



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Mr Mark Thurston
Chief Executive
High Speed Two (HS2) Ltd
Two Snowhill
Snow Hill Queensway
Birmingham
B4 6GA

6th January 2020

Ref: TG/2001

Dear Mr Thurston,

Re: Overhead Catenary Systems

You may recall that Andrea and I have previously corresponded with you in relation to HS2 Ltd's approach to the Overhead Catenary System, including the "gantries" on the four track sections. I refer to our letters of the 14th July 2017, 18th August 2017, and the 24th October 2017, and particularly to your responses of the 20th September 2017 and 24th November 2017, copies of which I enclose.

I understand that HS2 Ltd has commenced route-wide public engagement of your Common Design Elements, and the three CDEs subject to the engagement are: parapets (part of bridges and viaducts), piers (another part of bridges and viaducts) and lineside noise barriers (used to compensate for the sound of high speed trains). Comments have been invited via a survey.

Included within the illustrations provided by HS2 Ltd as part of the CDE consultation are the Overhead Catenary Systems (gantries), but these are not part of the survey. You will recall that South Northamptonshire District Council petitioned the House of Commons HS2 Select Committee to request that the design of these structures should fit in with the local rural setting and should not be like those used for HS1 in Kent. Tim Mold, the QC for HS2 Ltd, indicated that the designs should fit in with the local context and environment. So did the subsequent HS2 Information Paper D1. This was also confirmed in your letters of the 20th September 2017 and 24th November 2017.

I should be grateful if you could set out when Andrea's constituents will have the opportunity to engage with this part of the CDE. This will be discussed at the upcoming meeting of the South Northants HS2 Liaison Group on the 17th January, and your comments ahead of this would be appreciated.

With best wishes,

Tommy Gilchrist
Senior Parliamentary Assistant to the Rt Hon. Andrea Leadsom MP
Member of Parliament for South Northamptonshire

[Enc.]

Member of Parliament for South Northamptonshire

Your ref: TG/1708
Our ref: MP-17-098

Mr Tommy Gilchrist
Parliamentary Assistant to the Rt Hon. Andrea Leadsom MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

20 September 2017

Dear Mr Gilchrist,

Re: Overhead Catenary Systems

Thank you for your letter of 18 August regarding further clarification on our approach on the Overhead Catenary System.

As I am sure you will appreciate, the design of the Overhead Catenary System (OCS) must first and foremost comply with the technical performance requirements to ensure that HS2 operational needs are met. However, I would like to reassure you that the Overhead Catenary System (OCS) designers will be required to consider the sensitivities in particular locations to make sure that the OCS structure design will compliment and contribute to the natural and built environment. Whilst the system of wires that provides power to the train is fixed, there is some ability to adapt the OCS support structure design to meet these local aspirations. The use of an alternative design of mast will be assessed on a section by section basis with the Design Panel.

To ensure that the HS2 design vision is considered, the design of the OCS will be monitored by the independent Design Panel through a series of design presentations. This is to make sure that designs of structures and other related design aspects of the HS2 railway systems will, in so far as possible, meet local aspirations. The Design Panel will assist us through advice provision and we will work in partnership with a range of organisations, including planning authorities, with the aim of delivering a high standard of design that is cost-effective and sustainable.

With regard to the timescales and process, the OCS outline design stage has just commenced. During this stage the OCS mast layout will be determined to permit the masts to be integrated with the key design elements listed in the HS2 Information Paper D1. Primarily this will relate to the design of the OCS on viaducts, complex junctions and other areas where integration of the OCS with the civil works is critical to the overall design and performance of the railway. This approach will allow collaborative working between us and the Main Works Civil (MWC) contractors to ensure that a fully considered and collective approach to the design of the structure and OCS masts is applied. Early engagement with the MWC contractors is likely to identify and influence integrated structural designs.

The design of the OCS structures used on the open route section will be defined as part of the OCS design and build contract which will commence in 2020 following the appointment of the Railway Systems Contractors. The HS2 Railway Systems works information and contract requirements will require the

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Railway Systems Contractors to consider aesthetics and local sensitivities as part of their design development process.

I trust this reply is helpful.

Yours sincerely,



Mark Thurston
Chief Executive
High Speed Two Limited

Your ref: AL/TG/1710
Our ref: MP-17-134

Rt Hon Andrea Leadsom MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

24 November 2017

Dear Ms Leadsom,

Re: Gantries/Overhead Catenary Systems in South Northamptonshire

Thank you for your letter of 24 October, regarding your enquiry on the gantries and Overheads Catenary Systems along the HS2 line of route in South Northamptonshire. Apologies for the slight delay in responding to you, and I am also sorry to hear that there has been confusion over our approach. I hope that the below will provide some helpful clarification.

The performance of the Overhead Catenary System (OCS) is a key element in the context of the overall reliability of HS2 and it is therefore important that the OCS design is based on proven technology. To meet this requirement, HS2 has procured a license to use the railway company SNCF's high speed OCS as the base design for HS2. This is the same system that was used on HS1, as you acknowledge from my letter dated 9 August 2017. While the SNCF system design range includes a series of masts, their use will not be mandatory, allowing where appropriate, a different form of mast or support structure to be used. As you noted from my previous correspondence on 20 September 2017, the OCS structures being used will be defined as part of the OCS Design and Build contract which will commence in 2020 following the appointment of the Railway Systems Contractors. Our requirements for these contractors will ensure aesthetics play an important part in their design development process.

HS2 will predominantly be a twin track railway and as such the vast majority of the OCS supports will be single column masts. Gantries will only be used on four track sections, none of which will be in Northamptonshire. Where used, the gantry type will change in line with different conditions along the line of route.

Should you require any further assistance on this matter, I know that our Community Engagement Manager, Luke Nipen, would be happy to meet you. You can contact Luke on luke.nipen@hs2.org.uk or 07901 108852.

I trust this reply is helpful.

Yours sincerely,



Mark Thurston
Chief Executive
High Speed Two Limited

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