
HS2 Liaison Group
Venue: Microsoft Teams
Minutes of the meeting held on 16 February 2024 at 10.30 am

Representatives from the following organisations were present:

Cllr Phil Larratt (Chair)
Cllr Anthony Bagot-Webb WNC
(Brackley & Cllr Cabinet Assistant HS2)
Cllr Jonathan Nunn (Leader of WNC)
Bill Dodd (Whitfield)
John Merchant (Helmdon)
Cllr Charles Manners (WNC)
Cllr Sue Sharps (WNC)
Cllr Rosie Herring (WNC)
Cllr Rupert Frost (WNC)

Cathy Ellis (Evenley PC)
Maurice Cole (Thorpe Mandeville PC)
Stuart Rolt (Thorpe Mandeville PC)
Andrew Partridge (Eydon)
Gary Lowther (Syresham)
Cllr Dermot Bambridge (Silverstone)
Chris Weller
Jack Edwards (Parliamentary assistant)
Clive Hockley (Hinton-in-the-Hedges PC)
Philip Freer (FoB)

In Attendance:

Nick Henstock (part) (WNC)
Esme Cushing (WNC)
Nathan Lowde (WNC)
Simon Levell (Kier)
Chris James (EKFB)
Simon Davis (EKFB)
Dave Butcher (EKFB)
Sean Lang (EKFB)
Haidee Williams (EKFB)
Fiona Williams (HS2)
Richard Nuttall (HS2)
Jayne Willetts (HS2)
Andra Juhasz (HS2)
Zachary Stamps (National Highways)

Apologies:

Gary Pettit (WNC)
Hilary Walton (Whitfield PC)
Simon Matthews (EKFB)
Cllr Alison Eastwood WNC (Silverstone)
Bill Price (HS2)
Mick Morris (Farthinghoe)
Andy Smith (Radstone)
Dame Andrea Leadsom MP
Olivia King (National Highways)
Nichola Thomas (FoB)
Filippa St Alban D'Ancy (National Highways)
David Cranwell (SNATRA)
Stephanie Brackpool (SNATRA)

MINUTES

1. Welcome, introductions, Minutes of last meeting and matters arising

Cllr Larratt welcomed everyone to the meeting.

The Minutes from the previous meeting were agreed and updates given on actions from the previous meeting as below:

FW has sought a response to AP's complaint to the Construction Commissioner, but has not yet received a response. AP reported that he had chased the HS2 helpdesk and was promised a phone call but that had not happened. The Construction Commissioner had still not responded after 2 months. RN agreed that this was not acceptable.

Action – RN to chase AP's complaint with the Construction Commissioner face to face next week and provide update to AP

2. Greatworth Tee

PL outlined that the delay in opening Greatworth Tee has been taking up a lot of time to WNC, EKFB and others and that there seems to be little progress. WNC formally wrote to HS2 regarding the matter and have received a response, but this has not moved things forward. There have been consistent delays in documentation being provided and opening dates having to slip and we are now waiting for the paperwork to be correctly completed so that we can be sure that the road is safe and legal to open. WNC are growing increasingly frustrated.

AB-W said that one important measure of success and failure was the amount of email correspondence to Councillors and Officers and that in recent months this has been increasing on the project and often being escalated to Dame Andrea Leadsom. There are four key areas that have caused issues recently: Greatworth Tee, parking of twenty trucks on Brackley industrial estate, Brackley Road road closure and issues on B4525 as a result of increased HS2 construction HGV traffic.

The delay in opening the Greatworth Tee is now impacting a number of people and WNC made considerable efforts to fast-track the planning application, however information is still outstanding which is unacceptable and now EKFB are saying this will be with us by 28th February.

CJ introduced Sean Lang who is responsible for Greatworth Tee and acknowledged that they had not performed to the standards expected and want to improve. The presentation later will show the road closures over the coming year to give communities a better understanding.

GL said that the issue on Buckingham Road Industrial Estate has been resolved quickly by HS2 once reported, with only a few turning up the next day and that DB had done a good job. However, the issues on B4525 around Crowfield remain with several HGVs coming off the road into the verge, reinforcing the side of the road would help to make it safer.

CJ responded that these issues are best discussed at the Traffic Liaison Groups (TLG) which are attended by HS2/ its contractors, the relevant highway authority and blue lights services. The current number of HGVs on the B4525 is much lower than that approved through the Schedule 17 approval (currently it is around 70-80 HGVs a day) and this will increase as the weather improves. CJ suggested that the best way for GL to raise this issue would be to write to the helpdesk as traffic related issues are raised at the TLG.

Action – GL to write to HS2 Helpdesk ([Contact us - HS2](#)) to raise concerns copying CJ in

SL added that the Greatworth Tee has not been as simple as expected, but that over recent weeks there was a positive momentum for the departures, with 13 of the 14 resolved and one being resolved by close of play today. Will submit to HS2 for coding, then they will be submitted to HS2 for coding. RSA3 has already been carried out and all actions closed to work towards 29 February opening date.

PL urged that WNC was keen to see the road open as soon as possible.

RH raised concerns regarding lack of fencing around an area in Radstone (piece of land previously owned by Radstone Manor that is now owned by DfT) and concern that if it is not secured, it will become a target for flytipping and unauthorised use.

Action - RH to send email to RN regarding issue for him to resolve with property colleagues

CW asked why traffic was required on the B4525 when there was the internal site access road, it had been implied that this would be used for construction vehicles. He also sought reassurance that the Greatworth Tee would be open before the Banbury Lane was closed, and that there is a turning circle in Helmdon Road, Greatworth which is fenced off.

CJ explained that the site access road is used as far as possible, for example vehicles access at the A43 compound to access Radstone Road rather than having to use the B4525, but there is still a requirement to use the B4525 in some cases. The Banbury Lane will not close until the Greatworth Tee is open –the upcoming road closures are outlined in the presentation. The turning head is still awaiting sign-off by WNC.

JN introduced himself and highlighted that there was a high focus on opening the Greatworth Tee and raised concerns that it was all subject to a number of processes and sign-offs and the risks associated with that.

SL explained that EKFB had been discussing the issues with WNC and didn't believe that there were any last minute hurdles that could not be overcome and that it was in everyone's interest to resolve it.

JN asked for the group to be quickly informed if there were any reasons why the 29 February opening date could not be met.

AP asked whether a lessons learnt exercise would be undertaken. SL confirmed that an internal review was being undertaken but that this would be an internal document, but the key lessons could be reported back at a future meeting.

CJ proposed that a newsletter update setting out future plans in the Greatworth area would be produced to provide an outline of what to expect that they could be measured against and to give reassurance.

AP said that the lessons learnt would likely be the sanitised version.

JE gave a brief update on Dame Andrea's behalf and raised her dismay with the continual delay and that there would be a social media post this afternoon to give an update.

SS urged that a more interactive Comms solution was found that could be updated more regularly. AP suggested a portal approach that is used by Anglian Water for example. CJ will reflect on these suggestions.

3. National Highways update

ZS gave a short presentation on how NH manage HS2 works.

The following points were noted:

- NH are planning to commit to attending TLG going forward
- Safety of road users is their priority
- Extensive pre-apps take place
- Always looking to improve
- Regularly monitor HS2 schemes on the strategic road network (signage/safety etc)

AP raised concerns about the quality of temporary traffic management around the Greatworth Tee. CJ assured him that they would be subject to routine inspections, but any concerns should be raised through the HS2 Helpdesk so that they can be investigated.

BD asked about whether there would be safe access for cyclist and pedestrians on A43 structure.

DB confirmed that as communicated in previous meetings that the structure was futureproofed but that HS2 would only be reinstating what was on the current alignment.

ZS confirmed he would also look at this if BD emailed him.

Members of the groups raised concerns about co-ordination with other works on the strategic road network and ensuring that signage was correct and clear. There were also questions around how the bridge will be constructed.

Action – CJ to do a presentation on construction process for A43 structure

4. HS2/EKFB update

CJ gave a presentation.

The following issues were raised:

- Road closures making it difficult for people to move around the area

- Lack of real-time information to allow people to plan (can be delay with Google maps for example showing road closures/ diversions) this is difficult to influence as national issue
- Difficult to access/interpret One Network
- Not enough detail to share with communities
- Discrepancies between date of road closures in WNC and WCC for closures on the border.

CJ and DB responded by saying that happy to assist RH with One Network. Some road closures that were planned for trial holes on the A361 were done at another time while bridge inspections were undertaken. Further road closures and traffic management may be required. The presentation gives an idea of road closures, but it is inevitable that things will change as it is such a large and complex project.

Community engagement work is still ongoing with EKFB assisting with the Food Larder and working with Men in Sheds.

BD asked whether there would be any opportunity for help with an overgrown footpath near Whitfield as the landowner appears to have neglected to clear it.

Action – BB to send through location of overgrown footpath to DB and EC.

5.AOB

TB-W asked about the number of lorries taking concrete to Westbury viaduct overnight and for confirmation of the route. CJ confirmed that a section 61 had been submitted and that the route was B4525, A43 and A422 and that movements would be within what had been approved. GL again expressed that it would put further impact on the B4525 and would like to see HS2 being more proactive.

TB-W said that he and PL had order an urgent safety review to identify what action needs to be taken.

Action – WNC to provide update on B4525 at next meeting

PL thanked everyone for attending.

Action – WNC to circulate future meeting date

Date of future meetings:

- TBC

CLOSED ACTIONS

Date of action	Action	Status
15/12/23	NH to provide presentation at future Liaison meeting on how NH coordinates diversions/road closures	Closed 16/02/24

15/12/23	EKFB to produce phasing drawing for Greatworth T and road closures close by, to share with group to assist with timescales	Closed 16/02/24
15/12/23	RH to send details to GP of description of the location of pothole.	Closed
15/12/23	HS2 to chase up response to AP from Construction Commissioner and to respond to AP	Closed 16/02/24 and replaced with new action