



**HS2 Traffic Management Proposals**  
**Great Missenden, Little Missenden and South Heath**

1. The Conservation Board's primary areas of concern are the environmental impacts of HS2 on the AONB. We are not well placed to comment on traffic management issues as this is neither our area of expertise or central to our statutory purposes. However, it is clear that any proposals for use of existing roads or the construction of new temporary routes could have significant environmental impacts.
2. The Board has not been involved in any discussion nor our views sought, thus far, on new temporary routes, in particular those proposed near Deep Mill near Little Missenden or from the Gt. Missenden Link Road roundabout. These comments are being provided (27.10.2014) in response to local requests, but have been prepared without the benefit of having seen any route maps or assessment of impacts.
3. In determining these impacts the following key issues need to be addressed
  1. Minimising the amount of HS2 generated traffic using roads through villages.
  2. Minimising the amount of HS2 generated traffic using the ancient country lanes, e.g. Leather Lane and Potter Row.
  3. Avoiding possible knock on effects due to HS2 traffic, i.e. rat running.
  4. Ensuring full environmental assessment of any new roads and the plethora of associated structures causing permanent environmental damage.
4. The key considerations for the Conservation Board would be:
  1. What are the environmental impacts of the proposed use of local roads which are severe and damaging – including temporary or permanent changes to the rural character of these roads?
  2. What are the environmental benefits of the proposed alternative routes?
  3. What are the damaging environmental impacts of the proposed temporary routes?

4. How likely is it that the temporary routes will be removed and reinstated following the construction period?
5. Would there be any lasting environmental impacts following the removal and reinstatement of the temporary routes?
5. Presumably any temporary roads would need to be built to a high standard to cope with constant two way use by large and heavy vehicles. This would affect a wider corridor both in its construction and use. To avoid steep gradient the routes would have to follow more gentle gradients by traversing the valley side; this would inevitably increase their length and visibility.
6. To prevent its use out of hours, there would have to be security measures in place.
7. A major consideration would be the design of the junctions with the A413 and associated environmental impacts due to construction and then use; and a potential significant impact on traffic flows especially if, presumably, it involves roundabouts.
8. The temporary roads are likely to have the following environmental impacts, but in the absence of any assessments it is impossible to gauge the extent and severity of impacts:
  1. Landscape intrusion of the roads, associated features (including lighting) and traffic
  2. Loss of hedgerows and trees
  3. Loss of farmland
  4. Loss and fragmentation of wildlife habitat
  5. Damage to the historic environment
  6. Impact on drainage
9. In determining the overall benefit, the net benefits to communities is likely to be the overriding consideration if severe long term environmental damage can be avoided. It is inevitable that the construction of new temporary roads will damage the environment. The temporary gain to some communities has to be judged against the possible permanent environmental impacts. It may be that these can be minimised with careful route selection and design.
10. There are real concerns about the likely impact on traffic flows along the A413 due to the junctions created where new, but, temporary roads join. An issue, which would need to be tested by modelling, is whether new access onto the A413 might be significantly worse than HS2 generated traffic from the current proposals. A predictable consequence of having large numbers of vehicles, especially HGVs, is that congestion will increase and traffic will begin to avoid the area. With or without new temporary roads thought needs to be given as to how this might happen and how it can best be managed.

11. Within the wider consideration of HS2 construction and traffic management, the Board has yet to see evidence that HS2 Ltd. have carried out a comprehensive study of alternative means for materials movement. The Board understands that HS2 Ltd. already have plans to use the Aylesbury to Princes Risborough branch line for freight movement – what are the options for use of the Marylebone to Aylesbury Chiltern Line? Could this rail corridor be used for material movement by pipeline or conveyor belt? There may be other options that HS2 Ltd. could consider that would reduce HS2 related traffic movement within the AONB.
12. As with many other aspects of HS2 the challenge is to find the least worst solution which minimises long term damage to the environment and affected communities - and which provide the best collective benefits. Experience thus far seems to suggest that not everyone gains at the same time and the benefits of any particular solution are not shared equally.
13. It would seem that a full length bored tunnel would negate the need for any temporary roads.
14. The Board would wish to participate in any formal environmental assessment of the impacts of any proposed temporary roads, to be led by Bucks CC, which should now be considered an urgent priority. It should be completed in time for a common position to be established prior to any local parties appearing before the Select Committee.