

High Speed 2 (HS2)

High Speed 2 (HS2) is the new high speed railway proposed by the Government to connect major cities in England. When HS2 is completed, trains will run at up to 225mph between London and Birmingham, East Midlands, Manchester and Leeds.

The HS2 railway line from Birmingham to Manchester will run right through our Parish.

Full information on the HS2 project can be found on the HS2 website at: www.gov.uk/HS2. A hard copy of all the documents is also available at Crewe library.

HS2 will be built in phases.

- **HS2 Phase 1**, from London to Birmingham, has just started construction and is due to be operational in 2026.
- **HS2 Phase 2a** will run between Birmingham and Crewe. It is due to commence construction in 2020 and be operational in 2027.
- **HS2 Phase 2b** covers the lines to run from Crewe up to Manchester and between Birmingham and Leeds. This is currently planned to become operational in 2033.

HS2 Phase 2a current position

The High Speed Rail (West Midlands to Crewe) Bill was presented to Parliament on 17 July 2017. The Bill sets out the route of Phase 2a and seeks planning permission to build it. Construction of Phase 2a is due to commence in 2020. It is planned to become operational in 2027.

The Environmental Statement setting out the likely significant environmental impacts along the route and the Equality Impact Assessment for HS2 Phase 2a were published with the Bill on 17 July 2017. These can be accessed online or viewed at public libraries.

The Government sought comments from the public and other interested parties on these documents. The period of public consultation started on 17 July 2017 and finished on 30 September 2017.

The Parish Council's response to the Environmental Statement consultation can be accessed [HERE](#).

Impact on our Parish and surrounding area

HS2 Phase 2a will run through our Parish. It will have a major impact on South Cheshire.

The route through South Cheshire up to Crewe has been amended to incorporate the design changes that were consulted on in 2016 and which the Parish Council supported.

- The entrance to the tunnel which takes the HS2 lines under the centre of Crewe has been moved further south and is now sited to the south of the A500 and Weston Lane.
- The viaducts which enable the HS2 lines to connect to the West Coast Mainline have been moved further south and are lower.
- The Infrastructure Maintenance Depot is to be sited near Stone in Staffordshire, not at Basford West.

The route through South Cheshire is shown in Map Book CA5: South Cheshire of the Environmental Statement. This is available on the HS2 website.

In summary, the major long-term impacts are:

- **A500 and Weston Lane remain unaltered.** The tunnel taking the main HS2 line under Crewe town centre has been lengthened so that the entrance is to be located just to the south of Weston Lane. The tunnel itself is scheduled to be built as part of Phase 2b.
- **Casey Lane** – the bridge on Casey Lane is to be removed and Casey Lane closed off just beyond the existing houses. A new (Casey) Lane is to be built to the east of the railway to connect Weston Lane to the realigned Newcastle Road
- The HS2 lines will run parallel to the existing West Coast Main Line in a deep cutting under Newcastle Road and down to the tunnel entrance, located just south of the A500 and Weston Lane.
- **Newcastle Road** – the existing bridge will be demolished and the road realigned to a new bridge over the railway to the north of the existing houses. The existing Newcastle Road running past these houses will become an access road for these properties and other properties currently accessed from Chorlton Lane to the west of the railway.
- **Chorlton Lane** – the existing bridge will be demolished and not replaced. Chorlton Lane will run on the eastern side of the railway from the realigned Newcastle Road to the junction with Waybutts Lane and will be closed off just after this junction. The section of Chorlton Lane on the west will join up to the 'old' Newcastle Road to give access to the existing properties located on the lane.
- **Chorlton to Blakenhall** - two viaducts will take the HS2 lines over the West Coast Mainline between Chorlton and Blakenhall. These viaducts will be up to 14m high.
- **Den Lane** – the existing bridge over the West Coast mainline will remain as is. Further west, Den Lane will be realigned south of its existing position to join Mill Lane to the west of the new HS2 mainline. There will be three new railway crossings of Den Lane. The HS2 mainline and both the new viaducts will pass over Den Lane close to its intersection with Mill Lane.
- **Checkley Lane** – the existing railway bridge over the West Coast Mainline will remain as is. Further west the lane will be realigned to a new bridge over HS2
- Several **footpaths and bridleways** which cross or run near the railway will be diverted
- **The character of the area** will be permanently changed: more rail infrastructure will be visible and there will be increased train noise, making the area look and feel less rural. Extensive landscape works will be undertaken to mitigate the visual impact. More trees

will be planted, some on embankments and bunds, changing the landscape from predominantly views across arable farmland to developing woodland.

- People living in Crewe and the surrounding area will benefit from high speed trains stopping at Crewe station, reducing the journey time to London from the current 96 minutes to just 55 minutes.
- Between 2027 and the completion of Phase 2b it is planned that 7 HS2 trains an hour will run through Crewe in each direction. 4 of these will stop, providing services to London, Preston and Liverpool.
- From completion of Phase 2b up to 12 HS2 trains an hour will run through Crewe. Most of these will use the tunnel to be constructed under Crewe, the entrance to which is to be located to the South of the A500 and Weston Lane. Just 2 trains an hour in each direction will continue to stop at Crewe unless a full HS2 hub station is constructed at Crewe.
- Cheshire East strongly supports HS2, stating that the arrival of high-speed rail will consolidate Cheshire East as one of the most connected areas in the UK and will support existing businesses, inward investment and job creation in and around Crewe.

The effect on our Parish during construction will be significant:

Map Book CA5: South Cheshire, available on the HS2 website, contains maps showing the effects on South Cheshire during construction of the new railway. A link to the maps for just our area is provided on the Parish website. Construction activity is due to start in 2020 and continue until 2027.

- Significant areas of land close to the line of the new railway will be required during the construction period to give access to the construction site, for use as construction compounds, for stockpiling materials, as borrow pits and for landscaping activities
- Temporary road or lane closures will be required in a number of locations, including Newcastle Road, Casey Lane, Checkley Lane and Den Lane.
- Some temporary access roads will be constructed and many footpaths and bridleways diverted
- There will be more traffic on the roads, including an increase in heavy goods traffic. Certain roads in our Parish have been designated for use by HS2 construction traffic, including the A500, Newcastle Road, Casey Lane, Chorlton Lane and Wrinehill Lane.
- There will be an increase in noise from traffic and from construction activities, some of which may also cause vibration effects to properties close to the new railway lines.
- Mitigation measures will be in place to limit disruption and significant adverse effects, including construction traffic using the line of the railway wherever possible, noise barriers, limiting the working hours, but some disruption is inevitable.

HS2 Phase 2b current position

Phase 2b covers the new railway line from Crewe up to Manchester and the line between Birmingham and Leeds. The line to Manchester starts at the entrance to the tunnel just south of Weston Lane.

The proposed route of Phase 2b has been published and it, and further information on Phase 2b, can be accessed on the HS2 website.

Crewe Hub

Crewe station was opened in 1837 to link the four largest cities in England. It has been a major interchange station ever since.

HS2 will benefit Crewe, with 2 high speed trains each hour, in each direction, providing services to London, Preston and Liverpool. The Government has stated that the journey time to London will be cut from the current 96 minutes to just 55 minutes.

The Government is keen to explore the possibility of building a major Hub station at Crewe which would enable more HS2 trains to stop at Crewe. This would give Crewe and the surrounding region even better access to high speed rail services, serving more destinations. The new station would most likely be located on the existing site of Crewe station.

The Department for Transport produced a consultation document on the Crewe Hub, looking at various options, the investment needed and how this could be funded. The consultation document can be found on the DfT website or by using the following link:

www.gov.uk/government/consultations/crewe-hub-options-for-building-on-existing-connectivity

It sought the views of interested parties and the general public on these options, the consultation period began on 17 July 2017 and closed on 12 October 2017.

The Parish Council's response to the consultation can be found [HERE](#).