



Campaign to Protect  
Rural England

Buckinghamshire

## **CONSULTATION RESPONSES**

**The Department for Transport consultation document is available on their website and comprises seven questions, with the ability to provide yes/no answers, or more detail. Website: [http:// www.dft.gov.uk](http://www.dft.gov.uk)**

### **NOTE:**

The government opened the official consultation process on HS2 on February 28<sup>th</sup> and it is scheduled to last until July 29<sup>th</sup>. As an initial response, the local Chiltern Society joined with a number of National NGOs, including CPRE, RSPB, Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace, the Wildlife Trusts and the Woodland Trust, to condemn the HS2 proposal and calling on the government to reopen the planning process for High Speed Rail in the UK, arguing that a much better solution is available, at lower cost, both to the taxpayer and the environment. They developed the Right Lines Charter and have called upon the Government to sign up to the Principles of that Charter. They have recently attended a meeting with the Transport Minister, Phillip Hammond, to press their case.

### ***Herewith the 7 questions, followed by responses developed from the Charter Principles:***

- 1. Do you agree that there is a strong case for enhancing the capacity and performance of Britain's inter-city rail network to support economic growth over the coming decades?**

YES - but not just for economic growth but to tackle climate change and reduce social exclusion but that this would best be done by broader investment in the rail network.

- 2. Do you agree that the HS2 'Y' network proposal linking London to Birmingham then Manchester and Leeds would provide the best value for money solution?**

NO - the best value for money would be achieved by first upgrading existing routes and then assessing where, if any, new lines are required, as usage patterns are likely to change over time.

- 3. Do you agree with the Government's proposals for a phased roll-out of a high speed rail network and for links with Heathrow and the Channel Tunnel HS 1 ?**

NO - although a phased development of an enhanced rail network with links to Heathrow and HS 1 makes sense, the ultra-high speed proposed does not.

- 4. Do you agree with the principles and specification used by HS2 Ltd. to underpin its proposals for new high speed rail lines and the route selection process HS2 Ltd. undertook?**

NO - The choice of such a high speed line has constrained the route selection criteria and stations served. In addition the lack of integration with the existing rail network reduces the effectiveness of the solution.

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**5. Do you agree that the Government's proposed route is the best option for a new high speed rail line between London and the West Midlands?**

NO - Better routes are available, for slightly lower speeds, which have fewer adverse impacts on the environment.

**6. Do you wish to comment on the Appraisal of Sustainability of the Government's proposed route between London and the West Midlands?**

No account has been taken of potential future changes in travel patterns viz. increased use of *IT*/ video conferencing. The decision to propose an ultra-high speed line, requiring 50% more energy to operate, ignores climate change targets already imposed on the UK. It also ignores adverse impacts on the environment, including damage to an AONB (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty).

**7. Do you think that the proposals to address blight and provide compensation for those living and working along the proposed route are adequate?**

No position has been taken on this by environmental groups.

**IMPORTANT**

In addition to responding directly to the *DfT* consultation, people are urged by the Chiltern Society and CPRE to write to their MPs, Councillors, Party Leaders and Government Ministers objecting to the proposals on the grounds of a colossal waste of taxpayers' money and a squandered opportunity to enhance the whole of the transport infrastructure of the UK.

Contact details for many of these can be found at [www.writetothem.com](http://www.writetothem.com)

More information on HS2 and the Right Lines Charter can be obtained from [www.chilternsociety.org.uk](http://www.chilternsociety.org.uk) and [www.cpre.org.uk](http://www.cpre.org.uk) . A petition against it can be signed at [www.stophs2.org](http://www.stophs2.org)

The Chiltern Society and Bucks CPRE are jointly funding a Campaign Leader to lead a campaign which will extend through the remainder of the public consultation period and beyond. If you are able to contribute towards this campaign, either in terms of time or money, please get in touch with either organisation.

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