

Crewe Hub consultation

Response form

The questions on which the government is seeking your views are set out in the Crewe Hub consultation document.

The consultation will close at 23:45 on 12 October 2017. Please ensure that your response reaches us before the closing date.

For more information please visit <https://www.gov.uk/dft#consultations> or call (24/7) 08081 434 434 / Minicom 08081 456 472.

Please respond to this consultation using one of the methods below:

Online

<https://www.gov.uk/dft#consultations>

By email

crewehub@dft.gsi.gov.uk

By post

Crewe Hub Consultation
Department for Transport
3/14 Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road
London
SW1P 4DR

When responding, please state whether you are responding as an individual or representing the views of an organisation. If responding on behalf of a larger organisation, please make it clear who the organisation represents and, where applicable, how the views of members were assembled.

Crewe Hub Consultation

The questions on which the Government is seeking your views are set out below. In each case, the government is interested in your views on its proposals, as well as any additional evidence you feel it should consider.

Please write your response clearly in black ink, within the boxes and, if applicable, attach additional evidence to the response form, clearly stating the question to which it refers.

Confidentiality and data protection

Information provided in response to this consultation, including personal information, may be subject to publication or disclosure in accordance with the access to information regimes (these are primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), the Data Protection Act (DPA) 1998, and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004).

If you want information that you provide to be treated as confidential please tick the box below.

Please be aware that, under the FOIA, there is a statutory Code of Practice with which public authorities must comply and which deals with, amongst other things, obligations of confidence.

In view of this, it would be helpful if you could explain to us why you regard the information you have provided as confidential. If we receive a request for disclosure of the information we will take full account of your explanation, but we cannot give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, in itself, be regarded as binding on the Department for Transport.

The Department for Transport will process your personal data in accordance with the DPA 1998, and in the majority of circumstances, this will mean that your personal data will not be disclosed to third parties.

I wish my response to be treated as confidential.

Please write your reasons below. Please attach additional pages as required.

PART ONE

Information about you

It is important to give us your name to ensure your response is included.

Your contact details

First name
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Surname
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Email
roger.blake@railfuture.org.uk

Are you responding on behalf of an organisation or group: *

Please circle which answer applies.

(Yes)	
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If yes, please state the name of your organisation:

Railfuture

Please note: if you are providing a response on behalf of an organisation or group the name and details of the organisation or group may be subject to publication or appear in the final report.

What category of organisation or group are you representing? *

Please tick one box that applies.

- Prefer not to say
- Academic (includes universities and other academic institutions)
- Action group (includes rail and action groups specifically campaigning on the high speed rail network proposals)
- Business (local, regional, national or international)
- Elected representative (includes MPs, MEPs, and local councillors)
- Environment, heritage, amenity or community group (includes environmental groups, schools, church groups, residents' associations, recreation groups, rail user groups and other community interest organisations)
- Local government (includes county councils, district councils, parish and town councils and local partnerships)
- Other representative group (includes chambers of commerce, trade unions, political parties and professional bodies)
- Statutory agency real estate, housing associations or property-related organisations
- Transport, infrastructure or utility organisation (includes transport bodies, transport providers, infrastructure providers and utility companies)
- Other:

Please tell us whom does the organisation or group represent and, where applicable, how you assembled the views of the members?

Please write in the box below. Please attach additional pages as required.

c.2000 individual and affiliated members across Britain, including rail user groups.

Consulted via emails to Board Directors, national groups and regional branches.
Specific input from Ian Brown CBE FCILT Policy Adviser to Railfuture Board.

PART TWO

Consultation questions

The Secretary of State for Transport is seeking views on the questions listed below in the same order as they are listed in the consultation document. In each case, the Secretary of State for Transport is interested in your views and whether or not you support the proposed changes, and why, as well as any additional evidence that you feel the Secretary of State should consider.

Before answering any of the questions please read the consultation document: *Crewe Hub Consultation* which can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/dft#consultations>

Crewe Hub vision

Question 1

- a. **Do you support the vision for a hub station at Crewe as suggested by Sir David Higgins as set out at paragraphs 3.3 to 3.7? ***

Yes

No

Don't know

What are your reasons?

Please provide as much detail as possible in the box below. Please attach additional pages as required.

Railfuture strongly supports the vision for a hub station at Crewe as suggested by Sir David Higgins. This is on the basis that the HS2 platforms are placed directly adjacent to the existing facility (as proposed on the Manchester freight avoiding line).

The key priorities for HS2 from a Railfuture viewpoint are:

- maximising the capacity of the HS2 infrastructure with the finite number of trains which can run on it.
- providing the maximum economic benefit to the whole North West Region achieved by maximum connectivity.

The Crewe Hub proposal supports both of these objectives.

Option for splitting and joining HS2 services

Question 2

- a. Do you support the concept of splitting and joining HS2 trains at Crewe, which could provide more seats from Crewe - London and also allow a HS2 service to Stoke-on-Trent as set out at paragraph 5.8 to 5.14? *

- Yes
 No
 Don't know

What are your reasons?

Please provide as much detail as possible in the box below. Please attach additional pages as required.

The negative effect of a small time penalty (not affecting core HS2 Manchester services) is likely, when modelled, to be outweighed by time and capacity benefits by directly and more frequently serving additional destinations. Connectivity with Chester and north- and mid-Wales would also improve.

The planning constraints on HS1 should not be repeated on HS2 in the Crewe/Stoke Hub area. The Hub area should be seen as a major economic development area in itself, also facilitated by fast commuter rail links to Manchester, Liverpool and the West Midlands, so unlocking the potential for major housing development. HS1 would be the catalyst for economic growth, so that the Hub area would be economically sustainable in itself.

- b. Please provide any evidence you can provide about the difference splitting and joining HS2 trains at Crewe would make to:

- (i) local economic growth.

Please provide as much detail as possible in the box below. Please attach additional pages as required.

- (ii) housing provision.

Please provide as much detail as possible in the box below. Please attach additional pages as required.

Opportunities for serving additional destinations north of Crewe

Question 3

- a. What additional destinations north of Crewe might be served through splitting and joining trains at Crewe, as set out at paragraph 5.15 to 5.18?

Please provide as much detail as possible in the box below. Please attach additional pages as required.

The two scenarios described are worthy in themselves in providing an additional service to Stafford (replacement so mitigating the interchange time penalty at Crewe) Stoke and Macclesfield. They do not provide for additional destinations north of Crewe.

Splitting a second pattern train at Crewe (the second Liverpool train) would respond to the same logic and potentially provide an HS2 service to north of Preston (Lancaster, Oxenholme and Penrith) without slowing the Scottish HS2 service. Such a split would assist economic growth in these areas, less so for large scale housing. Such a plan would probably involve terminating alternate trains at Preston giving an opportunity to serve Blackpool. The Fylde coast is seriously in need of economic regeneration and is also a potential area for housing provision, given its proximity to Manchester.

The Stoke/Macclesfield service (plus Stafford) is important for bringing economic benefits to Stoke, which can also accommodate more housing. The difficulty is that such a service will probably have the lowest load factor on HS2 (other than Birmingham originating services) and given pressure on HS2 paths, may eventually succumb to other priorities. Extension to Stockport (and hence also to Manchester) would seem to be a priority as all other currently served destinations in Greater Manchester are provided for, except Stockport.

The glaring omission in these plans is Chester and North Wales. This is mitigated somewhat by the establishment of the Crewe Hub although there are opportunities for through HS2 service provision if bi-mode trains are considered, pending route electrification at least as far as Chester. The two more obvious ways of achieving this are using some of the split portions at the Crewe Hub in the second Liverpool train or using the Stoke train path extending this via Crewe and Chester to North Wales (as either a bi-mode portion or diverting this train away from Macclesfield) although this does not then provide a solution for Stockport.

b. Please provide any evidence you have about the impact of serving additional destinations would make to:

(i) local economic growth

Please provide as much detail as possible in the box below. Please attach additional pages as required.

(ii) housing provision

Please provide as much detail as possible in the box below. Please attach additional pages as required.

Option for stopping more HS2 services

Question 4

a. Do you support the concept of stopping more HS2 services at Crewe, as set out in chapter 5? *

Yes

No

Don't know

What are your reasons?

Please provide as much detail as possible in the box below. Please attach additional pages as required.

For the reasons already cited above, both in terms of economic growth in the Crewe/Stoke area and the ability to serve a greater number of destinations with through services, Railfuture supports the concept of an additional stop at Crewe in the second Liverpool train, with the time penalty to do this mitigated by the transfer of the Stafford stop to the Stoke service.

A 2tph HS2 Crewe Hub service is sufficient for this so we would not propose further stops above this in London originating services.

b. Indicate your views on the potential service pattern(s) outlined in chapter 5.

Please provide as much detail as possible in the box below. Please attach additional pages as required.

c. Please provide any evidence you have about the difference stopping more HS2 services at Crewe would make to:

(i) local economic growth.

Please provide as much detail as possible in the box below. Please attach additional pages as required.

(ii) housing provision

Please provide as much detail as possible in the box below. Please attach additional pages as required.

Option for a new junction north of Crewe

Question 5

a. Do you support the principle of a junction north of Crewe station which could allow HS2 services from Crewe to Manchester, Birmingham and Scotland as set out at paragraph 5.19 to 5.28? *

Yes

No

Don't know

What are your reasons?

Please provide as much detail as possible in the box below. Please attach additional pages as required.

A junction north of the Crewe Hub would facilitate improved use of HS2 capacity and the provision of additional services serving the whole region more comprehensively as well as allowing improved service to Crewe itself, so stimulating economic growth and housing development in such a geographically well placed area, particularly if the plan, as suggested, serves the Stoke area.

b. Do you have any evidence you can provide about the difference a junction north of Crewe station would make to:

(i) local economic growth

Please provide as much detail as possible in the box below. Please attach additional pages as required.

(ii) housing provision

Please provide as much detail as possible in the box below. Please attach additional pages as required.

Freight

Question 6

- a. What are your views on the level of freight growth that should be considered in planning a Crewe Hub? Please provide full reasons and any evidence you can to support your response.**

Please provide as much detail as possible in the box below. Please attach additional pages as required.

Crewe is an already established hub for intermodal and departmental freight and Basford Hall itself is not jeopardised by the proposal. It is important that this proposal provides for freight and for an increase in freight movements. The evidence is the potential at Felixstowe for a doubling of the present 32 trains per day plus the growth of domestic intermodal freight from the Midlands to Scotland.

Having said this, the four tracks on the Crewe freight avoiding lines are important but not overcrowded. A solution that maintains two tracks connecting to both the Liverpool/Preston and the Manchester Trafford Park line would be sufficient in capacity terms including for growth.

As the case for the Crewe Hub involves significant housing and hence local services to Manchester and Liverpool, we would not advocate routing these increasingly long trains through the station.

The key is whether HS2 can be accommodated on 2 of the 4 tracks, with platforms also taking the present underutilised land between the station and the new HS2 platforms.

- b. What are your views on the relative future priorities of types of freight movements? Please provide full reasons and any evidence you can to support your response.**

Please provide as much detail as possible in the box below. Please attach additional pages as required.

Local and regional passenger services

Question 7

- a. **What are your views on future local and regional passenger services that should be considered when planning for a Crewe Hub? Please provide full reasons and any evidence you can to support your response.**

Please provide as much detail as possible in the box below. Please attach additional pages as required.

The demand for continued provision of local services serving Crewe is not diminished by a comprehensive 2 tph HS2 service, quite the reverse in terms of bringing economic benefits to Cheshire and south Manchester.

However, demand for local services would greatly increase if significant new housing were constructed in the Crewe/Stoke area. Planning permission would have to be less restrictive and learn the lesson from HS1, and be based on developer contributions to the Crewe Hub which is the key to unlocking housing potential.

A 2 tph service would continue to be sustainable to Chester, Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham and Shrewsbury on this basis, all feeding into a wider range of HS2 services and to sustain strategic housing growth.

Northwich would need restoration of a feeder service to Crewe so this region of industrial Cheshire can participate in the benefits of HS2.

The Crewe to Stoke local service would also need attention with a view to it being used to unify Crewe and Stoke as effectively a single economic area, certainly unlocking significant potential for housing on brown field land north of Stoke on Trent in the Etruria and Longport area. This would require a metro shuttle type service with additional stations, funded in the Stoke area by housing Section 106/Community Infrastructure Levy provision.

The opportunity exists to develop the north west-south east axis which is not yet served as a potential through corridor between Chester/North Wales and the East Midlands. This represents a significant regional connectivity gap acting as a brake on inter-regional economic activity. Grade separation at Crewe South Junction may be justified.

Local funding contribution

Question 8

- a. **What do you see as the potential for a local funding contribution to any of these interventions alongside complementary works, such as improving the existing station buildings and road access?**

Please provide as much detail as possible in the box below. Please attach additional pages as required.

It is clear that a strategic approach is required treating the Crewe Hub as a whole ie including the interchange with and enhancement of the existing station.

Good road access is essential, particularly if significant new housing is planned as it should be. The key is a strategic housing and feeder roads plan. Unlike on HS1, such a plan should be based on large scale provision of new housing both at Crewe itself and in the much larger brown field area north of Stoke on Trent. A section 106/CIL contribution approach would be sensible as part of the planning process and the scale of housing planned for, large enough to make such contribution financially meaningful. Such an approach is far more tenable if the whole Crewe Hub footprint is treated as a single entity.

Additional areas

- a. **If there are any additional areas that you think it is important for us to consider, that have not already been addressed in this consultation, please explain them here.**

Please provide as much detail as possible in the box below. Please attach additional pages as required.

Crewe is not a pleasant station. The retail experience is adequate but not for a major hub such as HS2, which is an ideal opportunity to solve problems of the past and move forward.

Final comments

- a. **Do you have any other comments?**

Please provide as much detail as possible in the box below. Please attach additional pages as required.

The consultation is excellent in covering HS2 Crewe Hub options, local and freight services in the context of the significant opportunity for economic growth and strategic new housing.

Taking this forward it would of course need to be accompanied by the strategic roads and housing plan and how this might help fund the Crewe Hub.

The most significant omission is the question on how Chester and North Wales can key into this exciting plan and gain economic benefits from the Crewe Hub. There are service options such as briefly discussed in this response. Given the recent major switch to bi-modes for other InterCity services in Britain, it may be worth examining if careful application of bi-mode operation on HS2 in connection with the Crewe Hub proposal could bring additional benefits to HS2 and extend its economic benefits to North Wales. The policy preference is however for route electrification, certainly as far as Chester and extended further as additional benefits accrue.