

APPENDIX 2

Leeds City Council

Response to the HS2 Phase 2b

**Working Draft Equality Impact Assessment
consultation**



Introduction

1. The working draft Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) assessment 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.
2. The purpose of the 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.
3. The focus is on various type of impact, general and site specific. Due to the current stage of design development, the effects identified in the report are predominantly those associated with the temporary and permanent land required for proposed scheme. General mitigation measures as set out in Section 5 of the report are also identified. However, site specific mitigation has not been identified at this stage. Wider equality effects, for example those arising from traffic and transport, sound, noise and vibration or health effects are proposed to be reported in the formal EQIA. As such there is limited scope at this stage to comment on site specific mitigation on the protected characteristics as they have not yet been identified.
4. The consultation focuses on the due regard responsibility and identifies 9 protected characteristics as below;
 - **age**: this refers to a person belonging to a particular age or range of ages;
 - **disability**: a person has a disability if she or he has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities;
 - **gender reassignment**: people who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing, or have undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning their sex;
 - **marriage and civil partnership**: marriage can be between a man and a woman or between two people of the same sex. Same-sex couples can also have a civil partnership. Civil partners must not be treated less favourably than married couples (except where permitted by the Equality Act);
 - **pregnancy and maternity**: pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant or expecting a baby. Maternity refers to the period after the birth, and is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth;
 - **race**: refers to a group of people defined by their colour, nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins;
 - **religion and belief**: religion refers to any religion, including a lack of religion. Belief refers to any religious or philosophical belief including lack of belief (such as atheism).

- **sex**; this refers to a man or to a woman, or to a group of people of the same sex; and sexual orientation: whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes.
5. The focus of comments on the consultation is around the direct or indirect impact on the protected characteristics. The route impacts on certain physical areas of Leeds these are listed below and each will have a different impact in terms of equality protected characteristics. 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.

How has equality, diversity, cohesion and integration been considered?

Stakeholder engagement and public consultation

6. Stakeholder consultation has been held and 'stakeholder mapping' has been used to identify 4 types of stakeholders;
- relevant public bodies such as the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC), and other national and local organisations that support or represent people with protected characteristics;
 - LA equality and diversity officers (titles may differ between LAs) along the route of the Proposed Scheme;
 - parish councils along the route of the Proposed Scheme; and
 - owners or operators of community resources that provide services to people with protected characteristics that are likely to experience equality effects.
7. The objectives of the EQIA stakeholder engagement process for this working draft stage are identified as:
- identify PCGs within a local authority (LA) area;
 - identify facilities and services potentially affected by the construction or operation of the proposed Scheme that may be used by people with protected characteristics;
 - engage with representatives of facilities and services so identified with a view to understanding their operation and use, including user profiles; and
 - engage with people who have shared protected characteristics or representatives to better understand how impacts arising from the construction and operation of the proposed Scheme might affect those members of the community differently.
8. 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.'
9. 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.

Leeds site specific impacts

10. 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 are examined below and comments made.

Water Haigh Woodland Park (Warmfield to Swillington and Woodlesford, LA15)

11. Water Haigh Woodland Park is a 97ha woodland park and nature reserve, which was previously a quarry. It is located near Aberford Road in Woodlesford and is owned and managed by Leeds City Council. It is used by local people and families as a green space and also for observing wildlife. Activities for disabled people (including those with learning disabilities) that are held in the park includes tree planting programmes and wildlife walks. There is also a car park, which is used primarily by disabled people fishing in the canal.
12. **Comments;** the assessment states that it is currently not yet known how the temporary and permanent loss of these areas of land from the park would affect protected groups. HS2 Ltd state that they will seek further information through stakeholder engagement and deskbased research in order to understand the potential for equality effects. Further information is welcome to understand mitigation and local consultation.

Swillington Park, Organic Farm and fishing lakes (Warmfield to Swillington and Woodlesford, LA15)

13. Swillington Park, organic farm and fishing lakes site includes a farm shop and fishing lakes and is located on Coach Road in Swillington. There are five fishing lakes, car parking facilities and disabled access. Activities such as forest schools and ecoweddings are held at this facility. There is also a partnership with Rothwell Live at Home, which organises specific events for people with dementia at this facility. The construction of the River Aire viaduct would temporarily require land from the site to the south of Swillington which will impact the fishing lakes. The fishing lakes, and the area around the lakes which are used for events for children and people with dementia would not be accessible during the construction period, however access would be reinstated following construction.
14. **Comments;** The assessment states there may be the potential for this to result in temporary differential effects on groups with protected characteristics, such as people with dementia and children. HS2 Ltd will seek further information through stakeholder engagement and deskbased research in order to understand the potential for equality effects. Further information is welcome to understand mitigation and local consultation.

Health and social care centres- Leeds Specialist Autism Services (Stourton to Hunslet).

15. Leeds Specialist Autism Services (LSAS) is based at Junction 7 Business Park in Leeds, and provides services for adults on the autistic spectrum. The building has been recently refurbished by LSAS to provide very high standards of accessibility designed to cater for the particular needs of its users. It provides a wide range of services including employment support, social skills support, autism specific counselling, autism

awareness training, social enterprise support, Autism First project, community outreach and various other projects, many of which are on site.

16. **Comments;** Whilst provision of alternative services are provided what is not considered at this stage is the potential equality effects due to the permanent loss of this facility. It is also not clear how stakeholders have been considered in any decision making and how impact to the protected characteristics of disability, gender, age will be mitigated.

Hunslet Parkside Amateur Rugby League Football Club Pitch 1 (Stourton to Hunslet, LA17)

17. The construction of Leeds cutting and associated works to Hillidge Road and Beza Street would temporarily require some of the land associated with Hunslet Parkside ARLFC Pitch 1 on Beza Street. The car park and a grassed area north of the pitch, which together comprise approximately 40% of the total site, would be required for approximately four years and six months. During this time the pitch would remain open and accessible to users, however, the car park would be closed.
18. **Comments;** The temporary loss of the car park and the lack of suitable alternatives could have the potential for those with disabilities, children and young people to experience differential effects due to the lack of safe pedestrian access from the nearest alternative parking. The Assessment states that further information through stakeholder engagement and deskbased research in order to understand the potential for equality effects. This is encouraged to fully understand the impact and mitigation.

Hunslet Community Sports Pitches (Stourton to Hunslet, LA17)

19. The Hunslet community sports pitches are located within the Hunslet Green Community Sports Club site in Helton Court. The club has a membership of over 2,500 young people and provides an extensive programme of sports, arts and other activities for children and young people aged 18 months to 25 years. The club is open seven days a week with programmes on weekday evenings and on weekends. The construction of the Leeds cutting and the associated works to Hillidge Road and Church Street would permanently require land from one full size five-a-side football pitch and part of the outdoor space associated with Hunslet Green Community Sports Club on Hillidge Road. Together these spaces comprise approximately 10% of the total outdoor space at the Hunslet Club site. Both the pitch and outdoor space would be unusable for their intended purpose; however, the club building and other pitches would remain usable.
20. **Comments;** The assessment states that the permanent loss of a sports pitch and part of the outside space could have a disproportionate effect on those protected groups (children and young people) that use these spaces. There may be the potential for children and young people, for whom public open space and play space are important for play, health, fitness and social interaction, to experience differential equality effects as a result of the loss of these facilities. The assessment also states that HS2 Ltd will seek further information through stakeholder engagement and deskbased research in order to understand the potential for equality effects. Any equality effects identified as a result of impacts on the site and any consequent mitigations will be reported in the formal EQIA Report. To this extent further information will be required to fully understand and mitigate impacts.

Mecca Bingo Club (Stourton to Hunslet, LA17)

21. Mecca Bingo Club is a purpose-built bingo hall located on Balm Road. The hall includes seating for 1,555 players and 50 e-bingo terminals. The hall opens at 11.30am daily with daily afternoon and evening sessions plus a morning session on Saturdays. Additional facilities include a 211 space car park with disabled car parking, disabled access, a hearing loop, cash machine, bar and restaurant. The assessment states that the profile of users of the Bingo hall is not known but research suggests 80% of non-online bingo players are women and the age group with the highest participation rate (11%) is 75 years and over. The construction of the Leeds cutting and associated site haul routes would require the demolition of Mecca Bingo on Balm Road.
22. **Comments;** the assessment states that there may be the potential for the permanent loss of this facility to result in a disproportionate effect for women and the elderly; and differential effect on the disabled who use the services. This facility would be eligible for compensation under the Code, and it is assumed that the operators would seek to re-provide these services, subject to market demand. Further the assessment states HS2 Ltd will seek further information through stakeholder engagement and deskbased research in order to understand the potential for equality effects due to the loss of this facility.

Life Church Leeds (Leeds Station, LA18)

23. The Life Church is based in Leeds and is a place of worship for youth and young adults. Services are held at two venues, the Metropolitan Hotel in central Leeds and Hurley House on Dewsbury Road. Midweek services and activities for teenagers and young adults are held at Hurley House, which is the Leeds hub of the Christian megachurch Life Church UK and hosts groups for children, mothers and toddlers, young adults and women. The construction of Leeds viaduct and Leeds station multi storey car park would require the demolition of Hurley House on Dewsbury Road.
24. **Comments;** the assessment states the construction of Leeds viaduct and Leeds station multi storey car park would require the demolition of Hurley House on Dewsbury Road. There may be the potential for this to result in disproportionate effects on people of faith and young people. Also HS2 Ltd will seek further information through stakeholder engagement and deskbased research in order to understand the potential for equality effects due to the loss of this facility. Any equality effects identified as a result of impacts on the site and any consequent mitigations will be reported in the formal EQIA Report. Further information is welcome to understand mitigation and local consultation.

Gypsy and Traveller site, Kidacre Road (Leeds Station, LA18)

25. On Kidacre Road, Leeds the recently developed Gypsy and Traveller site providing a total of eight permanent pitches for modular prefabricated accommodation, as well as shower blocks, toilets and parking. The site is located on land permanently required for the construction of the Leeds embankment. Therefore, the site was granted a 10-year temporary planning permission (which expires in 2026) to allow vacation prior to the construction of the Proposed Scheme. However, HS2 Ltd may require this site earlier than 2026.
26. **Comments;** The assessment states that Leeds City Council has identified a site at Tulip Retail Park as a suitable alternative. The Tulip Street site has been identified for this use in the Council's Site Allocations Plan. However, the Plan has not been formally adopted and planning permission has not yet been secured. The statement also states Within the

Gypsy and Traveller community, Romany Gypsies and Irish Travellers specifically are legally recognised as ethnic groups under the Act. It can be assumed that all of the residents of the site will be from the Gypsy and Traveller community, but no other information is currently available regarding their ethnicity or whether residents have other protected characteristics.

27. Construction of the Proposed Scheme would result in the permanent demolition and displacement of occupiers of the site, with the potential for disproportionate and differential effects on the Romany Gypsy and/or Irish Traveller communities and other groups with protected characteristics, depending on the demographic profile of the residents. The assessment states that HS2 Ltd is engaging with Leeds City Council housing department to fully understand the site, its use and any potential equality effects. Further information is welcome to understand mitigation and local consultation.

Proposals going forward

28. 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.
29. 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.