

promoting quality public transport.....

HS2 Ltd
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30th August 2022

Dear HS2 Team,

High Speed Rail (Crewe – Manchester) Supplementary Environmental Statement 1 and Additional Provision 1 Environmental Statement

1. TravelWatch NorthWest (TWNW) is an independent Community Interest Company representing all public transport users in North West England. We are pleased to give our concise views as follows to this consultation.
2. Our major concern is around the decision to remove the HS2 WCML connection, included in the original scheme, from the High Speed Rail (Crewe – Manchester) bill. The Statement says that “with the removal of the HS2 WCML connection, HS2 trains will continue on the conventional rail network from Crewe to the North West and Scotland with one HS2 service per hour from London Euston to Glasgow.”
3. We have grave misgivings about this statement. The 2-track railway between Winsford and Golborne is a bottleneck. There is no mention of HS2 trains to Liverpool which we understood would have connected directly with the Northern Powerhouse Rail route (in the Warrington area). We also have concerns about the crucial importance of providing for the huge leisure market that is the Lake District which must have through HS2 links with London. Changing trains is not acceptable.
4. It is regrettably apposite that the document acknowledges that “as a result of the removal of the HS2 WCML connection (SES1-004-001), some of the benefits of the original scheme as described in the main ES will not be delivered through powers sought in this Bill. This includes some additional benefits of the original scheme, over and above those benefits of Phase One and Phase 2a of HS2. These are benefits from faster journeys and increased capacity between England and Scotland; and improved reliability and released capacity on the WCML.” This is indeed a very negative statement!

5. The document does go on to say that “the retention in the Bill of works at Hoo Green” (to provide for a future connection) “and on the WCML, works to stations at Carlisle and Preston and a depot at Annandale will facilitate the future delivery of a northern connection to the WCML and the benefits that future connection would bring.” We deeply advocate that this connection is approved as soon as possible to provide this much needed (Golborne) link.

6. More generally, the lack of free capacity on the WCML north of Golborne will be significantly more marked by the time HS2 becomes operational. There must therefore be significant capacity enhancements carried out to this crucial section of the route (Golborne – Glasgow/ Edinburgh) in parallel with HS2 development. Passenger growth will require this anyway and HS2 will add to that growth.

7. We would also like to take the opportunity to reiterate our concerns about the terminating HS2 station in Manchester. We support the concept of a West – East oriented through (underground) station at Piccadilly which would be much more flexible and advantageous for connectivity. Many cities in Europe are now abandoning the terminal station turnback principle in favour of through platforms to give greater flexibility.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond.

Yours sincerely,

John

John Moorhouse
Company Secretary