



Consultation update 2018

Western Rail Link to Heathrow

Improving rail links
to Heathrow Airport

Earlier this year, we consulted on our proposed designs to build a new rail link to Heathrow Airport from the Great Western Main Line.

The 6.5km rail link would allow passengers throughout the West, and beyond, to travel directly to Heathrow Airport from Reading, Twyford, Maidenhead and Slough, without having to change at London Paddington.

The new link – most of which would be underground – would deliver a fast, frequent and reliable direct train service.

Our plans have been drawn up on behalf of the Department for Transport.

Consultation activity

Between 11 May and 22 June 2018, we held 18 public consultation events around Langley, Colnbrook, Iver, Iver Heath, Richings Park and Harmondsworth, which were attended by more than 320 people.

We also raised awareness at events in stations, through the media, our website and social media.

We produced a two-minute animation and a one-minute video to simply explain the proposals to the public, which received a total of 52,000 views. Our dedicated web page was visited by more than 10,000 people over the six-week period.

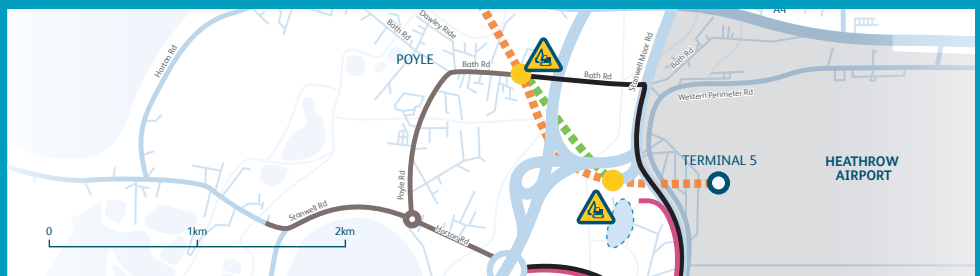
We received 1,333 responses from the public and stakeholders via post, email and our consultation website.

Outcomes

The consultation revealed a preference for Option B (shown on the map as a dotted green line) as the favoured route for the proposed tunnel. This option will now form part of our final proposals.

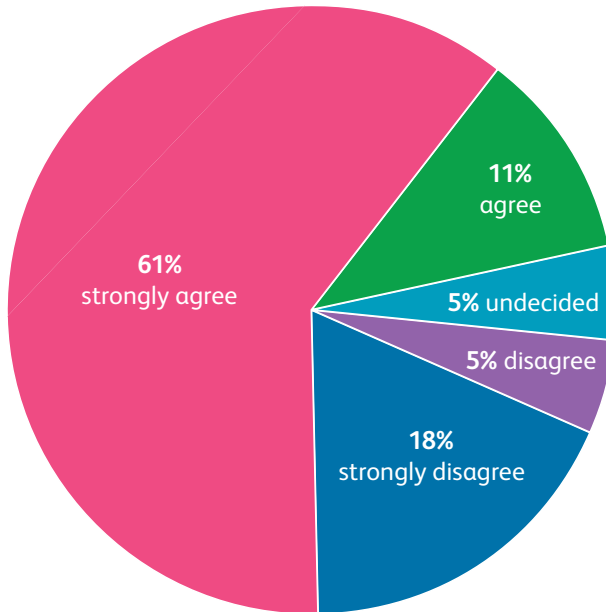
It would allow trains to run to Terminal 5, through to Terminals 2 and 3 and on to London Paddington. It would remove the section of track required to allow trains to turn back, shortening the tunnel by 100m. This would reduce construction impact and costs, and remove the need for an access building close to Heathrow.

Seventy per cent of respondents expressed no route preference. Of the remainder, 20% chose Option B and 10% Option A (shown on the map as a dotted orange line).



Feedback summary

Do you agree with Network Rail's plans to improve access to Heathrow Airport from the West?



72% of respondents agreed with Network Rail's plans to improve access to Heathrow Airport from the West.

23% disagreed with the proposal, with the closure of Hollow Hill Lane/ Mansion Lane featuring as the most mentioned reason (314 comments).

147 comments were received encouraging the industry to speed up delivery of the proposed scheme.

Key themes that emerged were:

- Concerns about the permanent closure of Hollow Hill Lane/Mansion Lane (314 comments).
- Long-standing desire for a relief road for Iver area.
- Calls to speed up the delivery of the project.
- Requests for more services, stopping at additional stations such as Langley.
- Calls to integrate the service with other routes.
- Concerns about the environmental impact of the scheme, including noise and pollution during construction.

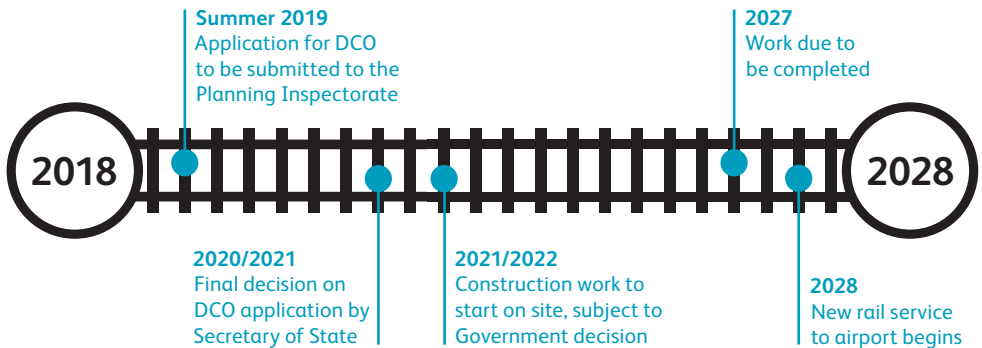
Next steps

Further traffic modelling is being carried out to assess the effects of the planned permanent closure of Hollow Hill Lane/Mansion Lane. The results, expected in early 2019, will inform discussions to be held with local highway authorities about proportionate measures to reduce the impact of the closure.

A full Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) will be presented in an Environmental Statement as part of our application to the Planning Inspectorate. This will identify any significant short and long-term effects on the environment, including noise and pollution, with measures to reduce or manage them.

We will also submit a detailed report which summarises, and responds to, the comments made during the consultation.

We will present the final designs for the scheme in a series of public information events, immediately prior to submitting our application for a Development Consent Order (DCO).



For further information about the Development Consent Order process and how to take part in it, please visit the Planning Inspectorate's website at <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/>

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