

HS2 Report for RRA May 2019

There is a lot of activity happening on a daily basis behind the scenes, these are the main HS2 activities for last month.

1 CONSTRUCTION TIMESCALE

The “notice to proceed” for main construction is still delayed until “towards the end of the year”. I have complained about them reclassifying some main works as enabling works, but this has been ignored.

There is a small potential to have HS2 cancelled, but it depends on who emerges as Prime Minister. Although most candidates so far have avoided the question.

2 OBJECTION LETTER

I did eventually get eight local organisations to sign the letter. I received a reply late on Friday evening (see separate document). It has the usual PR words about wanting to be a good neighbour. I will send a response along the lines of “That is not what we see on the ground”.

3 BREAKSPEAR ROAD SOUTH

3.1 Timescale

I believe the objection letter certainly contributed to the late decision (confirmed as taken by their CEO) to postpone the closure stating last Friday for 8 weeks. They are now looking for some time after 19th July. However this is very dependent on Affinity water being available, who apparently do not like doing major works in the summer because that is their busiest period. If only HS2 had finished the work during the previous closures as they promised ...

3.2 Road lowering

HS2 have said they think they may be able to avoid closing BRS again during main construction when they planned to lower the road under the bridge. I think this has come from the main contractor who we met a few months ago.

4 HARVIL ROAD

No date is set for the next closure of Harvil road.

5 POWER SUPPLY FROM RAYNERS LANE (TBM PS)

HS2 say that test borings along the route are likely to start in the next few months with main work expected to start Q3 2019 and will last around a year. There are some public events being planned to describe the works to residents

6 WEST RUISLIP

It is noticeable how little work is currently going on at the West Ruislip construction site. One day last week the only people there all day were the security staff.

7 WATER SUPPLY

There is concern about the drilling of viaduct pilings through the main west London aquifer which provides our water. Some commentators are very concerned and HS2 have admitted there is a risk of contamination. Affinity water has been indemnified against any loss, but worse case could be us on bottled water until a new supply can be found.

However it has been pointed out that this process has been done before without problems, for example in the building of the A40 / M40 roads.

8 COLNE VALLEY VIADUCT

The first public events about the CVV were held last week. I attended the one in Ickenham along with fellow activists and had tables outside with some leaflets suggesting questions people might ask to present a balanced view. The attendance was quite low.

There is one this Thursday 6th June at Ruislip golf club 16.00 – 20.00. I recommend you go if possible. I hope to be there, but we do not yet have permission to have a table outside.

9 OTHER ISSUES

9.1 Works forward look

The scheduled works for the next 3 months should be posted soon at:

<https://hs2inhillington.commonplace.is/news/2019/05/30/publication-of-the-hillingdon-construction-forward-look-for-may-2019>

10 MEETINGS

10.1 Liaison meetings

I had two meetings with HS2 last month (one of them in conjunction with LBH), and a separate one with representatives of local residents' organisations.

A new Engagement Director attended the HS2 meeting last week for the first time, and heard in depth about how unhappy we are with the engagement process, and why does it take writing to their CEO before we get action. She said lots of good words about improvements, but we shall see. It hasn't improved in the last year, despite our concerns.

I have invited the Residents' and Construction Commissioners to come for another visit. Date being arranged.

10.2 Drop in sessions

HS2 are planning more drop in sessions, see this link for details:

<https://hs2inhillington.commonplace.is/schemes/proposals/upcoming-local-events/details> .

11 COMPLAINTS AND ENQUIRIES

I would encourage people to contact the HS2 helpline. If they don't get comments and complaints then HS2 seem to assume everything is ok with the local residents.

In particular, if you see something wrong, please do make a formal complaint.

Enquiries: HS2enquiries@hs2.org.uk, 24 hour help desk 08081 434 434

Complaints: HS2Complaints@hs2.org.uk

Phil Taylor
3 June 2019