental Assessment and HS2's findings and response to it.

4.6.3 However at present, as construction is still some way off, it would be difficult for the Council to define the specific risk outline prior to the finalised HS2 plan; in the same manner it would be difficult to put any detailed and focused mitigating actions in place. The Council will continue to regularly review this risk during the period up to the HS2 Phase 2B Hybrid Bill submission.

5. Conclusions

5.1 The proposed council response to the WDES continues to welcome the principle of HS2 Phase 2b. It is recognised through the Leeds City Region Growth Strategy that HS2 can be a major contributor to the Vision for Leeds, Best City and council Plans where its economic and investment impacts have great potential.

5.2 At the same time the Council is clear and committed to careful planning to ensure that greater attention is paid to all the project's impacts on communities and the environment. The council therefore welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the preparation of the Environmental Statement (ES) that will accompany the Bill and asks for further engagement with HS2 Ltd as they develop the Phase 2B design and prepare the formal ES that will accompany the Hybrid Bill.

5.3 An Environmental Statement which addresses the adverse impacts identified by the council in the WDES should reduce the need for the council to seek changes to the Hybrid Bill by petitioning at a later date.

5.4 The proposed council response to the Working Draft Equalities Impact Assessment notes that potential site-specific impact on protected characteristics in Leeds. In the absence of more detailed information, the response requests that HS2 Ltd provide further information to understand proposed mitigation and what local consultation has taken place.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1 The Chief Planning Officer is requested note the information in this report and the proposed full response to the HS2 Phase 2b WDES and working draft EQIA in appendix 1 and 2, and to
- I. authorise the submission of the Leeds City Council response to the HS2 Phase 2b Working Draft Environmental Statement Consultation and Working Draft Equality Impact Assessment.
 - II. authorise the publication of the Leeds City Council response to the HS2 Phase 2b Working Draft Environmental Statement Consultation and Working Draft Equality Impact Assessment.

7. Background documents¹

- 7.1 None

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.