

Leicestershire County Council's response to Secretary of State for Transport on Measham alternative route

You have asked for Leicestershire County Council official's opinion on the alternative route. I understand that this route has been referred to by some parties as 'Option 4'

It remains for the Secretary of State for Transport to make a decision on the most appropriate route for HS2, which of course will be in light of technical evidence presented to him.

I am aware that HS2 Ltd. have considered the alternative option (Option 4) presented by Measham Land Company (MLC) and the assessment that they have undertaken. I am also aware that HS2 Ltd. has concluded that the MLC alignment is not compliant with current high speed rail design standards, and that the impacts of an alternative route further to the north-west of Measham are different from those assessed by MLC.

The County Council does not have the capacity to undertake its own detailed assessment of an alternative route, particularly within the timescale constraints given by HS2 Ltd.

Nevertheless, whichever route is chosen:

- the County Council will seek and expect that adverse impacts resulting from the new railway are minimised and appropriately mitigated for all affected communities & businesses
- the County Council will seek assurances that planned regeneration is not compromised by HS2, and if possible (subject to future policy decisions), regeneration in the immediate area is enhanced by making the most of opportunities arising from the proposed new railway to facilitate appropriate future development
- the County Council expect that the chosen route should have a minimal impact on the River Mease SSSI/SAC, and that impacts on both biodiversity and the natural environment are taken into consideration
- the County Council expect that the chosen route should have a minimal impact on the existing economy and jobs in the area
- the County Council seeks transparency in the SoS decision making process for all stakeholders, in that evidence considered during this decision making process is made freely available in the public domain.

In the event that the alternative route is taken forward, then this should be the subject of a comprehensive consultation exercise before a final decision is made and before progressing to the hybrid-bill stage.

This request and related matters will be drawn to County Council Cabinet's attention in due course. In the interim, the Council's formal position on HS2 is set out in the previous Cabinet decision¹.

1. <http://politics.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=135&MId=4864&Ver=4> (item 54)

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