

## HS2- IS IT BAD FOR YOU?

1. In December 2010 the government (Department of Transport) published a second set of route maps for the proposed new line, which showed a number of minor deviations to the original route between London and Birmingham. No change was shown to the route as it crossed the L. B. of Hillingdon from east to west.
2. It is vital to understand that these maps are *route maps only*. They do not show any of the detail necessary to assess the full impact and implications of the scheme e.g. embankments, cuttings, viaducts, road bridges, ancillary buildings, like permanent maintenance depots and electricity sub-stations, electricity gantries, retaining walls, property to be demolished, gardens to be taken, permanent access points and roads, floodlighting, mitigation features (e.g. noise baffles), or details of changes to existing railway stations. We do not even know the precise width of the track footprint, which in the spring, HS2 Ltd. was describing as being between 75 metres wide in open country, 25 metres in built-up areas and then revised to a possible 16m. The width of the corridor subject to noise pollution is still unknown at the time of writing. Please see <http://s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/assets.dft.gov.uk/hs2-arp-00-dr-rw-04004.pdf>
3. There will be no Public Enquiry. Instead, a period of "public consultation" is proposed, beginning in the spring of 2011 and ending in the summer (July?). Expect to see a road show appearing in the Borough in which HS2 Ltd. will seek to allay public anxiety. It is vital that YOU attend these road shows, ask questions and record your views. The shortness of the public consultation and the absence of detail, at such a late stage, makes it very difficult for interested bodies and individuals to make informed representations. Perhaps this is the intention?
4. Government will receive written representations until the summer and then announce its decision in December 2011. If the government says yes, a so-called Hybrid Bill will be introduced into Parliament in 2013. Hybrid Bills give approval to development projects in principle without requiring further submission of "details." If passed, further debate becomes impossible and work on HS2 will begin in 2015.
5. The work will be continuous for approximately 8-10 years and will have enormous implications for those living in the Borough during construction and on completion.  
There will be movement of vast quantities of building materials on each side of the line, closure of roads and railway stations, construction of temporary access roads and dumps, labour encampments, noise, demolition of homes and potential falls in property values etc., etc. Here in Ickenham particularly serious problems (admitted by HS2 Ltd. in their Technical Report) will arise at West Ruislip Station where the road bridge will have to be rebuilt, the station remodelled and there will be extensive demolition involving the Blenheim Residential Home and the Ruislip Golf Club. Most of the existing station car park will simply disappear under the new railway. Enormous problems will arise with combining construction with the free flow of rail and road traffic such that "temporary" closures and restrictions of various kinds must be envisaged. Loss of the station car park must exacerbate the existing serious problems caused by commuters parking in nearby residential streets.
6. The timing of the beginning of construction may well coincide with Britain's emergence from the present economic slow-down and the arrival of more money in the public coffers. Indeed, the government could be looking at that point for so-called "pump-priming projects" to stimulate economic activity. It would therefore be *unwise to assume that financial considerations will prevent the scheme going ahead*.
7. The London Borough of Hillingdon has stated its firm opposition to the proposed route through the Borough and has a list of Borough assets which will probably disappear, or be damaged, if the scheme is implemented (e.g. Hillingdon Outdoor Activities Centre, golf courses and businesses). The Council is also acutely aware of the degradation of the environment that will occur as a result of noise and vibration, visual impact, demolition and the resulting fall in property values across the Borough. The L.B.H. Council, while not opposed to a high speed railway in principle, has therefore promised to resist the chosen route with the same determination with which it opposed the Heathrow Third Runway. It deserves our support. Ickenham Residents' Association takes the same position and has joined the HS2 Action Alliance, an alliance of some 65 bodies, local councils and residents' associations along the length of the proposed route pledged to oppose the current proposals.
8. A 'Consultation Document' is promised prior to the beginning of the consultation period that should commence end February 2011. It is vital that individuals as well as interested bodies of all kinds RESPOND to this document when it appears online, by writing to the following as soon as possible; TIME IS NOT ON OUR SIDE:

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