26th February 2014

FREEPOST RTEC-AJUT-GGHH
HS2 Phase One Bill Environmental Statement
PO Box 70178
London
WC1A 9HS

Dear Sir/Madam

HS2 PHASE ONE BILL ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT

This is Birmingham City Council's response to the Secretary of State's consultation on the High Speed Two Phase One Formal Environmental Statement and is made in accordance with Parliamentary Standing Orders, by the 27th February 2014.

The city council continues to strongly support High Speed Two (HS2). We believe HS2 will address the challenges facing the UK, providing improved rail capacity and connectivity with Birmingham at its centre, offering a catalyst for economic growth and regeneration. The city council will continue to work with Government and partners including the Core Cities and the Go-HS2 consortium in supporting the delivery of HS2 and its significant predicted benefits. However, the development of the Birmingham Curzon Station must seek to maximise the opportunities it creates as a catalyst for regeneration in the local environs of the station, and support the delivery of the aspirations set out in Birmingham Curzon HS2 Masterplan.

The city council has responded to all previous HS2 Ltd / Government consultations regarding HS2, including those relating to the HS2 Environmental Impact Assessment Scope & Methodology, the Code of Construction Practice, Safeguarding, Property and Compensation and, more recently, the HS2 Draft Environmental Statement. At each stage the city council has submitted representations seeking a range of improvements/alterations to the HS2 proposal in line with its policy position. These responses have informed our assessment of the HS2 Formal Environmental Statement (ES).

Although the city council is grateful for the extension of the consultation deadline, we have been unable to fully review the substantial documentation associated with the ES in the limited time available and have been afforded no resources by Government or HS2 Ltd to assist in doing so. As such we must therefore reserve our position to make further representations, though we appreciate that these will not be included in the review to be undertaken by the assessor appointed by Parliament of representations made to the Secretary of State by 27th February 2014. We again express concern over the timescale of HS2 Ltd's consultation which are insufficient given the volume and complexity of information contained within the ES. We would recommend that timescales are lengthened for any future consultations, to a minimum of 12 weeks.

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26 February

The city council has reviewed the ES and has a number of concerns on the adequacy of assessments undertaken and mitigation proposed within the ES, and therein the unsubstantiated or insufficiently substantiated conclusions reached. The city council is disappointed that HS2 Ltd has not taken account of the vast majority of the city council’s previous comments, responses and concerns submitted over several years. These concerns cover the topics as set out in Annex A, with more detail under each of these broad headings included at Annex B.

The city council has identified a number of key areas which have been informed in part by our response to the ES for further discussion with HS2 Ltd, and has summarised its outstanding 'asks' in a table (a draft of which has been shared with HS2 Ltd). Where possible, it is the city council’s intention to secure robust and legally binding 'undertakings' in relation to each of these 'asks', through negotiation with HS2 Ltd and / or petitioning of the Select Committee in respect of the HS2 Hybrid Bill. The 'asks' as shared with HS2 Ltd to date should not be treated as a comprehensive and final list of all items in relation to which the city council may seek to secure legal agreement/s.

Analysis of the formal ES, and associated work by the city council and its Agents, remains on-going; therefore, although the city council is attempting to be as open as possible throughout this process, it reserves the right to raise new issues and bring forward additional representations and 'asks' at any time.

It is important that dialogue continues to address any further refinement in scheme proposals and their impacts. However, given the level of development to date and issues identified, we are increasingly concerned that key areas of the ES are not satisfactorily concluded and these issues remain outstanding as the parliamentary process is commencing. We are as always committed to working collaboratively with HS2 Ltd to seek consensus on these areas as required.

We look forward to continuing to work with HS2 Ltd and partners in assisting the delivery of this transformational national infrastructure project, and realising its benefits.

Yours faithfully

[Signature]

Paul Dransfield
Deputy Chief Executive
ANNEX A – SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES

The city council’s key concerns are described in summary below, and more fully (under the same headings) in Annex B.

1. Economy

We are concerned that the ES appears to underestimate the economic challenge facing the city, and compounding this there remains a significant uncertainty with regard to HS2’s employment impacts, including the significantly increased impact (from that in the draft ES) on both employment land generally and on jobs potentially displaced. There is a need for HS2 Ltd to recognise that HS2 will significantly alter the economic make-up of the city.

Related to this issue we note that, as HS2 Ltd has informed us it is aware, there are currently discrepancies between Safeguarding, Hybrid Bill and ES plans in terms of the extent of land required to build, and ultimately operate, HS2 including protecting HS2 from conflicting developments. There is a need to ensure such documents are as coordinated as possible to maximise clarity and certainty.

There is a need for the city council to continue to work to maximise economic benefits locally, and to continue to work with other partners, HS2 Ltd and Central Government to ensure that the economic opportunities of HS2 are realised. It is crucial that current initiatives such as the national HS2 Growth Taskforce are translated into sustained efforts to maximise opportunities from this long-term project and realise those benefits predicted directly and indirectly within the ES. These efforts must be coordinated with HS2 Ltd’s necessarily defined remit in delivering a railway and stations, the design of which are important components in the ultimate level of benefits that will be generated from HS2.

A wide ranging training and employment package must be provided to ensure that local people have the skills to enable them to secure employment in the construction and operation of HS2. Locating HS2 Ltd’s proposed training academy in the city would help to maximise benefits to jobseekers and the city as a whole, and in part help to mitigate the impact on current businesses and jobs within the city.

2. Birmingham Curzon Station

The station should be of the highest quality to rival the best in the world, in terms of architectural design, integration to the surroundings, passenger experience and connectivity. It must include wide ranging and high quality multi-modal facilities that would be expected of such a world-class station and a gateway to Birmingham and the wider West Midlands. We consider that the current ES and proposals do not fully consider the impacts of the scheme on landscape, place-making, permeability and connectivity. The development of the station
must seek to maximise the opportunities it creates as a catalyst for regeneration in the local environs of the station and support the delivery of the aspirations set out in the Birmingham Curzon HS2 Masterplan – currently there is a lack of convergence with this Masterplan.

3. Washwood Heath Depot

We note the proposed Washwood Heath Depot as the base from which to build and operate the HS2 ‘Y’ network - if progressed Washwood Heath should be the principal advanced engineering maintenance centre and rail control centre for the HS2 network. However, we consider that the ES does not consider the full impact of HS2 on the city’s employment land supply nor offer appropriate mitigation. It is considered that the overall layout of the depot takes an excessive amount of land which reduces the significant opportunity for development on the remaining land once the depot is operational and therefore reduces the potential for job creation in this particularly deprived area of the city. The opportunity for integrated and supporting advanced manufacturing/technological industries which maximise development and job creation at this location on the remaining land available for development must be fully explored and a credible shared plan put in place to facilitate this.

4. Birmingham Interchange Station

The location of the proposed Interchange Station, adjacent to the NEC and Birmingham Airport, provides a tremendous opportunity to implement strategically important development which will add real value to both the city’s and the region’s economy. However, the proposed design of the Interchange Station set out in the ES is deficient; we consider that it lacks a vision which facilitates place-making and wider regeneration in this key location resulting in a lack of convergence with GBSLEP’s vision as set out in the UK Central Masterplan.

During the construction process a number of site compounds are shown both on the city council’s land to the east of the M42 and on the National Exhibition Centre (NEC) site - discussions are required with HS2 Ltd to mitigate the loss of parking and minimise the disruption, potential loss of business and inconvenience by pursuing the alternative compound sites that have been suggested. Birmingham City Council and the NEC would welcome further discussions with HS2 to minimise disruption to the road network and pedestrian routes around the NEC.

5. Connectivity

In addition to multi-modal facilities at Birmingham Curzon station as above, proposals to enhance the quality and provision of supporting transport networks must be explored in detail and plans put forward to demonstrate a credible connectivity strategy, which ensures
a realistic and deliverable plan is in place to meet HS2 needs and support the wider city centre – it is considered that this important issue is not adequately covered by the ES.

More specifically, HS2 must be designed so as to facilitate and encourage delivery of the **West Midlands Local Connectivity Package**, including provision for a new Metro route along New Canal Street underneath the station. In a wider sense, further work is required on rail network impacts, including demand levels, crowding and use of released capacity. The development of HS2 must seek to maximise the opportunities it creates for wider transport network improvements. It must enable, and certainly not preclude, the provision / improvement of future transport infrastructure.

**6. Construction**

The construction programme identifies an unprecedented level of construction activity in the city, and some highways and streetworks legislation is proposed to be disapplied to HS2 works. Taken together, these points mean that HS2 has the potential to render the Authority powerless in its ability to manage its transport network.

We consider that the assessment of construction activities within the ES grossly understates the impact of these activities, for example the closure of Saltley Viaduct for 18-months being considered a slight impact. Insufficient information is also provided in the ES on how disruption to the existing rail network will be minimised during construction.

We fully recognise that construction activities and their impacts are temporary, however, we consider that the construction timescales are significant and that prolonged exposure to adverse impacts needs to be considered cumulatively over the construction period and appropriate mitigation put in place – at this time the ES fails to adequately address this.

**7. Environment**

Although the new railway will need to fulfil functional requirements, it is important to remember the significant legacy the HS2 project will create on Birmingham’s landscape. It is important that HS2 Ltd should therefore work with the city council to both mitigate the visual impact of the line and to take opportunities to improve the wider visual landscape. In particular, the **Local Environmental Management Plan** for the HS2 route into Birmingham should be developed in consultation with the city council and other relevant local stakeholders.

We fully support the **Bromford Tunnel** from Castle Bromwich Business Park to the Drew’s Lane industrial site in Washwood Heath, subject to the provision of further detail (see below). This option reduces environmental impact, with less complication and disruption than alternatives, though a collaborative approach to flood attenuation is still needed. Extension
of the tunnel eastwards under the Park Hall Wood area would further mitigate environmental impacts.

The HS2 corridor into the city is subject to flood risks. It is therefore important that HS2 is a catalyst for helping to address these, including more imaginative use of existing watercourses. In particular, we are concerned about the excessive proliferation of balancing ponds as set out in the ES which exaggerate HS2’s land take and negatively impact upon land use, and therefore economic development potential. We therefore request that HS2 Ltd review its design of the Birmingham Spur in terms of flood attenuation, and collaboratively explore alternatives seeking to minimise impacts on development land, at the same time as maintaining the promised zero impact on flood risk standards arising from HS2.

Compensatory provision must be provided for loss of public open space, historic buildings, ecology and other assets; more specifically there will be a need to minimise ecological impacts (in particular that there is no net loss of biodiversity to the city), enhance the ecological assets that will be created and ensure public access to new landscaping.

We welcome the commitment to the investigation and recording of archaeological remains and the built heritage. A sensitive and innovative approach must be adopted to the mitigation of impacts on historic assets, especially around the Birmingham Curzon station and Park Hall Wood. Where archaeological investigation/survey work is undertaken it must take place before any of the other advanced works, maximise information gain and ensure that such information is widely disseminated.

8. Mitigation and Compensation
The city council remains to be satisfied as to the adequacy of the mitigation and compensation proposed and considers that the ES underestimates the impact (including noise and disturbance) on local residents and businesses. We are concerned that the powers proposed in the Bill do not require all works and operations the ES proposes, including environmental mitigation, to be implemented. We also have no guarantee that further detailed work will address the city’s concerns. This has clear implications on the validity of the ES but more importantly does not demonstrate a commitment that HS2 will be implemented even as currently proposed, let alone to a standard that addresses the city council’s concerns as above, with potential implications on the overall level of benefits from HS2.
ANNEX B – DETAILED INFORMATION ON KEY ISSUES

1 Economy

The Economic Challenge

1.1 We are concerned that the ES appears to underestimate the economic challenge facing the city, and compounding this there remains a significant uncertainty with regard to HS2’s employment impacts, including the significantly increased impact (from that in the draft ES) on both employment land generally and on jobs potentially displaced. It is considered that the ES (within Volume 2, CFA 25 Report & CFA 26 Report) does not fully consider the impact of the proposed scheme on the city’s employment land and/or propose appropriate mitigation (this includes land at Washwood Heath, Castle Bromwich Business Park, Saltley Business Park and Network Park). For example at Castle Bromwich the impact of HS2 cannot be considered thoroughly due to the vagueness of the proposals in the ES at the current time - it is stated that proposals will be developed for the reconfiguration of the area and will be the subject of discussions with landowners and the city council (Volume 2, CFA 25, paragraph 10.4.23). **HS2 Ltd must recognise that HS2 will significantly alter the economic make-up of the city, and therefore to work more closely with the city council on maximising economic benefits to the city** - as the ES within Volume 2 acknowledges the line into Birmingham passes through some of the most disadvantaged communities in the country.

1.2 Figures (see para 1.3 below) serve to show the challenging nature of the Birmingham labour market compared to both the wider West Midlands region and nationally, and indicate that it will be harder to mitigate against loss of employment/re-employment of displaced workers than in some other areas along the route. Birmingham suffers from higher than average levels of unemployment, particularly in wards such as Washwood Heath. Displaced workers within Birmingham might therefore experience great difficulty in finding new employment, especially those with low skills from less-buoyant sectors. The city council considers that the ES underestimates the impact of loss of employment: for example, with regard to Castle Bromwich Business Park the city council takes issue with the finding in the ES that the possible loss of 220 jobs is ‘relatively modest’ (Volume 2 CFA 25 Report paragraph 10.4.17).

1.3 Likewise, marginal businesses may not survive relocation. For example, the city council’s most recent Employment Land Review (2012) shows that the available supply of high quality employment land within the city is currently falling short of UDP targets in both the ‘best’ and ‘good urban’ land categories (the shortage of such land has been recently demonstrated in practice by UK Mails proposed relocation outside
of the city) such that there is now an urgent need to identify new development opportunities in the ‘best urban’ market. The removal of the Washwood Heath sites means that the total supply of ‘best urban’ land will fall to 77 hectares which is a record low. Accordingly, the city council considers that the Socio-Economic sections of the CFA Reports which refer to employment land supply (such as Volume 2 CFA 25 Report paragraphs 10.3.10 & 10.3.11 and CFA 26 Report paragraphs 10.3.13 & 10.3.14) do not fully reflect the challenges facing Birmingham in terms of employment land.

The Economic Way Forward

1.4 The city council considers that, to ensure the success of HS2, it is vital that the socio-economic benefits that may be generated both directly and indirectly by HS2 are identified and realised. The Birmingham Development Plan Pre-Submission Version 2013 as well as masterplans for Birmingham Curzon Station, the Birmingham Interchange Station and Washwood Heath Depot set out a vision for how those benefits could be captured; it is important that consideration is given to that vision to ensure that the design and delivery of HS2, and its associated infrastructure, serves to maximise rather than limit economic growth and regeneration potential.

1.5 We would suggest that to mitigate the impacts of HS2 on the city, a shared city council/HS2 Ltd land and employment strategy is needed, incorporating the city council’s Birmingham Curzon HS2 Masterplan, and the emerging masterplan for the Washwood Heath area and also the Birmingham Interchange station area. This must include designation of the whole of the Birmingham Curzon HS2 Masterplan area as an Enterprise Zone (EZ), and a commitment to work with the city council to put in place a training/skills programme. More specifically, this must include a programme of apprenticeships for young people (HS2 have already taken on young people under the Mayor of London’s Apprenticeship Scheme). The programme should enable local people to access the training and jobs created by both the construction and operation of HS2, ensuring that existing jobs are not lost and new job opportunities are maximised. Consideration also needs to be given to business relocations, including a commitment to seeking to relocate affected businesses within Birmingham in the first instance, and more information on how quickly (and how much) land needed temporarily can be released for development - we are very concerned that this commitment does not currently exist. If the proposed HS2 Training Academy is located in Birmingham it would be a significant step forward and the city council is keen to work with HS2 Ltd on this opportunity. We believe that
Birmingham Curzon Station should be constructed early in the build programme, at the start of the construction period for HS2 Phase 1; this would provide an anchor for the Birmingham Curzon HS2 Masterplan to facilitate the growth and regeneration within the area.

1.6 In order to address these concerns and to remove blight and uncertainty, HS2 Ltd must be able to **undertake early acquisitions and to develop a funded business relocation scheme** so that the impact on existing jobs and businesses in Birmingham is minimised (including the appropriate relocation of the waste facility off Tameside Drive currently operated by Veolia under the city council’s waste framework). The City Council would have expected a commitment to such a relocation strategy to be included as part of the proposed mitigation outlined within the Area Reports in Volume 2 of the ES.

**Processes**

1.7 We note that, as HS2 Ltd has informed us it is aware, there are currently discrepancies between Safeguarding, Hybrid Bill and ES plans in terms of the extent of land required to build, and ultimately operate, HS2 including protecting HS2 from conflicting developments. This includes plans CT-050106, CT-05-106-L1 & CT-05-106-L2 within the CFA24 Map Book; plan CT-05-136 within the CFA25 Map Book; and plans CT-05-139b, CT-05-140, CT-050-141 & CT-05-142 within the CFA 26 Map Book. Whilst we recognise the logistical challenge of ensuring these are all consistent at the same time, given the complexity and timescales of HS2, there is nevertheless a need to ensure such documents are as coordinated as possible to maximise clarity and certainty. The lack of consistency between the confirmed Safeguarded Areas and the area that is identified as being required for construction shown on the plans in the Area Report Map Books within Volume 2 of the ES adds to the uncertainty and potential blight caused by HS2 for landowners and developers as well as the City Council as the local planning authority. For example, the uncertainty created for the development proposals at the Alumno Site at the corner of Curzon Street and Curzon Circle. **The Secretary of State should clarify the position in terms of the areas identified within the ES.**

1.8 **We request longer planning determination periods for applications under the post bill planning regime than those proposed through the Hybrid Bill for significant elements of infrastructure** such as Curzon Station and the Washwood Heath depot; we are concerned that a standard 8 weeks to determine all applications is not reasonable.
1.9 Concerning the acquisition, use and return or disposal of land, early discussions are required on the proposed disposal policy. We consider this a necessary part of joint-working arrangements between the Council and HS2 to seek to maximise development and regeneration opportunities. **We require clarification of the scope of Clause 47 in the High Speed Rail (London - West Midlands) Bill**, which would give the Secretary of State power to compulsorily acquire any land where HS2 would give rise to the opportunity for regeneration or development of that land. Whilst we support the principle of regeneration arising from HS2, we are concerned in particular about the use of the word ‘any’ in this Clause, as this appears to present potential for uncertainty, for example property blight and how the use of powers under Clause 47 would interact with the local planning authorities’ responsibilities and activities.

2 **Birmingham Curzon Station**

2.1 **Birmingham Curzon Station must be a station of the highest quality to rival the best in the world** in terms of architectural design, passenger experience and multi-modal connectivity with facilities that would be expected of a world-class station and gateway to Birmingham and the West Midlands. Design is of fundamental importance and should be governed by finding solutions that establish a strong sense of place both inside and outside of the station. The architectural precision and material quality is an important consideration, giving the station a singular identity and a strong presence which reflects a dramatically expressive state of the art solution. The station should have a distinctive approach that is expressive, striking, innovative, sustainable and contemporary in its approach to both structure and geometry. The ES Volume 2 Community Forum Area (CFA) 26 is considered deficient as we see no evidence to date that place-making and architecture is being fully considered and assessed within the ES – the illustrations provided within the ES do not match our ambitions in promoting Birmingham as an international city in addition to the necessary functional requirements.

**A High Standard of Transport Integration**

2.2 A Transport Assessment was published as part of the ES documents; however insufficient information is given in the ES (Volume 5/Technical Appendices: Transport Assessment (TR-001-000) Part 9: West Midlands Assessment) on specifics – e.g. design of public transport facilities/cycle facilities, details of key pedestrian routes for the wider network and assessment of bus impacts in detail. There are also a number of associated strategies which require development to provide necessary details,
such as a Parking Management Plan, Taxi Management Plan and detailed Servicing Strategy.

2.3 At Birmingham Curzon Station the associated interchange with pedestrian, cycle, bus, kiss and ride, taxi, Metro/SPRINT, express coaches and heavy rail should provide a high standard of integration with existing transport networks, serving the city centre and beyond. Proposals to enhance the quality and provision of these supporting networks are not considered and the paucity of information provided is unacceptable. This must be explored in detail and plans put forward to demonstrate a credible connectivity strategy which ensures a realistic and deliverable plan is in place to meet HS2 needs and also supports the city centre, the rest of the city and the wider West Midlands. Section 5 Connectivity provides further detailed comments on transport integration. It is essential that **HS2 be designed so as to facilitate and secure the delivery of the West Midlands Local Connectivity Package** (see Connectivity section below). We would have expected this to be assessed within ES Volume 5/Technical Appendices: Transport Assessment (TR-001-000) Part 9: West Midlands Assessment.

2.4 We appreciate that efforts have been made to refine the Birmingham Curzon Station design to allow for better passenger connectivity, station operations flexibility and interface with the local setting, and request continued close involvement in resolving our concerns. However we feel that there is still some way to go before the city council is assured that the new station is the world class arrival point well connected into the surrounding city centre that is required at this important location and is outlined in the Birmingham Curzon HS2 Masterplan. The city council considers that **the following are required, to address deficiencies within the assessment of the stations impact and connectivity requirements within the ES (Volume 2 CFA 26 Report, to ensure that the economic benefits of the station, as outlined in the Birmingham Curzon HS2 Masterplan are maximised** in the area of the city centre impacted by the station and viaduct structures:

i) **An open wide 24 hour accessible pedestrian link between Moor Street Queensway and Bordesley Street** that is over-looked, safe and attractive to ensure that pedestrian routes severed by the closure of Park Street and Fazeley Street are properly replaced and that connections to Enterprise Zone sites within Digbeth are maintained and improved.

ii) **Active frontages on New Canal Street** to provide a safe, welcoming environment underneath the viaduct and ensure that the street is an attractive route between Eastside and Digbeth; and
iii) **Closure of New Canal Street underneath the Station** with a dedicated Metro/Rapid Transit route and stop being provided, no general traffic would be permitted, however, taxi movements would be facilitated via the proposed new link between Curzon Street and New Canal Street.

**Moor Street Queensway**

2.5 The new station should be integrated seamlessly into the surrounding urban realm to ensure that wider regeneration opportunities across the city centre are maximised. This should include high quality and welcoming routes providing permeability across and through the station itself as well as clear and effective connections into the wider City centre including the Digbeth area. We are disappointed to note that current proposals in the ES (Volume 2, CFA Report 26) still do not include any improvement to the physical environment of Moor Street which would be the main passenger arrival space and key pedestrian route in to the city core from the HS2 station, and is a vital pedestrian link within the proposals set out in the Birmingham Curzon HS2 Masterplan. **This deficiency must be addressed.**

2.6 We have significant safety and capacity concerns regarding the ES’s assumptions for pedestrians around station access and egress, particularly on Moor Street Queensway. The current design proposals will lead to Park Street being closed, with traffic diverted onto Moor Street Queensway, this alongside significant increases in pedestrian movements related to HS2 and wider City Centre regeneration will significantly increase the number of conflicting movements in this already congested area. We consider the proposals put forward in the ES will have significant negative traffic and environmental impacts on the quality of the pedestrian environment of Moor Street in terms of noise, air quality, safety and levels of congestion for all modes. Maximising accessibility for pedestrians in this area is also critical in reducing the interchange penalty for passengers transferring between New Street and Curzon Stations, assisting the HS2 business case. This issue has been raised repeatedly with HS2 Ltd and the evidence provided does not demonstrate the proposals are acceptable - which we would have expected to be addressed in the ES Volume, CFA 26 which does not adequately consider or mitigate this adverse impact; more specifically

2.7 We believe that the approach adopted to testing the implications of HS2 on Moor Street Queensway does not provide sufficient or robust detail to substantiate the conclusions drawn in the ES. We consider that a micro-simulation model alongside a pedestrian model should have been developed to allow a more detailed...
understanding on the interactions of conflicting movements and their dynamic nature in the Moor Street Queensway area.

2.8 To mitigate these concerns, there is a requirement for wider highway works to remove pedestrian/vehicle conflict, including segregation by space; however the proposals within the ES (Volume 2, CFA26) or the Hybrid Bill fail to address the impacts. We would contend that **improving the pedestrian environment through removing general traffic on Moor Street Queensway**, creating new public squares and providing necessary facilities to accommodate predicted pedestrian movements alongside a high quality and integrated public transport network is necessary, to ensure the sustainable transport access predicted in the ES can be realised.

**Connecting with Digbeth**

2.9 The HS2 proposals sever current pedestrian and vehicular links into Digbeth at Fazeley Street, Freeman Street and Park Street. The ES (Volume 2, CFA 26) fails to address the physical environmental, heritage and social and economic impacts of the severance of these streets and as a result the designs shown fail to provide the necessary replacement infrastructure as mitigation for the loss of these routes. Without wide, overlooked and attractive pedestrian routes from Moor Street to the remaining section of Park Street, investment in regeneration of the Bordesley Street area of Digbeth will be unattractive, resulting in a significant adverse impact upon the quality of the physical environment within the Digbeth Conservation Area with many Listed buildings left physically and economically detached from the city core - this is a deficiency of the ES and fails to address this issue in the ES Volume, CFA 26.

2.10 In response to the ES and Hybrid Bill proposals, the City Council’s Birmingham Curzon HS2 Masterplan recommends a **high quality pedestrian route into Digbeth** (connecting Moor Street to Park Street), **with the bridging of the West Coast Mainline between Moor Street and Park Street to create a new public plaza** with taxi facilities fronting a Digbeth entrance to the Birmingham Curzon Station which will help to address these concerns. The necessary provision of this wide and attractive route as part of the station would mitigate the negative impacts of the ES and Hybrid Bill proposals upon regeneration potential and support the business case for the HS2 project with the regeneration of the Digbeth area of the city centre as a vital outcome for the city from HS2.

**Integrating Midland Metro with HS2**

2.11 In providing an integrated and holistic public transport network the city and partners have identified the need for an extension to the existing Metro to serve HS2 at Moor
Street Queensway and with a dedicated, fully integrated Metro Stop at the New Canal Street entrances to Birmingham Curzon Station. The route would also help to unlock regeneration opportunities to be extended into the Digbeth area which forms part of the Birmingham Curzon HS2 Masterplan. The city also considers that this corridor could be served by Bus Rapid Transit which would strengthen links to destinations surrounding the station, such as Digbeth Coach Station. This new public transport corridor would require the closure of New Canal Street to general traffic between the Taxis/Kiss & Ride drop-off at the Station and Curzon Street – alternative arrangements for Taxis to access the pick-up area could be provided using the proposed service road east of New Canal Street;

2.12 We do not agree that the statement in Paragraph 8.6.577 of Volume 5/Technical Appendices: Transport Assessment (TR-001-000) Part 9: West Midlands Assessment that “the Proposed Scheme proposals do not prohibit or preclude any such improvements coming forward” has been demonstrably proven by the information provided within the ES; the design of the station, its highway access arrangements, the proposals for urban realm and landscaping mitigation appear to take little account of potential Metro. As stated above, the city council’s aspiration is a world class arrival experience that includes wide ranging and high quality multi-modal facilities. The station must therefore be positively and pro-actively designed from the beginning to physically incorporate a Metro stop within its station building, allowing very high quality and high capacity modal interchange. The station design should pro-actively cater for this route, and all the HS2 scheme proposals, including any landscaping mitigation and other environmental or design measures, should be designed so as to facilitate its easy development and construction.

Buses and Coaches

2.13 We note that the ES TA Volume 5, Part 9, Table 8-320 and information from 8.5.135 to 8.5.139 suggests that all intending bus passengers would arrive and depart by current services as capacity exists. This takes no account of the deregulated market in the Birmingham area and the ability for operators to provide additional services to satisfy new or developing demand. We are therefore concerned that the ES data does not seem to make allowance for two key factors in the demand forecast for bus, as follows:

i) Additional buses that will look to serve the area of the city immediately adjacent to the Birmingham Curzon Station that do not currently, as part of the envisaged response of the commercial bus industry under a deregulated environment; this
has happened previously in the city e.g. to serve new land-use developments around the former MG Rover site at Longbridge; and

ii) The increased level of dwell time for buses serving the Birmingham Curzon Station at Moor Street and the surrounding area; Centro indicates that currently less than 20% of the number of people forecast to board in the area do so by using the stops in the vicinity of HS2, however that HS2 would be expected to increase this.

2.14 Suitable bus facilities should include additional capacity and provision to interchange with the proposed Metro/BRT link. HS2 Ltd should look at options to develop new facilities in the vicinity of Hotel La Tour (i.e. in the Park Street area) as well as exploring options to utilise existing facilities. We note that the current ES assumes coaches wishing to interchange with HS2 can use bus stops on Moor Street Queensway – however there is insufficient capacity to accommodate this and alternative arrangements must be made.

Walking and Cycling

2.15 Direct and attractive pedestrian/cycling routes should be provided as part of the development of HS2 between the station and Digbeth along the line of Bordesley Street and New Canal Street. Direct and attractive pedestrian/cycling routes linking the HS2 station to both Moor Street Station and New Street Station are also an essential requirement to ensure the necessary links to the regional rail network. Paragraphs 2.6, 2.7 and 2.9 – 2.11 provide further details. There needs to be sufficient assessment in the ES of the need for high-quality pedestrian links to replace the loss of Freeman Street, Park Street and Fazeley Street. We are disappointed that these are currently lacking within the ES (Volume 2, CFA 26 Report and Map Book, and the Transport Assessment included in Volume 5).

Listed Buildings/Parks

2.16 The city council objects to the loss of parts of the new Eastside City Park as outlined in Volume 2 Community Forum Area (CFA) 26 Paragraphs 5.4.43 and 5.4.54, either for permanent structures or during construction. The new park forms a centre piece for the regeneration of Eastside and should not be marginalised by the HS2 scheme. The proposed diversion of New Canal Street into the Park around the Woodman Public House is opposed as this would have an adverse impact on the park and listed public house.

2.17 The ES (Volume 2, CFA Report 26) fails to fully consider the impact upon the setting of Listed Buildings; the re-routed road will adversely impact the setting of the Grade II
Listed Woodman Public House which will become surrounded on 3 sides by highway – this will threaten the economic viability of the premises and destroy its setting within the Eastside City Park. In addition, the road in its current alignment provides the context for the Woodman in relation to the Grade I Listed Curzon St Station building. The justification for the proposal hinges upon a section of wall attached to the Grade I Listed Building (and so forming part of the Listing). However, the wall has been repaired and poorly extended with modern materials, and removal was considered acceptable under a previous plan for an extension to the building.

2.18 Given the wider significant environmental and cultural damage, the ES (Volume 2, CFA Report 26) should allow for the consideration of an option that repositions and restores the wall to allow for any highway improvement if deemed necessary. Within the Birmingham Curzon HS2 Masterplan an alternative arrangement is shown which maintains the historic line of New Canal Street as a high quality, wide and well lit space with activity and entrances into the station at the ground floor, and as a Metro/Rapid Transit Corridor with taxis moved to a new route to the east of the Curzon Station access. This would allow the Listed former Curzon Street Station and Woodman Public House to be set within ‘Curzon Square’ – to complement the Eastside City Park event space, and to provide seamless pedestrian friendly connections from the Eastside concourse of the station right through to Moor Street along Curzon Promenade alongside the new station.

Station Design

2.19 Design is of fundamental importance and should be governed by finding solutions that establish a strong sense of place both inside and outside of the station. The architectural precision and material quality is an important consideration, giving the station a singular identity and a strong presence which reflects a dramatically expressive state of the art solution. A distinctive approach must be adopted that is expressive, striking, innovative, sustainable and contemporary in its approach to both structure and geometry. The ES is considered deficient as we see no evidence to date that place-making and architecture is being fully considered and assessed within the ES – the illustrations provided within the ES do not match our ambitions in promoting Birmingham as an international city in addition to the necessary functional requirements. This must be rectified and could be achieved through a design competition with meaningful and influential assessment of all architectural and urban design matters by an independent design advisory panel. This should include minimum design requirements and the design should be in line with the Birmingham Curzon HS2 Masterplan.
2.20 More specific issues include:

i) We request information on minimum/maximum parameters of station dimensions, including height. The ES (Volume 2, CFA Report 26) indicates various roof heights above a set datum but we observe that the roof design could change and there is also the proviso within the Bill that works could go up a further 3m – these all would obviously significantly alter the impact the development could have. The environmental impact of the height of the station needs to be considered to ensure that it does not completely overshadow the open space within the park as the station building is to the south of the site, the ES needs to address the need for a sun-path analysis of the station building to inform the designs of the roof structure, or any potential over-site development, to maximise the light levels at ground level.

ii) There is still concern that the station building is not responding well to the sloped topography of the site in order to maximise active frontages to all elevations of the station (to include elements of retail/food & drink uses), including to the promenade and Eastside City Park (as well as the proposed Metro route). The landscape treatment of the promenade and the building levels need to work properly together to achieve a safe and attractive environment alongside the building. The principle needs to be established at this stage to lead the detailed design that follows. The effects of wind funnelling from the station along this route should also be assessed;

iii) We request information on minimum/maximum parameters on floor space or indication on percentages of how this may be made up with circulation/retail/ancillary facilities/platforms areas - whilst specific detail is for reserved matters stage it would be reasonable to expect indicators of such at an outline stage, and certainly within Volume 2 of the ES;

iv) We are concerned at the lack of assurance that the station’s design or quality will be to a world class standard. Again whilst the detail of such specifics would be dealt with at reserved matters stage, a traditional 'outline' application following a design competition would give a degree of reassurance on quality of materials and design principles including things such as minimum percentage provision of active frontages;

v) We are disappointed that the Bill does not specify the number, location and details (levels, size, quality) of station entrances unlike some of the works identified for the HS2 London Stations, and that the ES (Volume 2) fails to
describe how the station would operate and interact with its surroundings – we request that these are addressed;

vi) The ES (Volume 2) makes reference to the bridge link to Moor Street station, but we request further details including how the bridge would work with Moor Street station and the quality and effectiveness of the connection proposed – we note this is also not mentioned in the Bill; and

vii) We are concerned that for external public realm/arrival spaces there is a lack of detail and reassurance on specifics and quality, and that works are identified within the ES but not the Hybrid Bill. We note that the ES also makes reference to a ‘gateway’ feature where Curzon Street meets the plaza – we request clarification on what the ‘gateway’ feature would comprise.

The HS2 Route’s Approach to the Station

2.21 The canalside environment along the Grand Union Canal off Curzon Street will be severely impacted by the proposed viaduct structure and the higher level access roads proposed alongside both sides of the canal. The canal is within the Warwick Bar Conservation Area and contains listed bridge and canal lock structures. The design of the viaduct over the canal should seek to protect the heritage assets – however we are concerned that the current design of the bridge appears too bulky and would create a gloomy unattractive environment for walking and cycling along the canal. The sites alongside the canal not affected by the railway viaduct should be treated as prime development opportunities that will address the canal with activity at ground floor, and promote wide and attractive public access routes into the space. The drawings and illustration in the ES (Volume 2, CFA 26 Map Book and Report), establish a principle that is contrary to the creation of a safe, attractive and sustainable environment along the canal – we request that HS2 Ltd reconsider this aspect of the design as the ES fails to provide an assessment of the environmental impact of the design and layout and nature of uses proposed by HS2 along the canal corridor.

2.22 The city council opposes the proposals for an electricity sub-station, service roads and large balancing pond at the junction of Curzon Street with Curzon Circus as this would result in the under-utilisation of a key development opportunity at a landmark site at the gateway to HS2/City centre from the city’s ring-road (Volume 2, CFA 26 Paragraph 2.2.4). These should be relocated thereby creating an opportunity for additional development on this section of Curzon Street. We seek opportunities to maximise access and activity on the Digbeth Branch canal. Overall
the ES fails to assess the environmental and visual impact of such structures upon a prominent land-mark site on the city’s Ring Road, the Curzon Street entrance to HS2 and upon the Warwick Bar Conservation Area.

3 Washwood Heath Depot

Employment Land

3.1 Further to our comments in Annex A, the extent of the proposed balancing ponds (set out in the CFA 26 Report and Map Book within Volume 2 of the ES) at Washwood Heath is very difficult to justify given the shortage of employment land in the city. The opportunity must be taken to maximise development and jobs at this location. We believe that the overall layout at the Depot takes an excessive amount of land which reduces the significant opportunity for development on the remaining land once the depot is operational and therefore reduces the potential for jobs in this particularly deprived area of the city. The size of the balancing ponds is therefore a significant factor in this context. The ES (and the proposals for the depot that are set out within it) therefore do not adequately assess the impact on employment land supply within the city (Volume 2, CFA 26 Section 10).

3.2 We request that HS2 Ltd re-visit the Washwood Heath design to improve its efficiency if this is the site that is ultimately progressed. For example the ES (within Volume 2) has not investigated alternatives such as smaller flood attenuation features in other areas along the route and/or tanked storage; and in not doing so the ES is deficient. More complete information is again requested on employment potential including the various control/training facilities. The depot site if progressed should also become a main centre for training and skills – which would complement the location of the proposed HS2 Academy within Birmingham.

A Way Forward for Washwood Heath

3.3 We believe that the city council and HS2 Ltd need to work jointly on a master planning exercise covering land use and transport for the Washwood Heath area, to explore interim and permanent uses, and therefore to fully unlock the potential of the site. The land at Washwood Heath should be considered as a whole in terms of the opportunity presented (and we are concerned that the ES is largely silent on this issue and would have expected this to have been picked up within the ES (CFA 26 Report in Volume 2)) – it is about maximising the jobs on the depot site and maximising the opportunity on the remaining land (including positive benefits HS2 could bring such as remediating and servicing residual employment land post completion, ensuring that this land is ready for development). It is not
just about delivering a railway line particularly if HS2 is to be the ‘engine for growth’ that all parties hope it will be.

3.4 We are concerned that full consideration has not been given to wider supporting measures, such as access improvements. This is both to meet operational requirements and to ensure that arrangements facilitate the development of sites remaining post completion of HS2. We believe that there needs to be a coherent strategy for transport access to the Washwood Heath site, encompassing the HS2 depot and wider development potential, and we request to work with HS2 Ltd on this. The more development and hence jobs are available here, then the greater the likelihood of public transport services being operated to or near to the site. Also the study needs to include how early/late the services run, seeing as the depot will be a 24 hour operation. There also needs to be consideration of pedestrian and cycle access.

3.5 Residential properties in Common Lane are included within the permanent land take. We recognise that HS2 Ltd has been making efforts to liaise with both the owners and residents of these properties and secure appropriate re-housing opportunities, and request that this engagement continues.

4 Birmingham Interchange Station
The Vision for Birmingham Interchange

4.1 The location of the proposed interchange station, adjacent to the NEC and Birmingham Airport, provides a tremendous opportunity to implement strategically important development which will add real value to both the city’s and the region’s economy. The city council is a significant owner of land to the east of the M42 (approximately 105 acres) and also has considerable interests in both the Airport and the NEC. To this end our response to the elements of the ES relating to the Birmingham Interchange station area (i.e. ES (Volume 2, CFA 24 Report, Section 2)) has been developed in consultation with the NEC Group. In summary the ES is felt to be deficient as the proposed design of the Interchange Station, as presented in the ES, lacks a vision which facilitates place-making and wider regeneration in this key location, resulting in a lack of convergence with GBSLEP’s vision as set out in the UK Central Masterplan;

4.2 HS2’s proposals in the ES for the Interchange Station include the station itself; People Mover and associated depot; rail infrastructure; and a number of surface car parks and balancing ponds. As such the proposals as outlined in the ES (Volume 2, CFA 24 Report, Section 2) pay no attention to the potential for growth and
development at this location (which would seem central to the government’s overall economic case for HS2) - a location where high speed rail, Birmingham Airport, the West Coast mainline, NEC and M42 Corridor are all in close proximity. There appears to be no sense that proposed infrastructure has been designed such that it would neatly and appropriately fit within the context of an evolving new centre of economic activity and ‘place’. This concern includes the design of the Interchange Station which appears to be a standard ‘Parkway’ Station rather than a high quality station which facilitates growth and regeneration;

4.3 The city council’s land to the east of the M42 (approximately 105 acres) is strategically important as it is located between the NEC and the proposed Interchange Station. The location of two surface car parks on this land and a significant number of large balancing ponds is neither the most efficient nor economic use of the land and the city council is concerned at the layout as currently shown in the ES (Volume 2, CFA 24 Report and Map Book). Please see our comments in the Environment section below for alternative suggestions concerning balancing ponds.

4.4 Therefore, the current proposals may not serve to maximise the economic benefits afforded by the Birmingham Interchange Station - in our opinion this is a significant oversight. There is a tremendous opportunity at this location for development on a significant scale which will provide an opportunity for growth and add real value to both the city’s and the region’s economy without compromising the existing function of Birmingham city centre. To this end the four key landowners, (Birmingham City Council, Solihull MBC, the Packington Estate and the Digby Estate), will shortly sign a Memorandum of Understanding to explore ways of working together to deliver growth. HS2 Ltd should therefore properly engage with the city council as landowner to master plan this area (something which has been lacking to date). The current design of the Interchange Station must be revisited to maximise the opportunity for growth and development at this location in line with the aspirations of the M42 Gateway / UKC project.

Accessing Birmingham Interchange

4.5 The ES states (within the CFA 24 Report, Volume 2) that significant numbers of passengers will be using the Interchange Station from the outset (building to 3,450 passengers in the morning peak hour and 3,700 passengers in the evening peak by 2041), significant areas of surface car parking are shown, and there is also the cumulative impact of so many construction compounds. Evidence is required to highlight the assumptions adopted by HS2 Ltd in forecasting the origin / destination of
trips accessing the Interchange Station, and the distribution / assignment of those trips onto the highway network.

4.6 HS2 Ltd should provide more information on the overarching transport solution, including enhanced public transport services (such as rapid transit routes into East Birmingham) and highway improvements, which will need to be provided to handle this number of people accessing the station, and ensure that this is coordinated with that for the Curzon Station. Coordination with wider transport considerations will also be important taking into account background growth, and capacity for land-use developments. The city council believes that the overarching objective should be to encourage as many people as possible to access/egress the Interchange Station by public transport, taxi, walking and cycling. This is particularly important for the HS2 Interchange Station where at the moment there is not a public transport network in place, and will:

i) Maximise the benefits of HS2 through excellent local connectivity stimulating the economy and creating jobs across a well-connected West Midlands; and

ii) Avoid the generation of significant traffic impacts on local highways and the national motorway network securing the long term viability of both the West Midlands and the national economy (e.g. M42, M6).

4.7 More specifically, Junction 6 of the M42 is already heavily congested and there have been instances where the junction has ‘locked’ impacting on both the motorway network and the A45 (the gateway to the Airport, NEC and wider city). HS2 Ltd should ensure that there is sufficient strategic highway capacity in terms of both the Interchange Station and associated growth and development. It is considered that the ES (within both the TA and the CFA 24 Report within Volume 2) has failed to adequately assess the capacity of the junction, particularly given the potential for growth at this location. It is felt that more work will be required to junction 6 than has been outlined in the ES and potentially a new junction on the M42 is required (the principle of which the city council supports) in order to deal with traffic accessing the station. There is also an inconsistency regarding the figure of 7,500 parking spaces in the Bill (paragraph 22) and the ES which assumes 6,400 spaces at the Interchange Station (volume 2, CFA 24 Report, paragraph 2.2.20) – the ES needs to reflect the ‘worst-case’ scenario for Interchange Station car parking demand that would be enabled by the Bill. See our NEC-specific highway comments below.
People Mover

4.8 The HS2 Birmingham Interchange station must include a fast and efficient direct link connecting that station with the existing Birmingham International station (also serving the NEC) and Birmingham Airport. There should also be rapid transit links to locations in East Birmingham, with consideration of serving demand from new developments as part of UK Central as appropriate.

4.9 We are generally supportive of the People Mover route but the following comments must be taken into consideration:

i) Firstly, partners should be more involved in the design and routing of the proposed People Mover in terms of how it relates to the opportunities on the city council’s land to the east of the M42 and its impact on the operation and future aspirations of the NEC. In particular, the city council, the NEC and Birmingham Airport must agree the route and stops of the proposed People Mover;

ii) The proposed alignment of the People Mover in the ES (Volume 2, CFA 24 Report and Map Book) locates the stop at Birmingham International away from the station’s concourse and therefore provides an interchange penalty for rail passengers. Furthermore, the ES provides the length and journey time for the proposed People Mover (2.6 km and 6 minutes journey time) but does not provide information on the overall interchanging time between HS2 Interchange and Birmingham International stations. The city council is keen to see the proposed People Mover stop at Birmingham International station located as close as possible to the existing station concourse and bus interchange facilities, with direct access to all platforms in Birmingham International. This is particularly important in order to ensure that the proposed People Mover provides an effective, fast and attractive option for accessing HS2 by conventional rail from other parts of the West Midlands; and we support the People Mover points made by the NEC as follows;

iii) A day to day dialogue must be maintained during construction of the People Mover to ensure that site operations for the NEC and other tenants at the National Exhibition Centre are not disrupted resulting in loss of income or business;

iv) The People Mover should be constructed in phases (rather than sterilising the whole route for the duration of the construction period) therefore minimising the potential significant disruption to the NEC;
v) Locations of the supports for the People Mover must be agreed in advance with both the City Council and the NEC to ensure they do not affect operations at the NEC for example, but not limited to, access to car parks, services, roads or the loss of parking spaces (unless replaced).

The National Exhibition Centre

4.10 Comments on the ES (Volume 2) provided directly by the NEC are as follows, these are supported by the city council. During the construction process a number of site compounds are shown both on the city council’s land to the east of the M42 (it is also indicated that this area will be used for temporary workers accommodation) and on the NEC site. The positioning of the works compound on the NEC site causes a number of concerns, including a serious effect on the NEC’s operations, contractual issues with Genting and Birmingham Airport respectively and the tenants’ significant financial loss, threats to employment, and disruption to two key employers in the region - the NEC attracts over three million people a year, contributes £2.1bn to the economy and supports 29,000 jobs. Discussions are required with HS2 Ltd to mitigate the loss of parking and minimise the disruption, potential loss of business and inconvenience by pursuing the alternative compound sites that have been suggested – it is disappointing that HS2 Ltd has ignored these alternatives. More specifically:

i) The compound in West Car Park is not acceptable as the area is currently subject to a licence granted to Birmingham Airport Ltd that will overlap with construction work. The loss of parking spaces will have an impact on operations at the Airport.

ii) The loss of parking in East 4 Car Park would affect the ability for the NEC to continue to attract major exhibitions at the NEC.

iii) East 5 Car Park is critical to Genting Solihull Ltd, the operators of Resorts World development which is currently under construction. It is subject to a licence agreement and provides parking for up to 1500 cars. Without it, or even a reduced number of spaces caused by the compound, this will severely restrict their trade.

iv) A compound is proposed adjacent to Halls 2 and 3 on Perimeter Road therefore blocking loading access to Halls 2, 3 and 4 and also the NEC Warehouse Estate. The ES (Volume 2, CFA 24 Report) states that there are alternative loading bays and this will not affect NEC operations. This is clearly not the case and if not relocated will prevent the use of these 3 exhibition halls and potentially prevent
the warehouse tenants from trading during construction. This could result in a loss of business, revenue and jobs.

v) The compound east of the NEC site, to be used for the Interchange station construction and then for the proposed station car park, will result in the permanent sterilisation of the mineral opportunity. (The NEC has indicated that a compensation claim will be submitted for the loss of revenue from mineral royalties).

4.11 The proposal to close the footpath for 450m around Pendigo Lake outlined in Volume 12, CFA 24 Paragraph 12.4.28 is unacceptable; there is no alternative route for visitors to the NEC complex as suggested in the ES. This route is critical for pedestrian access for the NEC and Genting Solihull Ltd for its customers parking in East Car Parks and should remain open.

4.12 The ES (Volume 2, CFA 24 Report) states that the motorway junctions will be closed at weekends and overnight and that the impact will be minimal as there are alternative routes to the NEC. However, the busiest times at the NEC tend to be away from traditional general traffic peak times, i.e. weekends and evenings. The NEC site is expected to become even busier once Resorts World opens in Spring 2015. There is a concern that weekend road closures will result in traffic jams in the area and the inability for visitors to access the NEC site resulting in loss of trade, revenue and jobs, and damaged reputation. Night closures will affect concerts taking place at the NEC site with similar effect to weekend closures. Birmingham City Council and the NEC would welcome further discussion with HS2 to minimise disruption to the road network around the NEC, including on road closures, any associated diversion routes and utility diversions. More specifically:

i) During construction of the railway and access roads East Way is likely to be disrupted. It is imperative that one lane is kept open at all times and during high activity at the NEC two lanes remain open; and

ii) The road network between North Way and Birmingham Business Park will result in traffic congestion during the works. Therefore road closures should only take place during periods of minimal activity on the NEC site.

4.13 In terms of the city council’s land to the east of the M42, the need for temporary working space is understood but HS2 Ltd should provide details of how these temporary uses will be managed and how quickly the land will be delivered back to the landowner once the construction process is complete. It has been assumed that
the existing planning consents for Resorts World Birmingham and the Biomass Plant will be unhindered.

4.14 The city council requests compensation for its losses on the site on the eastern side of the M42/east of the NEC taking its minerals value into account. Land adjacent to the Packington Site (Park Farm).

4.15 Alternative drainage solutions should be installed to reduce the risk of birds flocking to the ponds and creating a bird strike problem for planes landing at Birmingham Airport. Dried out balancing ponds can create a risk to the public too unless carefully protected.

4.16 It is proposed that surface parking will be provided to service the Interchange. It is believed that a multi-storey car park would serve the station better and reduce land take. This was originally proposed within one on the quarry pits on the Packington Estate therefore minimising the visual impact on Park Farm and this proposal should be reinstated.

4.17 With regard to construction activities it is imperative that HS2 Ltd have further informed dialogue with the city council, NEC and Airport to minimise disruptions caused. HS2 Ltd should note: that is important that all contractors working on NEC land comply with the NEC Construction Guidelines and obtain the relevant work permits from the NEC where necessary; Construction programs (works on the NEC site) referred to in clause 5.1.2 must be agreed in advance with the NEC to mitigate financial losses; and potential of damage to NEC property could be substantial - the proposed £7,500 limit in clause 5.1.10 for property damage claims is inadequate and must not be limited. Any routes for utilities diversion should be agreed in advance with the city council and NEC to ensure minimal site disruption to the NEC site.

5 Connectivity

Overall Priorities

5.1 We believe there are three overall priorities to ensure a high standard of connectivity in the context of HS2: (1) Provision of efficient and high-quality access to the two HS2 West Midlands stations; (2) Wider ‘asks’ for the rest of the transport network to widen the benefits of HS2; and (3) Mitigation for all modes including maintaining the expeditious movement of traffic, and maintaining access on the highway network – both during construction and operation.
West Midlands Connectivity Package

5.2 **HS2 must be designed so as to facilitate and encourage delivery of the West Midlands Local Connectivity Package** – we are concerned that the ES does not currently acknowledge this Package, which must be rectified. The Department for Transport and HS2 Ltd have been involved in discussions on the Package, and are aware of its contents – more specific information is shown in paragraphs 5.3 - 5.6 below.

5.3 To capture and maximise the distribution of HS2’s potential benefits, authorities across the West Midlands region have prepared a Connectivity Package, which will deliver significant benefits to the region as a whole; Centro commissioned research which shows that implementation of the West Midlands Connectivity Package alongside the HS2 Y-Network is estimated to more than double the economic impact of HS2 on its own, with the creation of over 50,000 jobs in the West Midlands and an increase in GVA of over £4 billion per year.

5.4 The key outcomes of the Package have been categorised under three strategic outcomes:

i) Capitalising on the network approach;

ii) Unlocking growth assets; and

iii) Linking the West Midlands to the HS2 network.

5.5 The West Midlands Connectivity Package will improve regional and local links to HS2 and encourage sustainable growth using the released rail capacity from the West Coast Main Line. Economic benefits will therefore be maximised across the West Midlands region with capacity constraints on the already congested local transport networks being relieved. Based on international experience of High Speed Rail, implementation of the West Midlands Connectivity Package to transform the proposed HS2 interchanges into integrated regional transport hubs is fundamental if our businesses are to expand their markets, access a wider workforce and develop local economic networks. Improved connectivity will undoubtedly attract new business and promote innovation across our manufacturing and service sectors.

5.6 The Package will have a positive impact across a range of economic challenges facing Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) in the West Midlands such as slow business cluster formation, urban youth unemployment and limited access to international gateways. The arrival of HS2 also underpins development plans for Birmingham city centre and UK Central, stimulating further job creation from high-
value economic activity in the West Midlands. Delivery of the Package will ensure that key locations are effectively linked up to HS2 stations overcoming any potential consequences of building HS2 without connections to these places.

**Birmingham at the Heart of the Network**

5.7 Birmingham must be at the heart of the new high speed rail network – both in terms of HS2 phase 2 (including maintaining service levels into the city centre once phase 2 is operational) and connections to HS1. The HS2 train service levels in the ES (Volume 1) - for three trains per hour in phase 1 rising to up to nine trains per hour in phase 2 – are welcomed, however the city council needs assurance that these will be guaranteed.

5.8 We would welcome assessment of costs/benefits of HS2 running at the higher line speed, and potential for freight services utilising HS2, including those outside/at the fringes of mainstream passenger services operating hours, for example mail/parcels/other high value cargos.

5.9 More locally, the assessment of traffic and transport does not fully set HS2 in the context of wider improvements within the city centre; the focus is on highways improvements and does not make reference to wider sustainable transport measures, i.e. Sprint, Metro, Cycling Network development. Despite the work that has been done on the Transport Assessment, more is required and we do not agree with the assertion within the ES that increased demand from HS2 would simply be absorbed within the existing transport network with no requirement for wider improvements.

5.10 The assessment of impacts and statements of residual significant effects is not supported and unproven, indeed, we would suggest that some of the conclusions drawn within the ES, including in the TA, are incorrect. We request that HS2 impacts be considered together with those from future land-use developments in the vicinity of the two West Midlands HS2 stations, on a cumulative basis to provide a more comprehensive understanding.

5.11 The ES does not consider fully the requirements for improvements to the wider transport network nor does it maximise the opportunities that HS2 creates for wider transport network improvements, it must enable and certainly not preclude the provision / improvement of future transport infrastructure; for example future Metro/bus rapid transit routes, and Fort Parkway and Castle Vale stations as part of the re-introduction of local passenger rail services on the Birmingham-Tamworth Line.
5.12 We consider that further work is required on rail network impacts, including demand levels, crowding and use of released capacity, and integration into wider rail industry planning, specifically Network Rail's Long Term Planning Process. Whilst HS2 would clearly release much track capacity on the existing West Coast Main Line, by moving most long-distance demand to the new line, it will be essential to ensure that remaining local and regional services have sufficient on-train and station capacity to cope with general demand growth and that to HS2 stations. Certainly the city council needs to be comfortable that service levels on the existing rail network will not be inferior to the current situation and the ES is not clear on this point.

5.13 It would be instructive to establish where the geographic split would be (and be desirable to be) in terms of travelling catchment to the two west Midlands stations and planning the transport system for that (including coordination between the two stations) – although a version was published in a previous set of HS2 documents, an updated version would be useful taking into account the latest HS2 calling patterns.

A Fit for Purpose Link to HS1

5.14 We agree with the concerns raised about the southern end of Phase 1 that the HS1 connection as proposed in the ES would be inadequate, forming a potentially missed opportunity for a more extensive UK high speed rail network enabling more direct economic links between the West Midlands and areas east/south of London. We are encouraged by Greengauge 21’s report ‘Travel market demand and the HS1 – HS2 link’ published June 2013, which indicates that “there is a substantial market for domestic high-speed services over the HS1 – HS2 connection”, and more specifically that “this [travel demand] amounts to as much as 45% of the equivalent market from the HS2 catchment to and from central London”.

5.15 We therefore request that HS2 Ltd give consideration to a more fit for purpose, higher capacity link, including the alternatives presented e.g. Euston Cross and by Transport for London, including at the very least a fully segregated twin track HS2-HS1 link. A twin-track tunnel solution would provide future resilience to the railway and a direct link between HS2 and the existing line from London to Europe, avoiding disruptive interaction with the existing rail network at this location (including freight services to/from/through the West Midlands) and allowing passengers direct travel to the continent.

5.16 To take maximum advantage of an optimised HS1-HS2 connection, the Birmingham Curzon Station must include a platform for international services to enable
direct trains to the Continent from the city centre. If this link was to be removed it would undermine both the economic and environmental case for HS2 which is set out in the ES.

**Integrating with the Existing Rail Network**

5.17 In respect of London Euston Station, we support the principle of this being the HS2 central London terminal (and the Interchange station at Old Oak Common), and the proposals for a more integrated concourse for HS2 and West Coast Main Line services are welcomed. However, there is still some concern in respect of the impact of the construction works on existing rail services into London Euston. The proposed link between Crossrail at Old Oak Common and the West Coast Main Line slow lines would appear to offer a solution to this potential lack of capacity at Euston as it would enable the rerouting of some West Coast Main Line suburban / outer suburban rail services away from Euston and onto the new Crossrail network. Further consideration of this WCML link to Crossrail, which would also provide new journey opportunities, is therefore supported.

5.18 In order to ensure that HS2 does not preclude capacity expansion along certain important parts of the West Midlands existing rail network, we request that HS2 Ltd maintain provision for future WCML four-tracking in the design for the HS2 overbridge at Carol Green (Berkswell) & for future double-tracking between Gibbet Hill & Kenilworth in the design for the HS2 underbridge at Milburn Grange. We note that the potential partial 4 tracking of the WCML route between Birmingham and Coventry remains a long term aspiration of Centro and other local stakeholders.

5.19 We note that a railhead is planned in the Hams Hall area in the Curdworth to Middleton CFA to enable rail access via a connection between the HS2, and existing rail, networks for the construction period only. However, we question why such a connection could not be provided along the Birmingham Spur. For example, in the vicinity of Washwood Heath given the expected significant concentration of construction activity, and the potential for a permanent direct rail connection for through passenger services to/from places west/south of Birmingham, serving Birmingham New Street station and avoiding having to interchange there, and onto the HS2 network. Such a connection could also provide additional operational flexibility, for example during times of planned or short notice disruption. We are disappointed that not even passive provision for such a link appears to be being considered.
5.20 We support design refinements which provide necessary enabling infrastructure to support future provision to Leeds and Manchester. However, we note that the realigned link at Handsacre still connects into the complex and congested section of the West Coast Main Line between Lichfield and Colwich Junction. This is likely to act as a capacity constraint until the completion of Phase 2 of HS2 in 2032/3. We welcome HS2 Ltd’s proposal for signalling and track improvements on the existing line between Lichfield and Colwich Junction, which appears to be intended to provide some incremental capacity enhancement. We remain firmly of the view that a properly segregated route for HS2 trains between these locations is required, for capacity and also punctuality. To this end we would support the continuation of the proposed Manchester spur to an alternative connection with the West Coast Main Line to the north of Colwich Junction as part of a further design refinement to the Phase 1 HS2 route. In addition to a properly segregated route, we request that the Handsacre link be retained in the HS2 Phase One design, in order to allow direct classic-compatible trains to provide improved rail connectivity north and south (including for example locations such as Stafford) making better use of the proposed High Speed network.

5.21 Regarding the ES’s statement that ‘…[the] requirement for upgrading existing infrastructure will be relatively minor…’ (Volume 1, para 4.3.11): We appreciate the importance of minimising costs to the rail industry in accommodating HS2 trains on the existing network as part of HS2 Phases 1 and 2. However, it will be important to ensure that journey time benefits are enjoyed for journeys on direct HS2 trains beyond the ‘Y’ network, which is why we support HS2 Ltd’s investigation of further journey time improvements north of the ‘Y’ network. This is particularly relevant given that we understand that, unlike the present Pendolino trains, HS2 trains will not be able to tilt around curves thus potentially lengthening journey times north of Wigan.

5.22 HS2 proposals should allow for the future growth of Moor Street Station, for example for future platforms (e.g. nos. 5 and 6), a wider platform 1 (i.e. that facing the HS2 station), and concourse space at Moor Street to serve the Camp Hill Chords scheme (proposed new local rail services from Kings Norton, Tamworth and potentially the Sutton Coldfield area), and additional servicing requirements associated with a larger Moor Street station.

5.23 Likewise, HS2 Ltd must ensure its proposals in the ES fit with proposals by the city council and Centro to improve accessibility (and hence minimise interchange penalty) between the HS2 Curzon, and existing New Street,
stations. Given the volume of people expected to interchange with New Street station, it is disappointing to see the lack of provision or mitigating measures in place in the ES to ensure the quality of the environment and the time taken for the Curzon St – New St. interchange does not reduce the benefits to passengers of the faster journey via HS2, particularly for those with mobility difficulties, or heavy luggage, who may be unable to walk between these important stations.

Framework Travel Plan

5.24 On the Framework Travel Plan (FTP) included in Annex A to the TA section of the ES, we look forward to seeing more information in the final version but this is well written with good aims and objectives. We welcome both the generic information but also local issues, which should mean that in the final TP the occupiers should be well aware of what is available to them. There will need to be discussion between the city council and HS2 Ltd about planning gain and contributions to cycling, bus access, pedestrian issues and the matter of travel information on arrival will be considered (as per Birmingham New Street Gateway Plus). In the operational phase the FTP covers the Local Authority contact well, but there are some areas where the city council can offer more support through established partnerships.

5.25 Paragraph 4.2.4 of the FTP Operational travel plans: aims and objectives: these are mentioned later in the FTP but could be added here so bullet points could cover discussions with bus operators and Centro to increase services and current frequencies to all sites and depots from construction phase to completion and opening. It needs to be clear who picks this up and by the time a Travel Plan Coordinator (TPC) is in place at a functioning station it could be too late. We believe this needs to be covered as early in the process as possible.

5.26 The FTP should make it clear that one of the aims should be to ascertain what benefits are available to staff from the construction phase and from operation, for example, explore discounted travel for staff from ITA or local bus operators.

5.27 Paragraph 4.6.2 of the FTP TPC responsibilities: there are a number of additional tasks that could be added to the TPC, and the city council can offer a support and guidance. For example, additional points could include:

i) To ascertain what support, services and benefits are provided by the local authority, Integrated Transport Authority and public transport operators;

ii) To oversee the implementation of cycling improvements, training and promotion;

iii) To oversee the implementation of Brompton Docks;
iv) To oversee the installation of secure cycle parking for employees and visitors;

v) To ascertain local support for cycling such as Bikeability Training and the Top Cycle Location initiative; and

vi) To liaise with the local police on crime reduction such as cycle theft and Safer Travel.

5.28 Paragraph 4.8.1 Physical measures to encourage sustainable travel: we suggest adding Brompton Docks to cycle hire point.

5.29 Paragraph 4.10.2 ‘The TPC may use the following promotional strategies’: We suggest some additional promotional strategies as follows:

i) Using a station website would be beneficial;

ii) Use local authority and Integrated Transport Authority contacts to help promote sustainable transport especially public transport and cycling; and

iii) Use Business Improvement Districts and Local Enterprise Partnerships for promotion.

5.30 Paragraph 4.11.3 SMART targets for monitoring: we suggest that all targets are agreed with the Local Authority.

Environmental Minimum Requirements

5.31 Environmental Minimum Requirements (EMRs) are considered to be key documents; however, we note that transport matters are not outlined within EMR's scope – we request that they are included.

6 Construction

Overall Management of Construction

6.1 The city council acknowledges that the impact of construction related activities will be managed through the Code of Construction Practice (CoCP) - we have provided detailed inputs to scoping the CoCP, and look forward to the CoCP being updated to reflect best practice and any emerging relevant issues. For example, we believe it needs to be made clear that the CoCP applies to advance works and enabling works as well as actual construction.

6.2 The city council welcomes the prospect of Local Environmental Management Plans (LEMPs) being developed for each local authority area / community forum area; however, these provide no guarantee of further mitigation or compensation for those
directly affected by construction of the railway and cannot be treated as part of the ES now undertaken. **The LEMP for Birmingham must be developed in consultation with the city council, the Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country and other relevant local stakeholders.**

6.3 The proposed construction boundaries need further explanation; these do not appear logical in part and do not in our view provide optimal boundaries in mitigating adverse impacts. They also conflict with the confirmed Safeguarding areas.

**Construction Activities**

6.4 On construction compounds and activities, the temporary impacts need to be minimised, including managing HGV movements. We request consideration of a construction consolidation centre to minimise HGV movements into both the city centre and wider network. We welcome the proposal to use the new rail alignment for a haul road where reasonably practicable, to minimise impacts of HGV movements on the highway network.

6.5 The area of the city centre bounded by the Middle Ring Road, the A4540, is being considered as a possible Low Emission Zone due to nitrogen dioxide levels within this area. All construction and other traffic associated with the development entering the area will need to ensure it has the best emissions reduction technology in place (by Euro standard, abatement technology, etc.) to minimise adding to the pollution burden within the area.

6.6 **Proper consideration must be given in the TA to potential for construction operatives’ villages.** Without construction villages or park and ride sites for workers within the city there will be greater trips to sites and compounds and issues with the associated congestion and parking.

6.7 There is little recognition in the ES or TA with regard to the impact of construction traffic parking or the potential need for the implementation of Traffic Regulation Orders to control parking in sensitive areas such as around compounds and welfare locations. Likewise, with regard to relocation of business and other premises as a result of HS2 construction there is only a very limited assessment of the likely implications of moving these operations and potential locations for relocation have not been identified. We request that HS2 Ltd addresses this in discussion with the Highway Authority.

6.8 We agree that HS2 Ltd’s identified construction routes are in the main confined to the expected classification of roads (Class A or B) and which on the whole are suitable
(in terms of intended use) for moderate/heavy volumes of HGV traffic. However with anticipated HGV flows generated by the HS2 construction activity still understandably vague, caution must be urged with regard to the impact the potential additional HGV traffic will have on the actual condition of those roads. **It is crucial that a robust method of structural assessment (including pre-commencement assessment, monitoring and methodology) is agreed, adopted and adhered to by both the nominated undertaker and the Highway Authority.**

6.9 Furthermore, however, we consider that there are many roads identified within the ES (Volume 2 and TA) which are not considered to be suitable for HGV use as HS2 Ltd intends. These are primarily roads with a high proportion of residential frontages and/or, in terms of road classification or hierarchy, are Class C roads or lower. We believe the potential impact on noise, dust and disturbance to frontagers along with the increased road safety risks to residents and their visitors is unacceptable. **Alternative routeing plans along suitable and appropriate routes need to be found and agreed with the Highway Authority.** We consider the following roads to be unsuitable and would not permit them to be part of construction traffic routeing. Any other roads which are not listed below but meet the description set out above are also deemed to be unsuitable: Cadbury Drive; Farnborough Road; Javelin Avenue; Lysander Way; Tangmere Drive; Wanderers Walk; Chillinghome Road; and Sandown Road. In addition we also have concerns with regard to the routing of HGVs and increased vehicle traffic on Water Orton Lane as it crosses the River Tame due to the restricted width of the carriageway crossing and the construction of Water Orton Lane within the Birmingham Local Authority boundary.

6.10 We fully support the proposed tunnel between Washwood Heath and Castle Bromwich Business Park subject to the provision of further detail - including detail on construction, e.g. how spoil and materials will be moved to and from site, in particular leaving the remainder of the Washwood Heath site not used permanently for the depot ready for future development, as well as issues such as vibration and potential settlement.

6.11 The designs in the ES (within CFA 26 Report and Map Book, Volume 2) relating to the depot alignment and rebuilding of Saltley Viaduct do result in a greater impact on Saltley Business Park than previously. HS2 Ltd will need to produce a strategy to minimise the impacts on the area, particularly during construction activities over 18 months. This should include business relocations as required.

6.12 We do welcome the proposed retention of the Midland Tavern on Inkerman Street, however a number of business properties are affected as the rail line is routed into
the city centre including the West Midlands and Staffordshire Probation Trust building on Saltley Business Park; West Midlands Fire Service; and the Arya Samaj Vedic Mission building. Appropriate relocations within Birmingham should be identified and HS2 Ltd should work with businesses and owners to mitigate the impact of the rail line.

6.13 It is also considered that the proposals will have a significant impact on a number of residents, including Northumberland Street and Vauxhall Road where the rail line will be on a viaduct at this point. The ES (within both CFA 25 Report and CFA Report 26, Volume 2) does identify both permanent and temporary effects on residents and homes but is not specific about mitigation which is a serious flaw within the document.

6.14 The construction programme provided in the ES (within Volume 2) identifies a significant number of major works being undertaken during the same time periods, resulting in an unprecedented level of construction activity. The major highway works being undertaken as part of the construction of the route and Curzon Station cause concern in terms of the impact on traffic (vehicle, cyclist and pedestrian) and how mitigation of the impact is to be managed. Whilst we would need to understand the detailed programmes, there is a concern that such a scale of construction activity on the highway network will cause significant congestion problems. We have a number of specific comments on how to address this concern as per below.

6.15 We would envisage temporary traffic management measures to be required on the wider network to ensure a minimal amount of congestion in key areas of work such as Aston Church Road, Park Street and around Saltley Viaduct.

6.16 Paragraphs 8.5.27 and 8.5.29 of the Transport Assessment (TA) states that “The proposed scheme is not forecast to impact on the operation of junctions...” and that therefore only link capacity issues have been considered. We are not clear why or how this initial “forecast” on junction capacity has been made. This needs to be clarified as it is an integral part of the assumptions made in compiling the TA and yet there seems to be no demonstrable reasoning given as to why junction capacity is not being assessed.

6.17 We welcome the inclusion of severance in the ES as this is a particular consideration at the many locations where HS2 crosses highways in Birmingham. Connectivity for both residents and businesses across the city centre and East Birmingham must be maintained during the construction of HS2. We particularly welcome the intention to maintain access where possible and contend that temporary bridge
arrangements will be required at certain locations (including discussion on coordination of diversions). – it should be noted that temporary pedestrian access was maintained across the Bullring Shopping Centre site during its construction and the city council will want HS2 Ltd to consider similar measures during the construction period. For example, to **provide and maintain alternative pedestrian routes during construction of Birmingham Curzon Station with the earliest possible completion and opening of new routes**.

6.18 In particular there is a notable concern over the closure of the Saltley Viaduct Bridge for up to 18 months (within section 12 of CFA 26 Report, Volume 2) given the limited alternatives in this part of the city, and the potential impact on the Alum Rock Road area which is a vibrant local centre and on the wider local community in terms of their access to schools, jobs and community facilities which is not adequately addressed or mitigated in the ES (the city council is of the view that a temporary bridge should be provided at this location for the duration of the works). We again also request assurance that Freightliner will be able to continue operating during HS2 construction and operation. The impact on traffic at Saltley Viaduct and Aston Church Road on projected queue lengths and duration of work is not acceptable. For example, Table 8.377 in Volume 5 Appendix – Transport Assessment (TR-001-000) West Midlands Assessment CFA26 states that queues at the Duddeston Mill Road/Melvina Road roundabout will increase from a baseline 2021 of 116 PCU to 1,119 PCU in the morning peak hour with construction traffic, and from 269 PCU to 1,052 PCU in the evening peak hour. The city council believes this is unacceptable, providing an unsustainable situation for the duration of the construction period. Localised traffic management controls will not be sufficient to mitigate resultant congestion and these mitigation works need to be developed by the project in further detail – the work undertaken by HS2 Ltd to date cannot be supported until more information is made available. Without proper traffic management measures to alleviate parking, ensure public transport priority, and facilitate a reliable service the impact for passengers and operators in the East Birmingham area could result in significant patronage loss and financial impact during the construction phase. We do not agree that the option favoured by HS2 Ltd would have the least impact on community severance in a wider sense rather than simply in the immediate vicinity of the bridge. The city council proposes that HS2 Ltd makes efforts to mitigate impacts on travellers in the Saltley/Alum Rock area by:

i) Fully investigating the possibility of a **temporary bridge structure to allow continued pedestrian and cycle access across Saltley Viaduct** throughout construction of HS2;
ii) Fully investigating the feasibility of making Duddeston Mill Road accessible to double deck buses and providing a public transport corridor via that route, providing improved traffic management for Aston Church Road where the majority of car traffic would be diverted; and

iii) Investigating the level of public transport priority that can be provided through the Aston Church Road diversion in the absence of the Duddeston Mill Road route being feasible.

6.19 We are also concerned that no specific proposals are outlined in relation to reducing the impact on the bus network in terms of journey times and reliability of services. Localised traffic management controls will not be sufficient to mitigate resultant congestion and these mitigation works need to be developed by the project in further detail – the work undertaken by HS2 Ltd to date cannot be supported until more information is made available; furthermore

6.20 In considering the construction impacts the city will require certain enabling infrastructure to be put in place to mitigate anticipated impacts, for example the closure of Park Street (set out within CFA Report 26, Volume 2) will have adverse impacts on the wider highway network and public transport operation. Therefore, in particular the proposed works on the Middle Ring Road junctions should be in place in advance of any closure which would assist in mitigating impacts.

6.21 We request further information on rail network possessions and in particular customer impacts thereof. There is a lack of clarity on the magnitude of the expected disruption at London Euston, which is concerning given that the ES acknowledges that the extensive works there will place pressure on the available capacity and will have a potential impact on network performance and consequent delays to services and passengers on the West Coast Main Line (WCML). We therefore request that the following information be provided, for both the construction and operation periods, clearly demonstrating:

i) How baseline service levels will be maintained;

ii) Why HS2 Ltd’s proposed solution in the ES of lengthening of platforms 8 and 11, and the consequent loss of platforms 9 and 10, is a better solution than retaining four shorter platforms; and

iii) The impact on service performance which is likely to result from the changes.

6.22 This also relates to the Birmingham end of the WCML, including impacts of works along the HS2 route within Birmingham alongside the Water Orton corridor and New
Street approach, and other locations including (but not limited to) the WCML underbridge at Berkswell, and the WCML Trent Valley connection around Handsacre.

**Construction Process**

6.23 Linked to the issue of **Technical Approvals (Tap, discussed below)** there is very little in the TA that provides for assurances that the necessary analysis has been undertaken to assess the safety implications of either the impact of construction traffic on the network or the proposed highway works. Without the necessary rigour of a robust Tap process, supported by the established Streetworks Noticing process, we believe the safety of the public and staff associated with the HS2 scheme will be compromised. For example, given the recent high profile problems in London with regard to the increased dangers for cyclists around large construction vehicles, very little is evident in the documents to demonstrate how cyclists on the network will be safely catered for during the construction period.

6.24 Various Sections of Highways and Streetworks legislation are proposed to be disapplied to HS2 works. This proposed removal of these controls over such a major series of highway works has the potential to render the Authority powerless in its ability to manage the network. – for example there are no Section 74 powers to fine for overrun of works. We are concerned that such a position may result in the Secretary State deciding to apply the Traffic Management Act guidance Intervention Criteria and appoint a Traffic Director to the city for failing to carry out its statutory duty to co-ordinate Streetworks.

6.25 The key principle of streetworks legislation is to provide for co-ordination and parity across all streetworks undertakers. This proposed disapplication removes both of those principles without any explanation as to why it is necessary to do so; existing controls with legislation regulations and guidance are workable and provide parity for all undertakers. This is a major area of concern for all highway and streetworks Authorities. The proposed CoCP which would seek to formalise replacement arrangements between the LA and the Nominated Undertaker (NU) will have no legal or contractual basis.

6.26 Other similar circumstances where such an arrangement has been put in place following the disapplication of powers have resulted in instances of roads being closed and restrictions being in place which have had a significant network impact over long periods - and without any form of redress for the streetworks or Highways Authority concerned. We note that London Borough of Southwark raised concerns about the London Bridge redevelopment where highways and streetworks legislation
was disapplied; specifically with Network Rail over delays in the occupation of the highway, including a five-year closure of Thomas Street. We understand that Network Rail acknowledged that the works were not being planned, coordinated and executed in a timely way that would minimise disruption – resulting in Network Rail making a financial contribution to LB Southwark for a post to assist in co-ordination of works associated with this project.

6.27 Conversely, we understand that other large infrastructure projects in London, such as the Thames Water Victorian Main Replacement Programme, and roll out of BT Superfast Broadband, were previously undertaken without the need to disapply highways and streetworks legislation, and without causing undue delay to the delivery of the programmes.

6.28 We are also concerned that the proposed method of application for Tap of highway works seems to trivialise and unnecessarily expedite the important role of technical approval. We would expect to see such Taps as part of the Streetworks application process but with those powers under threat (as raised), a robust and measured approach to Taps becomes even more important. More specifically the proposed 28 day approval process is not sufficient time to approve aspects of highway works, particularly those of a complex and/or sensitive nature. The reasons for objecting to such proposals need to be refined to ensure that the high standard of submissions for approval, not the debate as to reasonableness of withholding approval, is where the real resource and professional effort is concentrated. Furthermore safety of the public and staff is paramount in these considerations and we believe the proposed timescales and “approval by default” approach being outlined in the Hybrid Bill and CoCP compromises safety and undermines the Duty of Care we have to the public.

6.29 We emphasise that there is a need to provide funding for Local Authority resources for Technical Approvals, specialist advice, temporary and permanent TROs, etc. Any additional assets created by the project which are required to be managed by the Highway Authority will attract Commuted Sums for maintenance - the Hybrid Bill needs to recognise that the city council has a Best Value obligation to manage its assets on a reasonably practicable basis. The details of these arrangements for Birmingham have been forwarded to HS2 Ltd. Roads, structures, lighting and drainage are all potential accruals to the Highway Authority. The city council requires the calculation of the commuted sum over a 30 year period rather than the 10 year maintenance undertaking proposed by HS2 Ltd. The construction and operation of HS2 must not incur additional cost to the Council in association with highway
maintenance and repair activities. Furthermore, public highways used as construction haul routes must be appropriately maintained throughout the construction period by HS2 Ltd, and reinstated to their original standard and character following cessation of use.

Construction and the Environment

6.30 For construction work, we emphasise that all these should be preceded by applications made under s61 of the Control of Pollution Act 1974 (CoPA), taking into account the specific needs of the area, with a specific set of requirements. Hours of operation in particular are most important to the levels of community annoyance - Ensuring specific local needs are considered where particularly intensive works are proposed whilst attempting to standardise the hours across areas will promote a consistent approach.

6.31 The most significant air quality impact will arise from road closures and rerouting of traffic on the local highway network. This has the potential to create local hotspots which could lead to new areas of exceedence under Local Air Quality Management (LAQM). These closures may have a large impact on residential properties in the area and compromise any proposed Low Emission Zone (LEZ) areas. The impact of all road closures should be modelled in detail to provide evidence to the city council to permit emissions monitoring to confirm compliance or otherwise with emissions limits under LAQM. Consideration of dust impacts on sensitive properties will also be needed. These should apply not only to the core working hours 0800 – 1600, but also to other times where there are impacts.

6.32 Monitoring of AQ by the use of nitrogen dioxide diffusion tubes will be required along the HS2 route so as to verify the predicted model and provide greater confidence to the Local Authority in its obligations under LAQM. Birmingham City Council Environmental Health can undertake this monitoring upon contract if needed.

6.33 Sites with sensitive safety/resilience issues within scope of HS2 works need to be identified and suitable risk assessments need to be carried out. For Control of Major Accident Hazards Regulations (COMAH), there are 3 high tier sites in Birmingham of which Flogas is one. Flogas is a site off Tameside Drive which conflicts with construction access for a compound for the eastern tunnel portal.

6.34 There is a risk from major excavation / demolition that pests (rats) may be displaced. The city council considers that there will be a duty on HS2 Ltd as the Scheme Promoter to mitigate the impact of displacement with early pest control management up front as preventative action. Impacts on public health, on businesses from
displaced rodents and on Birmingham's reputation must all be controlled pro-actively. To satisfy this requirement, **HS2 Ltd must engage a pest control service ahead of demolition** to tackle rodents in advance to avoid displacement. The city council has a commercial pest control service which could assist in this.

6.35 For ecological management during construction, consultation with relevant stakeholders/local interest groups is essential. The involvement of Local Authorities and the local Wildlife Trust are especially required where works affect non-statutory sites and species outside the formal remit of Natural England. Every effort should be made to ensure habitat/species translocations and compensatory habitat creation occur as early in the construction programme as possible.

6.36 The construction phase will severely restrict access to a number of buildings, including the listed Woodman Public House and Curzon Station building. The ES needs to assess the significant environmental heritage damage that these buildings will suffer if left isolated over a significant period of time during construction activities. We consider that **both buildings should remain open throughout the construction period** (or have the potential to remain open) with easy access from Eastside City Park with suitable noise and dust pollution protection to minimise the environmental impacts upon the park. Alternatively, HS2 Ltd should assume responsibility for the maintenance and security of these properties where access is restricted during the construction process.

**Construction Engagement**

6.37 We believe it will be important for the city council to remain informed in order to maximise the effectiveness of its own work (both to support the delivery of HS2 and protect local interests), and to respond to queries from Elected Members, the public and other local interested parties. We would like to better understand how to manage the working relationship through the CoCP, in addition to the Community Forum-style meetings proposed – i.e. working in a close and pro-active manner; in particular

6.38 We believe that the appointment of a community liaison team will be critical to managing community responses to incidents and relaying information about the project and that this is clearly the responsibility of the scheme promoter. For example, we are aware that previous engagement has included HS2 Community Forums, and that the emphasis of this engagement has recently changed as the project has moved into the Hybrid Bill stage. We suggest that the overall functionality of the Community Forums is continued in appropriate local engagement throughout
the taking forward of HS2. However we request that consideration is given to improving how well the Community Forums operated, including increasing attendance (both numbers and representative people), as the city council believes this has been sub-optimal to date.

7 Environment

7.1 Further amendments to the Draft Environmental Memorandum should be discussed with relevant local stakeholders, including the city council and the Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country, as well as representatives of the National Environmental Forum.

Flood Attenuation

7.2 The HS2 corridor into the city is subject to flood risks. It is therefore important that the opportunity is taken for HS2 to be a catalyst for helping to address these risks, including more imaginative use of existing watercourses. In particular, we are concerned about the excessive proliferation of balancing ponds shown within Volume 2 (particularly CFA 24 & CFA 26 Reports) which exaggerate HS2’s land take and negatively impact upon land use, and therefore economic development potential at several sites; more specifically:

i) The railway infrastructure, including the electricity sub-station and balancing pond, on Curzon Street should be relocated to minimise the impact upon both the environment and potential development opportunities in this area. There is an opportunity for additional development on this section of Curzon Street which also maximises access and activity to the Digbeth Branch Canal;

ii) The proposed balancing ponds at Washwood Heath (approximately 8 hectares) take too much land which reduces the employment opportunities at this key site. Alternative solutions should be introduced which minimise the land take of the balancing ponds and again maximise employment at this location – see the Washwood Heath section above;

iii) The current design of the Interchange Station must be revisited to maximise the opportunity for growth and development at this location in line with the aspirations of the M42 Gateway / UKC project; the illustrations of the Interchange Station in the ES are uninspiring and large areas of land are taken up with surface car parking and balancing ponds;

iv) We welcome that HS2 Ltd is proposing open attenuation of the increased run off created by HS2. Through earlier comments we have asked that when locating
the new ponds and considering their interaction with other water features, they be used to give meaning to some existing ‘remnant’ watercourses. For example the Washwood Heath Brook, which has pollution issues, could be incorporated into the drainage solution proposed at Washwood Heath and thus remediate the brook, thereby improving water quality in the Tame, at the same time as dealing with the HS2 requirements. The old course of the Rea in the area of Aston Church Road could similarly benefit the wider water environment. Sustainable Drainage (SuDS) should be the default for all route and station development, and the aim should be to re-use or re-cycle all waste arising from HS2 development. Certainly there should be no deterioration in any Water Body status, in line with the Water Framework Directive;

iv) We request that HS2 Ltd work with the Lead Local Flood Authority and the Environment Agency to mitigate flood risk in the Bromford estate area. Our view is that there may be options for smaller attenuation features in other areas along the route, and/or some of the proposed balancing ponds at Washwood Heath could be put into tanked storage in a way that balances flood risk and maximises water quality; and

vii) We therefore request that HS2 Ltd review its design of the Birmingham Spur in terms of flood attenuation, and explore alternatives including the above seeking to minimise impacts on development land, at the same time as maintaining the promised zero impact on flood risk standards arising from HS2. At the current time as alternatives have not been fully considered within Volume 2 of the ES it is considered to be deficient.

HS2’s Legacy on Birmingham’s Landscape

7.3 Although the new railway will need to fulfil functional requirements, it is important to remember the significant legacy the HS2 project will create on Birmingham’s landscape. It is important that HS2 Ltd should therefore work with the city council to both mitigate the visual impact of the line and to **take opportunities to improve the wider visual landscape**, including through measures such as a Community Fund for local environmental improvements (as was provided for High Speed 1).

Public Facilities & Open Space

7.4 Public open space is lost both temporarily and permanently at Park Street Gardens, Eastside City Park, Garrison Park and Farnborough Road; the **ES fails to consider the mitigation for this public open space loss and any necessary provisions for ensuring appropriate compensation / replacement**. Likewise, no compensatory
provision is made for the loss of historic buildings, ecology and other assets. **Any impact on Eastside City Park must be minimised and there should be no construction compounds or storage areas located within the Park.** The HS2 Ltd proposal that Curzon Street is diverted into the Park around the Woodman Public House is opposed with the ES failing to provide assessment of the adverse impact upon both the environment and usability of the Park and the setting of the Grade II Listed Public House. In accordance with the Birmingham Curzon HS2 Masterplan, to mitigate the impact of general vehicles in the locality, the historic line of New Canal Street between the Woodman Public House and Curzon Station should be maintained as a rapid transit / metro only corridor with all taxis moved to a new route to the east of Curzon Station. General through traffic on New Canal Street will be re-routed via the Middle Ring Road

7.5 The waste facility at Tameside Drive is a crucial part of Birmingham’s waste infrastructure and additional costs for landfill tax would be incurred if no alternative is available or where an alternative site is not found prior to the closure of the old site. **Replacement facilities are therefore needed for the Waste Transfer Site and Bottom Ash Plant currently at Tameside Drive** and consideration is needed of how to address the loss of some land at the adjacent Travellers’ site. In general, we are concerned at the impact of the proposals on Castle Bromwich Business Park generally and the waste facility in particular and this is not adequately considered within the ES (Volume 2, CFA 25 Report) and request further dialogue on how impacts can be mitigated. More specifically:

i) The city council would seek alternative sites for both the waste transfer site and the bottom ash plant;

ii) Finding an alternative site(s) for the Bottom Ash Plant and Travellers Site in the City will be challenging. Indeed we consider that doing so in time for HS2 starting construction in 2016 will be impossible;

iii) All costs of obtaining an alternative site(s), as above, would be sought from HS2 Ltd on an Equivalent Reinstatement basis;

**Protecting Birmingham’s Ecology**

7.6 There will be a need to minimise ecological impacts, enhance the ecological assets that will be created and ensure public access to new ponds / landscaping. More specifically:
i) To ensure that there is no net loss of biodiversity, it is essential that areas providing compensatory and replacement habitat for species/habitats adversely affected during construction are effectively managed and monitored to maintain the long-term conservation status of the species/habitat concerned – this will need to form part of the Environmental Minimum Requirements (EMR). Where compensation is required to secure no net loss of biodiversity, this provision should be located as close as possible to the location where habitat losses occur. It is not acceptable for compensation for impacts arising in Birmingham to be located outside the city; to evidence this

ii) Calculations of the biodiversity value of habitats lost and gained, based on mitigation and compensation measures set out in the ES, should be shared with relevant local stakeholders, including the city council and the Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country. This is required in order to understand the extent to which HS2’s stated objective of “no net loss of biodiversity” will be achieved within the Birmingham section of the route, and in particular in relation to losses of habitats of principal importance at Park Hall SINC;

iii) There needs to be a mechanism in place to ensure that the commitments to ongoing management and monitoring are shared with relevant local stakeholders. Likewise, the LEMP for Birmingham should be developed in consultation with the city council, the Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country and other relevant local stakeholders;

iv) We support the requirement for further ecological surveys, for example to confirm the presence of water vole, and to determine the extent of mitigation/compensation required. All the identified compensatory habitats should ideally be created before construction works impacting on the floodplain habitats commence;

v) We are concerned about the impact of the proposals on Park Hall nature reserve (within CFA 25 Report, volume 2 of the ES) and request further dialogue on how these impacts can be adequately mitigated and compensated. Although effects on the habitats at Park Hall will be reduced, likely significant residual effects will remain. It is not clear whether these losses will be compensated for at the route-wide level, in order to achieve HS2’s objective of no net loss of biodiversity. HS2 Ltd should commit to appropriate management and monitoring of compensatory habitats to enable evaluation of the Park Hall site against Local Wildlife Site criteria and re-designation as SINC at the earliest opportunity. The results of the badger survey and proposed mitigation for CFA 25 should be provided to the city
council; these details do not appear to be publicly available as part of the ES documentation; and

vi) The city council strongly encourages the incorporation of soft banks and shelves in the Washwood Heath Brook diversion and River Rea Overflow Channel diversion to facilitate the establishment of marginal vegetation, and the creation of side pools to provide additional habitat for aquatic animals and plants. Not only would these features provide a significant ecological benefit, their creation is also likely to contribute to wider water quality/WFD objectives. In this highly urbanised part of Birmingham, the rivers, streams and canals are important habitat corridors and have an important role in aiding species dispersal.

Protecting Birmingham’s Heritage

7.7 We welcome the commitment to investigation and recording of archaeological remains and the built heritage. However the route will significantly impact upon the historic environment within the city and we therefore have a number of specific concerns as detailed below.

i) A sensitive and innovative approach must be adopted to mitigation of impacts on historic assets, especially around the Curzon Station and Park Hall Wood;

ii) There is a need to acknowledge that many non-designated heritage assets will be affected through physical impact as well as designated assets;

iii) Where archaeological investigation/survey work is undertaken it must take place before any of the other advanced works, maximise information gain and ensure that such information is widely disseminated; and

iv) As above, compensation is required for the loss of historic buildings and structures with enhancements to structures that remain.

7.8 Our more detailed comments are on points where we feel that more clarity is required; where there are inconsistencies between the documents and chapters that need to be resolved; and where there are factual inaccuracies, omissions and unsupported statements that need correcting; more specifically

7.9 Under clarity, it needs to be made clear (possibly through inclusion in the general Glossary) that the term “construction” in the context of the ES and related documents (including the CoCP) includes advance and enabling works (including site establishment, utility diversions etc); that Surveys to confirm or update the cultural heritage baseline from that presented in the ES will be required prior to construction
and prior to enabling works; and that the archaeological and built heritage mitigation works will be required before advance and enabling works (ES Volume 1, 6.4.4- 6.4.9 and 8.4.9; CFA Report 25, 2.3.47 and fig 5); additionally

i) It needs to be acknowledged that burial grounds are archaeological remains and therefore come under the relevant parts of the CoCP etc. The extent of archaeological works may need to be considered, but not the need for archaeological works (Volume 1 9.7.7). Replace “including removal of graves from Park Street Gardens” by “including archaeological excavation of graves from Park Street Gardens” (CFA Report 26, 2.3.83);

ii) Where available, existing information will be used in developing programmes of Archaeological and built heritage works mitigation works (ES Volume 1, 6.4.9); and

iii) It should be made clear that specific local control measures in the LEMP Template include mitigation measures (as defined in the CoCP, 8.1.4), and cross-referenced to the statement in 5.6.7 of the Draft Heritage Memorandum which refers to the separate production of site specific Written Schemes of Investigation (WSIs).

7.10 Under consistency, the terms and processes of archaeological and built heritage mitigation stated in the CFA Reports 25 and 26 need to be consistent with those in Volume 1, Introduction. The advance mitigation works are archaeological investigation and recording, not archaeological evaluation or pre-construction surveys or archaeological survey works (CFA Report 25, 2.3.7 and 2.3.35; CFA Report 6, 2.3.7 and 2.8.3).

7.11 The impact of the Proposed Scheme on potential palaeoenvironmental deposits and other potential archaeological remains, as identified in the Technical Appendices and Baseline Reports, needs to be stated in the CFA Reports (CFA Report 25, 6.4 and CFA Report 26 6.4) and the potential of palaeoenvironmental data for Romano British, early medieval and medieval periods as well as prehistoric periods.

7.12 We wish to point out some inaccuracies, omissions and unsupported statements, and request that these are rectified, as follows:

i) Identification of archaeological features and names of woodland at Park Hall are incorrect (CFA Report 25, 6.3.6) and some heritage assets recorded in the Birmingham Historic Environment Record are omitted from the CFA 25 Report and Gazetteer of heritage assets;
ii) There should be reference to published archaeological reports rather than grey literature and all relevant previous archaeological work needs to be acknowledged (CFA Report 26). Prehistoric features and objects were found at Castle Bromwich Castle (CFA Report 25, 6.3.10);

iii) Woodbanks are an important component of the historic woodland in the Park Hall area and should be acknowledged (CFA Report 25 6.3.3, 6.4.8, 6.4.20, 6.4.23). The surviving medieval street and post-medieval street pattern and the impact of the Proposed Scheme on it needs to be acknowledged (CFA Report 26, 6.3.29, 6.4.36);

iv) The low potential assessment of archaeological sub-zone 25-002 is not justified because on the basis of sites like Castle Bromwich this is a potential area of early settlement, above the valley floor and valley slope. There may be other as yet unrecorded features on higher ground such as in the area of the Water Orton cutting and ecological mitigation pond between Park Hall Wood and the B4118;

v) There may be palaeolithic material in interglacial deposits (CFA 26). The evidence of medieval industries including pottery manufacture needs to be stated (CFA 26); and

vi) Statements about “largely forested” and “extensive areas of forest” at particular periods are unsupported and prejudice assessment of the archaeological potential (CFA Report 25 6.3.11 and 6.3.12 and 6.3.13), and a statement about no assets of a particular date needs to be qualified by “are currently recorded” (CFA Report 25 6.3.11).

Structures and Sustainability

7.12 The ES provides insufficient information and detail within Volume 2 (CFA 24, CFA 25 & CFA 26 Reports) on many of the rail related structures that will be an integral part of the new rail line, including bridges, viaducts and tunnel portals. Further detailed design of these elements are required for the City Council, and more importantly the ES, to be able to reach considered conclusions on the impact of these features on both the urban and (in the case of Park Hall Woods) rural environment.

7.13 Viaducts, and other HS2 related structures, must be designed so as to be iconic rather than purely functional; with consideration given to designs that complement the character of the areas in which they are proposed. We are concerned that those proposed in the ES are indeed purely functional, which will need to be rectified to result in HS2 having the best possible architectural legacy in Birmingham. Please
see our comments in the Curzon Station section regarding the viaducts proposed in the ES approaching Curzon Station. Additionally, consideration should be given in the ES to other structures along the Birmingham Spur, including around Park Hall Wood.

7.14 Finally, we request that the Carbon impact of constructing and operating HS2 is minimised and that a clear strategy is put in place in partnership with the city. This should be in line with the city council’s Climate Change Action Plan 2010+, which includes a commitment by the city council and the BeBirmingham partnership for a 60% reduction in carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions produced in the City by 2026 based on 1990 figures.

8 Mitigation and Compensation

8.1 The overall level of mitigation and compensation along the route is inadequate; the city council remains to be satisfied as to the adequacy of the mitigation within the CFA 25 & 26 Reports in Volume 2 of the ES (including for noise and disturbance) and compensation proposed. It must question the general approach to assessment and the judgements made in conducting it; the sub-division within the community impact assessment of affected community areas results in some cumulative impacts being overlooked and, where adverse effects cannot be avoided or fully mitigated, provision has not been made for compensating the wider community.

8.2 We welcome the approach that environmental operations have been assessed to also include the expected Phase 2 operations; however this will need to be consistent across the ES. For instance, additional benefits including employment will need to be quantified.

8.3 The CoCP suggests that the impacts of construction will be managed to an ‘acceptable level’. However, the construction of HS2 will inevitably be highly disruptive for residents and business over a sustained period of time; compensatory measures should therefore be provided. The city council considers that the ES underestimates the impact on local residents and businesses and that the mitigation where proposed is inadequate.

8.4 To mitigate and minimise impacts we ask that all the compensation and mitigation measures included in the ES (and the recent Property Compensation consultation) are implemented or replaced by schemes that will increase the protection for sensitive premises, during both construction and operation periods. Measures must be implemented to provide a form of environmental
compensation for those significantly affected throughout the construction of HS2; however

8.5 The proposed mitigation, both that directly incorporated into core elements of the scheme design and additional, is not guaranteed to form part of the scheme as built and operated: In particular, it appears that the powers proposed in the Bill (for example relating to the Environmental Minimum Requirements) do not require all the works and operations proposed to be implemented and, furthermore, there is no commitment as such to undertake the mitigation proposed or any independent basis to enforce their provision. This has possible implications on the validity of the ES in any such eventuality due to inter-dependencies and consequences of partial implementation; and

8.6 Geographically-specific comments relating to mitigation and compensation are included in the sections above.