

INDEPENDENT ASSESSOR'S REPORT

HIGH SPEED RAIL (CREWE - MANCHESTER) BILL:
SUMMARY OF MATTERS RAISED IN RESPONSES TO THE
CONSULTATION ON THE ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT

Submitted to:
The Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills

The House of Commons and the House of Lords

6 June 2022

Report Number: HC 268



HIGH SPEED RAIL (CREWE- MANCHESTER) BILL: SUMMARY OF MATTERS RAISED IN RESPONSES TO THE CONSULTATION ON THE ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT.

Report prepared by the Independent Assessor appointed under Standing Order 224A(6)(a)(ii)

Submitted to the House of Commons by the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, pursuant to Standing Order 224(6)(a)(v)

Ordered by the House of Commons
To be published on the 6 June 2022

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Executive Summary

This report provides an independent summary of the feedback received in response to the public consultation on the Environmental Statement (ES) for the proposed High Speed Two (HS2) railway between Crewe and Manchester.

The consultation on the ES for the proposed HS2 railway between Crewe and Manchester was published by the Department for Transport (DfT) on the 25 January 2022 and ran until 23:45 on the 31 March 2022.

AECOM was appointed as the independent assessor to analyse and summarise the feedback to the consultation. All responses to the consultation have been read in full by members of the AECOM team to identify the substantive matters raised in the comments received.

The analysis of the responses sought to categorise matters raised in relation to a series of themes based on the environmental topics covered in the ES and a series of further scheme-wide themes to provide a summary of the main points raised. Where possible comments related to specific geographical locations or features were also identified to enable reporting against the eight Community Areas identified in the ES.

The aim of this report is to provide Parliament and the wider public with a summary of these matters raised.

A total of 6,391 individual responses were received from the general public and stakeholders.

Of these responses, 5,829 originate from a campaign organised by the Woodland Trust. This campaign focused on concerns related to the impact of the proposals on ancient woodlands and veteran trees and the implications of the construction and operation of the project on efforts to tackle climate change. This campaign also made specific reference to the impact on the section of the proposed route between Hulseheath to Manchester Airport (known as MA06).

In the 562 responses to the consultation not linked to the Woodland Trust campaign, the most commonly raised comments related to matters categorised under the themes of traffic and transport; ecology and biodiversity and community.

The most commonly raised concerns in the responses received related to traffic and transport are linked to the number and impact of vehicles linked to construction of the proposed new railway on roads that are not considered suitable for this use. In relation to ecology and biodiversity respondents specifically raise concerns about the impact of the project on ancient woodland, specific habitats and the effects on wildlife and certain protected species. Comments categorised against the theme of community mostly relate to perceived impacts of the proposals on specific communities including commercial and residential property, schools, parks and other public facilities.

It is not the independent assessor's role to provide a judgement on the validity or otherwise of the comments received in the feedback to the consultation. However, the report does summarise the main matters raised in the feedback received and identifies particular areas where substantial concerns have been expressed.

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1. Introduction

This report provides an independent summary of the feedback received in response to the public consultation on the Environmental Statement (ES) for the proposed High Speed Two (HS2) railway between Crewe and Manchester. It has been prepared for Parliament to support consideration of the High Speed Rail (Crewe – Manchester) Bill.

The consultation on ES for the proposed HS2 railway between Crewe and Manchester was published by the Department for Transport (DfT) on the 25 January 2022 and ran until 23:45 on the 31 March 2022.

The Standing Orders passed by Parliament in 2013 for HS2 Phase One, require a group of impartial Parliamentary officials, the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, to appoint an Independent Assessor to analyse and summarise the feedback to the consultation on the ES for the proposed HS2 railway between Crewe and Manchester. AECOM was appointed to be the Independent Assessor for this phase of the HS2 project by the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills on the 9 February 2022.

The consultation period was set by the Secretary of State for Transport under the terms of the House of Commons Standing Orders. The ES for the proposed high-speed railway between Crewe and Manchester was made available online to the public on the 25 January 2022, with an accessible format available on request. Electronic copies of the ES documents were provided on a USB stick to libraries, parish councils and local authorities in the areas potentially affected by the proposed scheme. Hard copies of the ES documents were also made available to these parties, with many requesting the reports that related to their specific geographical area of interest. A hard copy of the ES was also issued to Parliament.

The consultation was publicised in regional newspapers circulating in areas potentially affected by the proposed scheme, between the 24 January 2022 and the 16 March 2022. The newspapers used were also those that the Bill deposit was advertised in. Social media (Twitter and Facebook) was used to publicise the consultation, using 'organic' posting to target those following HS2. Targeted advertising posts were also used on Facebook in locations in close proximity to the proposed scheme. The social media advertising was carried out for around two weeks at the start and just prior to the end of the consultation period to encourage feedback.

This report is the independent assessment of the matters raised in the feedback received in response to the consultation on the ES. A total of 6,391 individual responses were received from the general public and stakeholders.

We note that the same approach was adopted by the Government on Phases One and 2a of the HS2 project which were the development of the high-speed line between London and the West Midlands, and the West Midlands and Crewe.

This report is split into two principal sections, the first an introduction detailing the Terms of Reference, work programme and methodology we have applied. The second section presents a summary of the feedback received to the consultation on the ES, providing an overview of the main matters raised in relation to each of the environmental topic areas covered in the ES and the scheme as a whole and then the matters raised specific to each Community Area (CA). The CAs are geographical areas defined in the ES which cover the entire length of the proposed scheme, as shown in Figure 1 below.

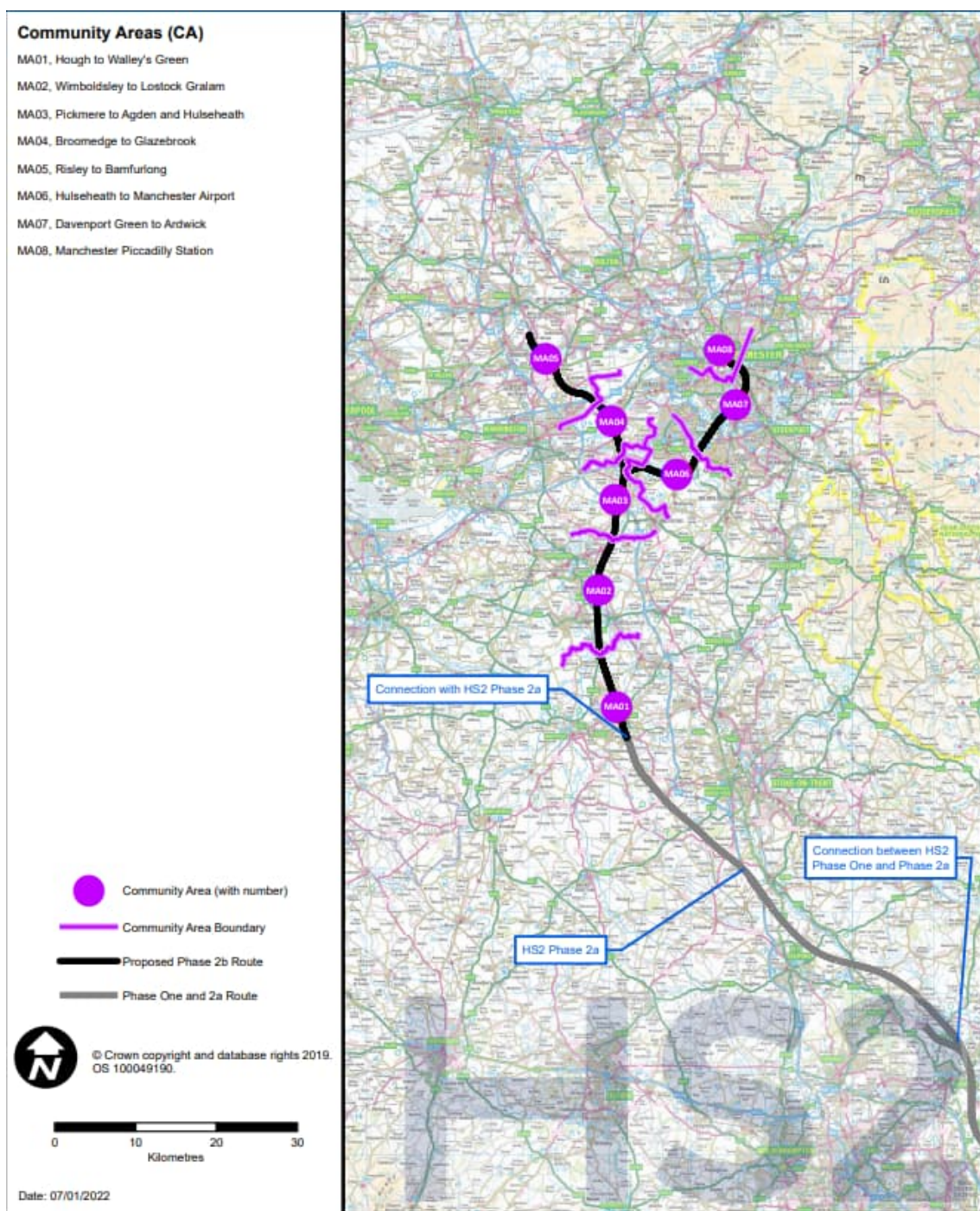


Figure 1. Proposed HS2 railway between Crewe and Manchester, showing identified Community Areas

It is not the Independent Assessor's role to provide a judgement on the validity or otherwise of the comments received in the feedback to the consultation. However, the report does summarise the main matters raised in the feedback received and identifies particular areas where substantial concerns have been expressed.

The report was submitted to the Examiners on 6 June 2022 in line with the Standing Order requirement, for submission by the Examiners to Parliament. The Department of Transport will publish all responses received via the ES consultation page on the gov.uk website. The Independent Assessor has no involvement in the publication of the original responses.

1.1 Assessment Parameters

This section of the report summarises the purpose of the independent analysis and the approach we have used. We have maintained complete independence from HS2 Ltd. and the DfT, and developed a process where every response to the consultation has been read in its entirety, given adequate consideration and the substantive matters raised captured within a database to enable thematic analysis and the production of this summary report.

1.2 Terms of Reference

This report is focused on the outcome of the public consultation on the ES for the High Speed Rail (Crewe-Manchester) Bill. The Bill proposes a high-speed railway line extending the route north from Crewe to Manchester. In our role as independent assessor we were not required to provide comments on the quality of the ES or the approach to consultation; the structure, delivery of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process or the appropriateness of proposed designs, mitigation and route alignment decisions, although the report summarises comments made by respondents on all these matters.

The aim of this report is to provide Parliament and the wider public with a summary of substantive matters raised in the feedback received in response to the consultation.

1.3 The Independent Assessor

The Examiners required the Independent Assessor to demonstrate that its staff had the knowledge and skills to assess the subject matter of the responses and produce a summary to assist both Houses of Parliament in their consideration of the High Speed Rail (Crewe-Manchester) Bill. The Examiners also required that the Independent Assessor and the staff working on this project had no vested interest in the HS2 project and that neither the company nor the individuals could reasonably be assumed to be biased in relation to the proposed scheme.

AECOM UK Limited (AECOM) has been appointed as the Independent Assessor. AECOM is a respected infrastructure consulting firm. We are trusted advisors and have specialist teams delivering a range of professional services including all the environmental disciplines as well as planning, design, engineering, programme and construction managers. AECOM has vast experience of delivering consultations on major infrastructure projects across the UK.

1.4 Timeline of Assessment

The ES was published on the 25 January 2022 and the Secretary of State for Transport set a deadline for the receipt of comments by 23:45 on the 31 March 2022. The Examiners set a timeline for the production of this report taking into account the final volume, size, complexity and the time required to adequately analyse each of the responses received. It was agreed with the Independent Assessor that this report would be submitted to Parliament on the 6 June 2022.

1.5 Methodology

1.5.1 Submission and Collection of Responses

Responses to the consultation on the ES were submitted to the DfT under the requirements of the Standing Order with no involvement from the Independent Assessor. The consultation itself and the process for submitting comments was designed by HS2 Ltd. working with the DfT.

Respondents were invited to complete a specially designed ES consultation response form. The response form contained a series of questions and allowed the respondent to insert additional pages or attachments as required. The response form was split into three sections.

- Part One: Your information
 - collected basic information on the respondent
- Part Two: High Speed Rail (Crewe – Manchester) Environmental Statement Consultation
 - Question 1 invited comments on the Non-Technical Summary to the ES (NTS);
 - Question 2 invited comments on the introduction and methodology;
 - Question 3 invited comments on the CA reports and map books;
 - Question 4 invited comments on the route-wide effects;

- Question 5 invited comments on the off-route effects; and
- Question 6 invited comments on the technical appendices and map books.
- Part Three: Submitting your response
 - detailed the different methods for response submission, including a postal address, web address for online responses and an email address via which electronic submissions could be made.

Once submitted by any of the methods above, all responses were captured by the DfT's selected processing contractor, Ipsos MORI.

Ipsos MORI was responsible for receipt of all the responses. Each was logged with a unique reference number, opened to confirm validity and hard copy responses electronically scanned. The responses were then made available to AECOM (the Independent Assessor) via Ipsos MORI's online data management system.

At the close of the consultation all responses were securely transferred to AECOM to allow for the analysis to be undertaken. The unique reference number assigned by Ipsos MORI to each response was continued within our response management system to provide a complete audit trail from the point of receipt through the analysis process.

1.5.2 Analysis of Responses

We developed a bespoke approach for handling and analysing the responses. A secure network location was created to which only the project team members had access. Responses were uploaded either directly from Ipsos MORI's online data management system or from the secure file transfer at the close of the consultation.

A response management system containing a series of spreadsheets within a shared workbook was designed specifically for this consultation. The workbook was stored within the same secure network location as the individual responses and allowed multiple members of the project team to be reviewing and analysing responses at the same time and for ongoing quality assurance checks to be carried out on the data by senior members of the project team.

The spreadsheets within the workbook enabled the team to log each of the responses to the consultation to compile the statistical data. The team identified and recorded the types of response (such as private individual or stakeholder organisation), and the substantive matters raised in the response. These matters raised were categorised against a series of themes based on environmental topics contained in the ES, the scheme as a whole and those specific to each CA. All responses retained their individual identification numbers throughout the analysis process for traceability and quality assurance.

We set up a team of environmental specialists and engineering professionals familiar with the issues and requirements of environmental assessments for major infrastructure projects to carry out the analysis. All members of the analysis team received specific project focussed training on both the HS2 project and the specific requirements of the programme of analysis to ensure consistency. Any matters raised that could not be allocated by a member of the analysis team, were identified to a more senior member of the team for analysis.

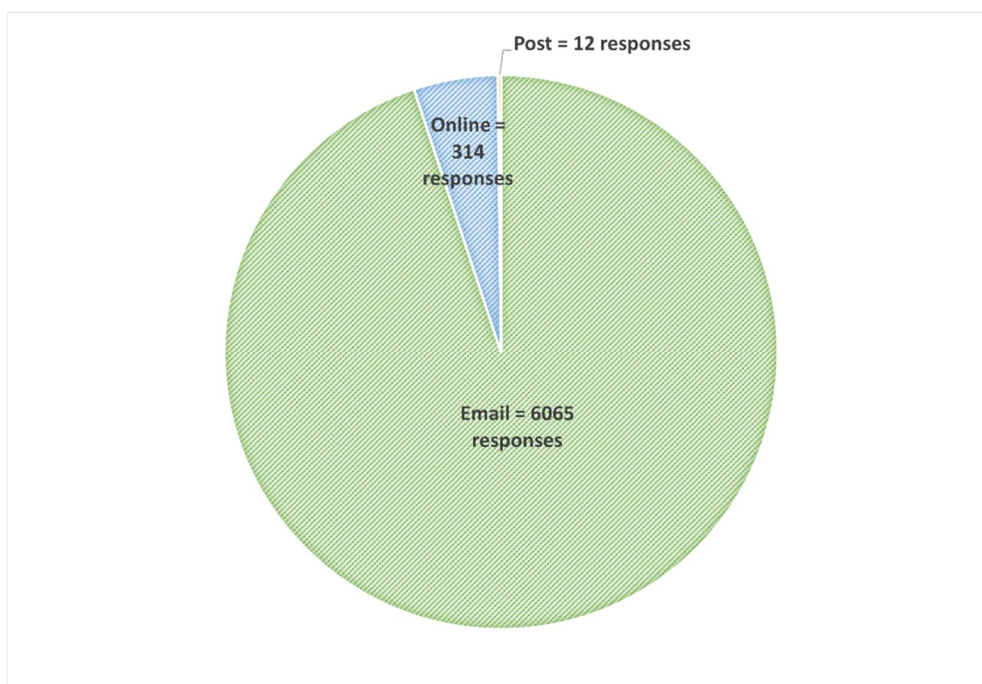
Quality assurance checks were carried out throughout the analysis and reporting to ensure accuracy and constancy in the identification of the matters raised in the responses received. The Independent Assessor also had access to senior specialist experts in all technical areas of environmental assessment throughout the course of the assessment to provide an additional level of expert review as necessary.

1.5.3 Response Type and Volume

The total number of responses received by the close of consultation at 23:45 on the 31 March 2022 was 6,391. A few days (up to the 5 April 2022) were allowed for any final postal responses to be received which had been date stamped on or before the 31 March 2022.

All of the responses were provided by Ipsos MORI to AECOM (the Independent Assessor) by secure file transfer on the 8 April 2022.

Consultation responses could be made via three channels: the online response form or via a dedicated email or postal address. Graph 1 below illustrates the number of responses received via each of these formats.

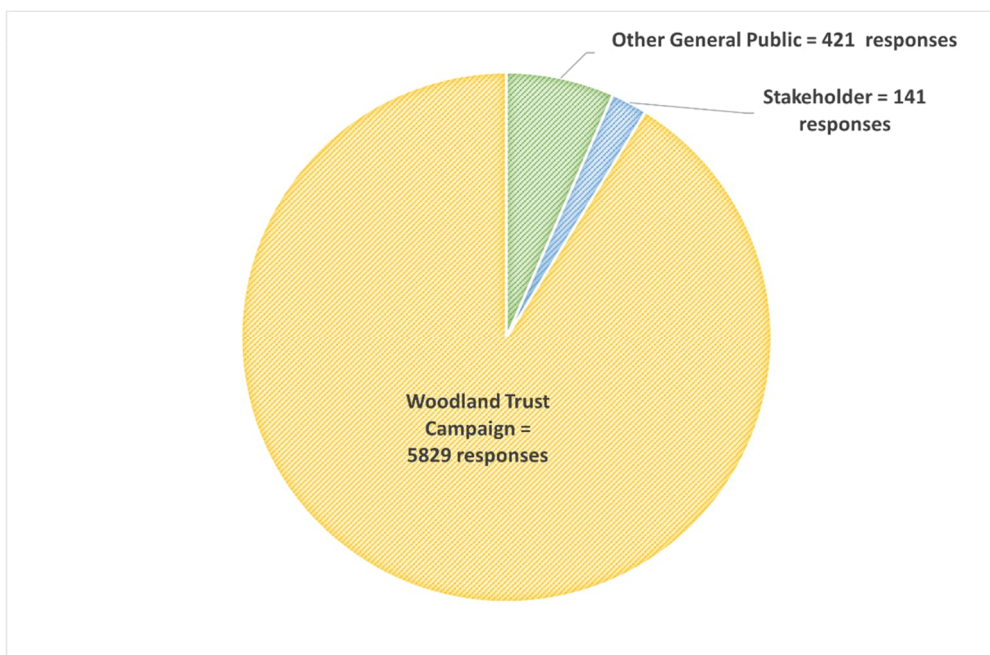


Graph 1. Response type

All of the responses received were categorised into three groups:

- individual responses received from the general public;
- responses linked to specific campaigns which contain wholly or largely consistent text; and
- stakeholder responses including: local authorities, statutory bodies, parish councils and other interest groups.

Graph 2 below illustrates the number of responses received from these three broad categories.



Graph 2. Response category

1.5.5 Woodland Trust Campaign

As can be seen from Graph 2 above, the vast majority of the responses received (5,829) originate from a campaign organised by the Woodland Trust, most of these appear to have been completed by members of the general public. This campaign focused on concerns related to the impact of the proposals on ancient woodlands and veteran trees and the impact of construction and operation of the project on climate change. The campaign enabled respondents to fill in their personal details on the Woodland Trust website to generate and email a standard response to the consultation. Respondents were able to amend or add to the standard text of the response before it was submitted and 186 of the 5,829 people who completed the Woodland Trust campaign chose to amend or add to the standard text.

1.5.6 Late Responses

Four late email responses were received on the 1 April 2022. While these are not included within the statistical data presented above all four responses were reviewed to check that they did not contain any significant new information not contained within other responses. Two of the late responses were generated through the Woodland Trust campaign and contained only standard text. The other two late responses did not contain any information which had not already been raised by other respondents and had therefore already been considered in the development of this report.

1.6 Categories of Matters Raised

We categorised the matters raised in all of the responses received in relation to a series of themes based on the environmental topics covered in the ES and other common themes related to the scheme as a whole. Where responses included comments related to a number of different environmental topics and themes all of the matters raised were identified separately.

The environmental topics covered in the ES used as themes to categorise individual comments within the responses received are presented below. These are listed in alphabetical order with examples of matters raised that have been included under each theme:

- **Agriculture, Forestry and Soils:** Loss of agricultural land and effect on farm businesses
- **Air Quality:** Dust and air pollution in relation to construction and operation of the proposed scheme
- **Climate Change:** Impact on global climate and CO₂ emissions
- **Community:** Effects on communities, including commercial and residential property, schools, parks, public footpaths and loss of jobs
- **Ecology and Biodiversity:** Loss of ancient woodland and veteran trees. Potential impact on specific habitats, effects on wildlife, and protected species
- **Electromagnetic interference:** Interference of operations on sensitive receptors for example air traffic communication
- **Health:** Impact on mental health and wellbeing, and physical health from construction activity and operation of the railway
- **Historic Environment:** Potential impacts on heritage assets such as listed buildings
- **Land Quality:** Risk of contamination from construction activity and land stability
- **Landscape and Visual Assessment:** Visual impact of the proposals on the countryside
- **Major Accidents and Natural Disasters:** Flooding, subsidence and increased risk of accidents on local roads
- **Socioeconomics:** Viability of the project due to changes in working patterns following the Covid pandemic and comments related to ticket prices
- **Sound, Noise and Vibration:** Increased noise and vibration associated with construction and operation
- **Traffic and Transport:** Increased HGV traffic on local roads link to construction and traffic generated by the new railway when operational
- **Waste and Material Resources:** Generation and disposal of waste from construction
- **Water Resources and Flood Risk Assessment:** Likelihood of flooding and impact on surface water features

Further themes were included to categorise scheme-wide matters raised that did not fall directly into the above ES topic areas, again listed alphabetical order:

- **Compensation:** Comments relating to compensation for loss of business income
- **Design:** Comments on the route design, impacts from the construction and operation on existing infrastructure
- **Environment (general):** Comments about the general impact of the project on the environment
- **Expense:** General comments related to the project cost
- **Government:** Comments on perceived benefits / importance of the project to the government
- **In favour:** Comments in support of the project
- **Not specified:** A category for capturing where either no comment has been made in the response received or comment does not fit into other categories
- **Property value:** Concern over reduction in property value as a result of HS2
- **Public consultation:** Comments on the content of the ES documentation made available during the consultation, the consultation itself and level of engagement linked to the public consultation
- **Questions from responses:** Questions raised by respondents
- **Report:** Complexity and perceived inaccuracies in the ES.
- **Sustainability:** Environmental impacts relating to emissions, and not being carbon neutral
- **Tunnels:** Sections of the route being tunnelled

The results of this analysis based on themes linked to the environmental topics and other scheme-wide matters are presented in Section 2.2 and 2.3 below.

To enable interested parties to gain an understanding of the matters raised in relation to a specific geographical area we have, where comments could be linked to a specific geographic location, also categorised the matters raised against the relevant CA as defined in the ES (see Figure 1). The results of this analysis are presented in Section 2.4 below.

2. Results

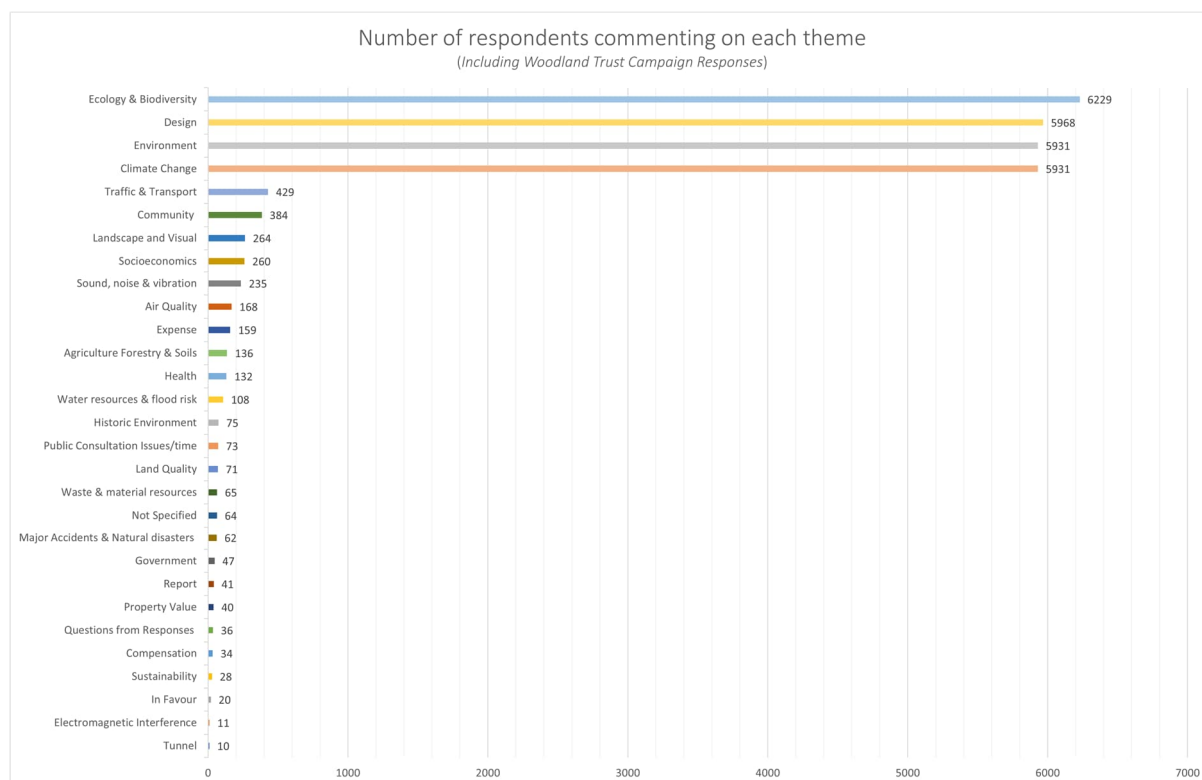
2.1 Summary of matters raised by theme

This section of the report provides a summary of the matters raised by all respondents to the consultation on the ES for the proposed high-speed railway between Crewe and Manchester. The results are presented under a series of themes. These themes are based on the environmental topic areas contained in the ES and a number of further scheme-wide themes identified during the analysis of the responses.

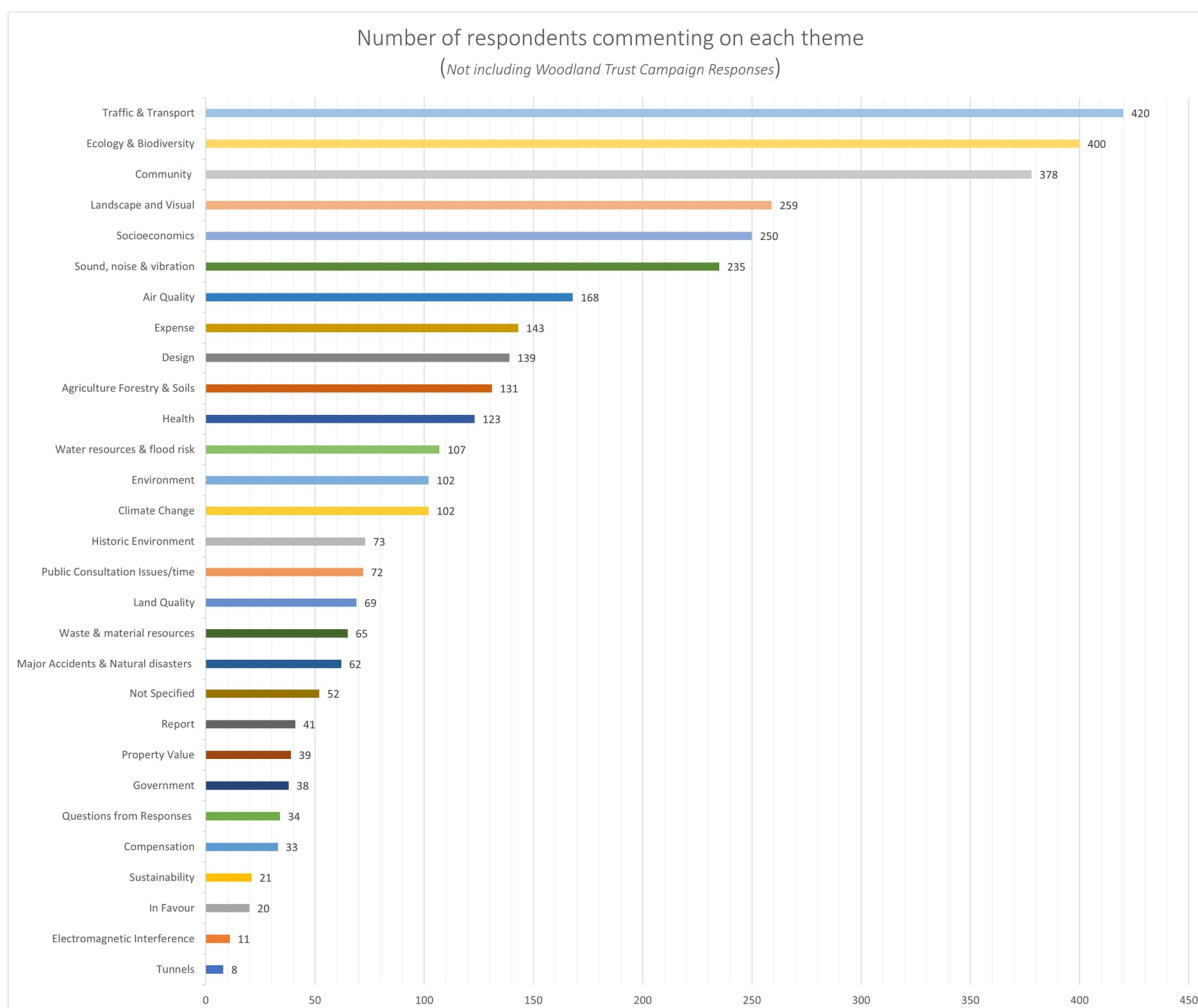
The results capture the views of a wide range of respondents including members of the public, local authorities and statutory bodies, commercial organisations, and a variety of community and interest groups.

This section of the report is designed to provide an accurate summary of the feedback received, identifying the main matters raised and the relative number of respondents who raised this matter to enable comparison. It does not provide any technical evaluation of the matters raised in relation to the information presented in the ES.

Graphs 3 and 4 below illustrate the number of respondents raising matters related to each of the identified themes. Two different graphs have been created to show the number of respondent comments against each of the identified themes both with and without the Woodland Trust campaign responses. The Woodland Trust campaign generated over 91% of the response to the consultation (in terms of number of individual responses), hence for clarity and ease of reading the graphs, where appropriate, separate graphs have been produced within this report to show both with and without the Woodland Trust campaign. The total number of respondents raising matters against each theme is greater than the total number of responses to the consultation as a whole because most respondents commented on multiple themes.



Graph 3. Number of respondents commenting on each theme (Including Woodland Trust campaign responses)



Graph 4. Number of respondents commenting on each theme (not including Woodland Trust campaign responses)

For each of the identified themes a narrative summary of the main matters raised is provided in Sections 2.2 and 2.3 to give a better understanding of the views being expressed by those who responded to the consultation.

Within the each of the summaries the following descriptors have been used for consistency to help quantify the number of respondents expressing a specific view:

- ‘a few’ has been used to refer to 2 – 5 respondents;
- ‘some’ to refer to 6 – 10 respondents;
- ‘several’ to refer to 11 – 50 respondents; and
- ‘considerable’ to refer to over 51 respondents

For each of the themes linked to the environmental topics in the ES a graph has been included to illustrate the number of responses containing comments related to that theme which can be linked to a specific CA. For the additional themes the comments have not been quantified by CA as the majority of the matters raised related to the proposed scheme as a whole.

These summaries are designed to provide an overview of main points raised by respondents related to a specific theme, they do not provide comment on or include reference to every matter raised in the responses received. They do however identify particular geographical features, issues and concerns that were recurring matters in the responses. Throughout the summaries, quotes have been taken from a selection of responses to help illustrate specific points being raised. No additional importance is inferred related to the specific views identified in these quotes.

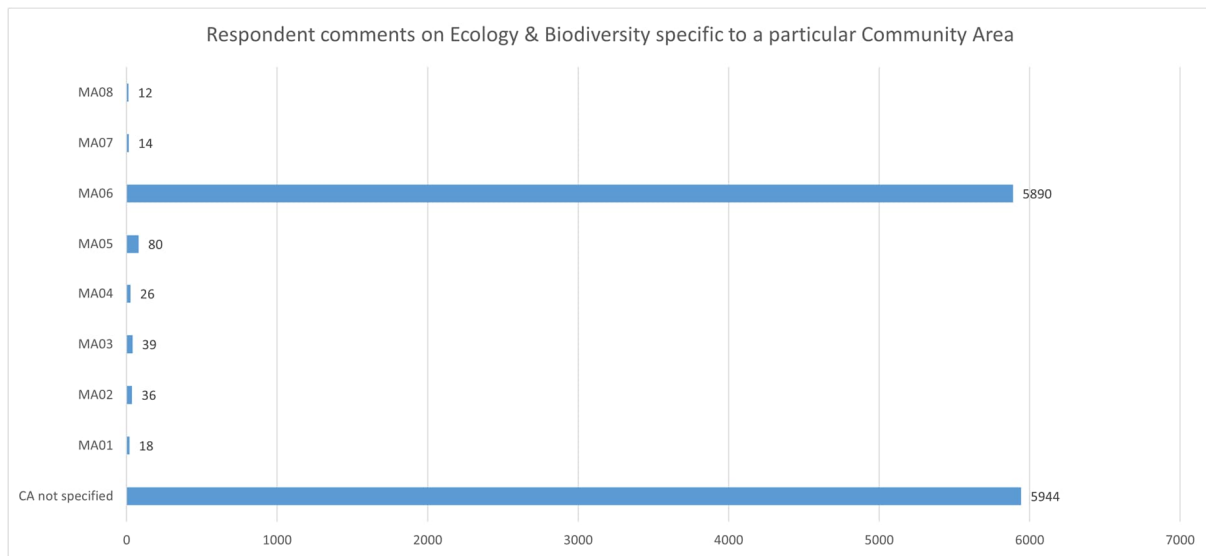
2.2 The Environmental Topics Covered in the ES

This section of the report provides a summary of the matters raised in responses categorised by the environmental topics covered in the ES. The results are presented in rank order with the environmental topics receiving the most comments first.

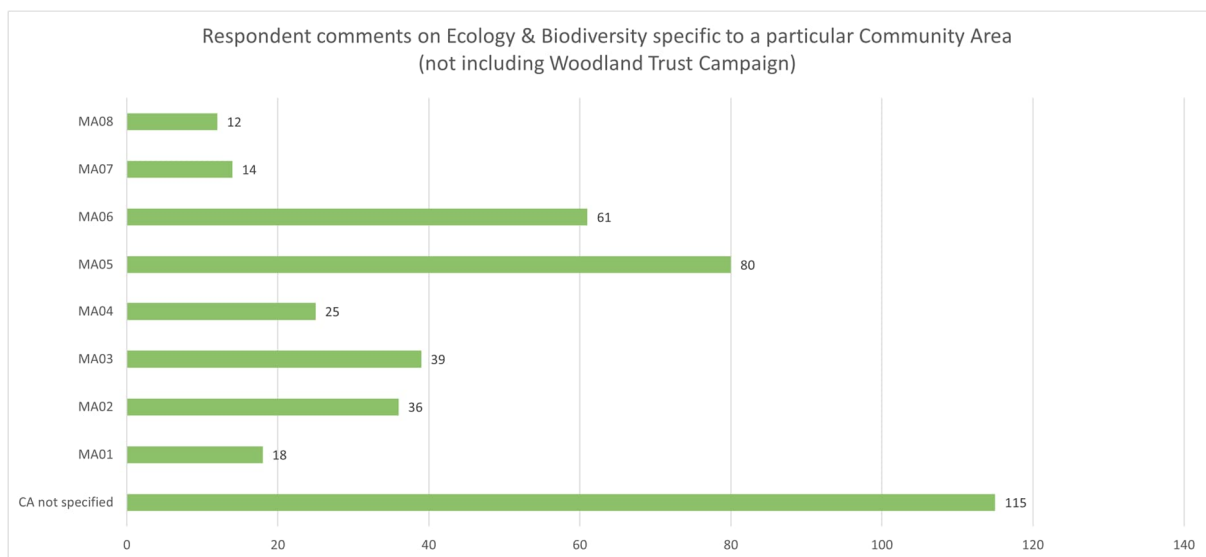
2.2.1 Ecology and Biodiversity

A total of 6,229 respondents included comments related to ecology and biodiversity. The majority of these comments were as a direct result of the Woodland Trust campaign, however this theme was also the second most commonly raised concern within the non-campaign responses. The comments focus on the loss of ancient woodlands, loss of veteran trees, threats to protected species, reduction of wildlife habitat and biodiversity, and the need for the route to be reassessed because of its impact on the natural environment.

The graphs below show the distribution of the comments related to ecology and biodiversity where they could be attributed to a specific CA, with Graph 5 showing the total responses, and Graph 6 the non-campaign responses (without the Woodland Trust).



Graph 5. Respondent comments on Ecology & Biodiversity specific to a particular Community Area (including Woodland Trust campaign responses)



Graph 6. Respondent comments on Ecology & Biodiversity specific to a particular Community Area (not including Woodland Trust campaign responses)

The majority of the respondents raised concerns about the loss of irreplaceable ancient woodland and loss of veteran trees as a result of the proposed scheme.

“18 ancient woods and 24 veteran trees remain at risk of destruction from this phase of the project. 15 further ancient woods may be subject to indirect damage”

Member of public

“Ancient woodland can NEVER be replaced, it must be preserved for the future.”

Member of public

The majority of the respondents highlight the benefits that ancient woodland brings to the population, wildlife and the environment in general. They also reference a number of rare and threatened species such as dormice, lesser-spotted woodpeckers, and Bechstein’s bats which live in the UK’s ancient woodlands and veteran trees.

“Less than 2.4% of the UK is covered in ancient woodland”

Member of public

The majority of the respondents comment that the route for the proposed scheme should be reassessed, and alternative routes considered to reduce the impact on the natural environment.

“if the Government wishes to deliver a transport system that is compatible with addressing both the nature and climate emergencies, the current route for Phase 2B West must be urgently reassessed”.

Member of public

A considerable number of comments recorded under this theme are related to the impact of the proposed scheme on hedgerows, grassland and other habitats, and the wildlife linked to these environments.

Several respondents express concern that the ecological surveys undertaken to help inform development of the ES and the proposed scheme have been carried out using desk-based studies rather than physical surveys. Several respondents also comment that the surveys did not cover some areas potentially affected by the proposals; lack baseline ecological information; used out-of-date datasets and do not adequately assess the likely impacts.

Several respondents express general concern about the scale of biodiversity loss and, what they believe are insufficient mitigation measures. Specific concerns are also raised over the loss of habitat connectivity affecting wildlife foraging habits, and potential impact of train strikes on the barn owl, bat and bird populations.

“Biodiversity Net Gain calculations show a -64.78% percentage net change”.

Cheshire Wildlife Trust

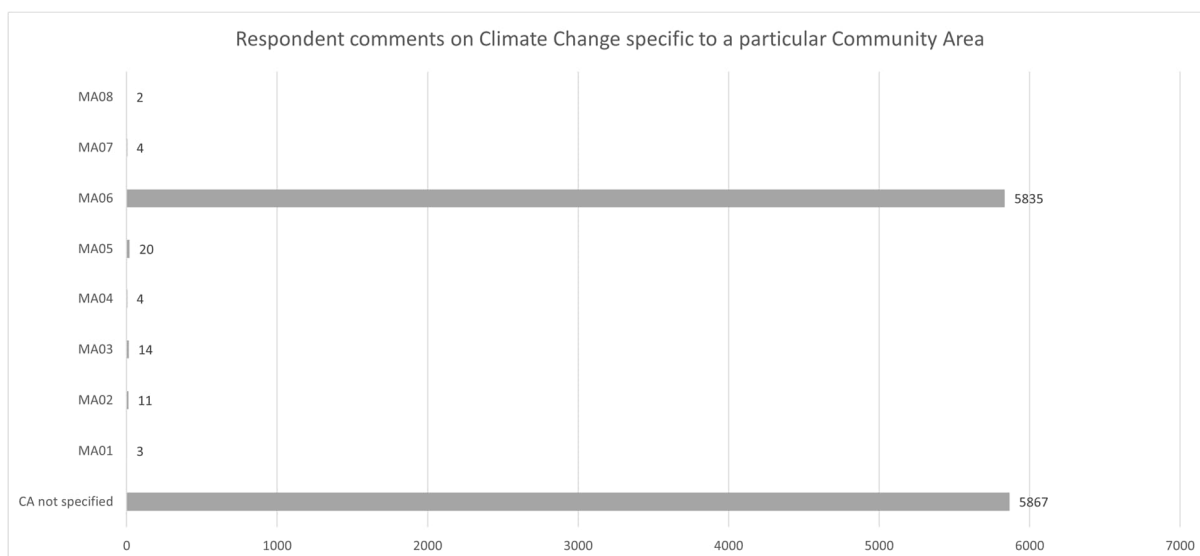
Several respondents express concern about the irreversible effect on watercourses and wetlands, and the negative impacts on the biodiversity of rivers and waterways.

Several respondents express the view that more mitigation measures are required to help protect wildlife likely to be affected with: otters, water voles, badgers, polecats, stoats, harvest mice, brown hare, barn owls, kestrels, buzzards, greenfinches, yellow hammers, roe deer, reptiles and invertebrates all being specifically identified. A few respondents raise specific concerns about the locations of sites where ecological mitigation is being proposed. They believe that some of these are too far from the areas likely to be affected by the proposed scheme and, that there is little evidence that they will provide adequate mitigation.

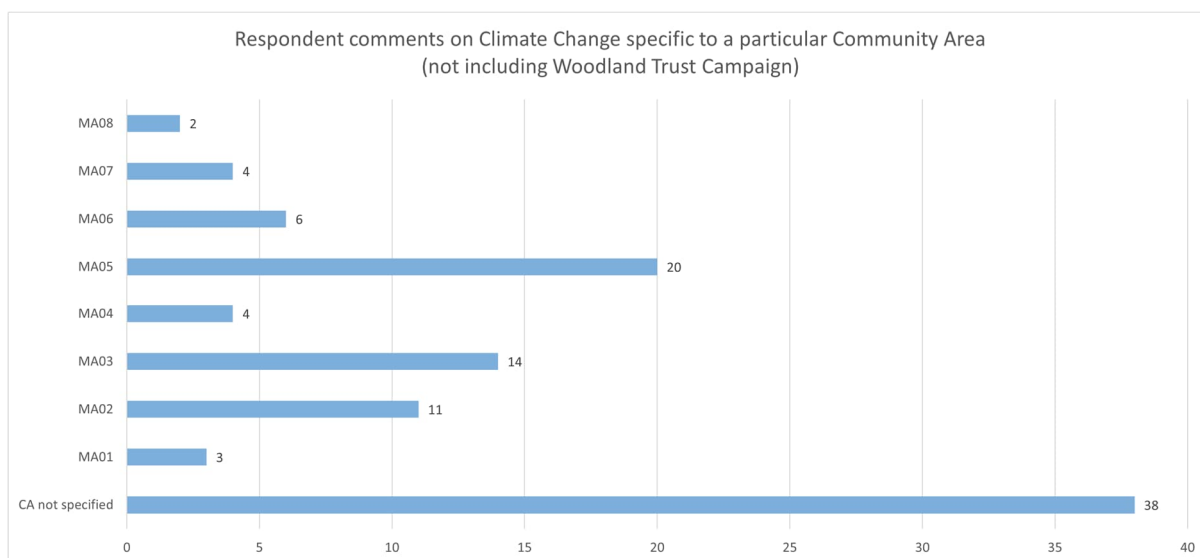
2.2.2 Climate Change

A total of 5,931 respondents raised climate change as a theme of concern. The majority of the climate change comments were as a result of the Woodland Trust campaign. The comments focus on the potential adverse impacts of the proposed scheme on climate change, specifically linked to the loss of ancient woodland and veteran trees; and how the proposed scheme will facilitate the growth in carbon intensive air travel via the link to Manchester Airport.

The graphs below show the distribution of the comments where they could be attributed to a specific CA, with Graph 7 showing the total responses overall, and Graph 8 the non-campaign responses (without the Woodland Trust).



Graph 7. Respondent comments on Climate Change specific to a particular Community Area (including Woodland Trust campaign responses)



Graph 8. Respondent comments on Climate Change specific to a particular Community Area (not including Woodland Trust campaign responses)

The majority of the comments in this category are related to respondents' concerns about potential adverse impacts of the proposed scheme on climate change. Several respondents state that the proposed scheme would produce significant carbon emissions, both during the construction and operational phases; and that as a society we should be seeking to achieving a net zero future.

“If the Government wishes to deliver a transport system that is compatible with addressing both the nature and climate emergencies, the current route for Phase 2B West must be urgently reassessed.”

Member of public

The majority of respondents whose comments have been categorised against this theme highlight how the proposed scheme will promote carbon-intensive air travel due to the link to Manchester Airport. A few respondents believe that travelling should be generally discouraged considering the climate emergency, and that the construction of the proposed scheme will promote greater car use as it will encourage people to drive to stations to use the new high-speed rail services. Some respondents believe that investing in local electric public transport would be not only more beneficial for the community but also for the climate.

“The case for a station at Manchester airport must also be reassessed, given that it would, under current plans, result in significant loss of ancient woodland and facilitate growth in carbon-intensive air travel for decades to come.”

Member of public

Several respondents believe that due to the climate and ecological emergency, what they regard as more sustainable transport measures need to be encouraged.

“We are currently in a climate crisis situation and yet HS2 plan to tear up acres of greenfield land and replace it with concrete, cut down trees, ancient woodland which, whatever anyone or any study says, cannot be replaced.”

Member of public

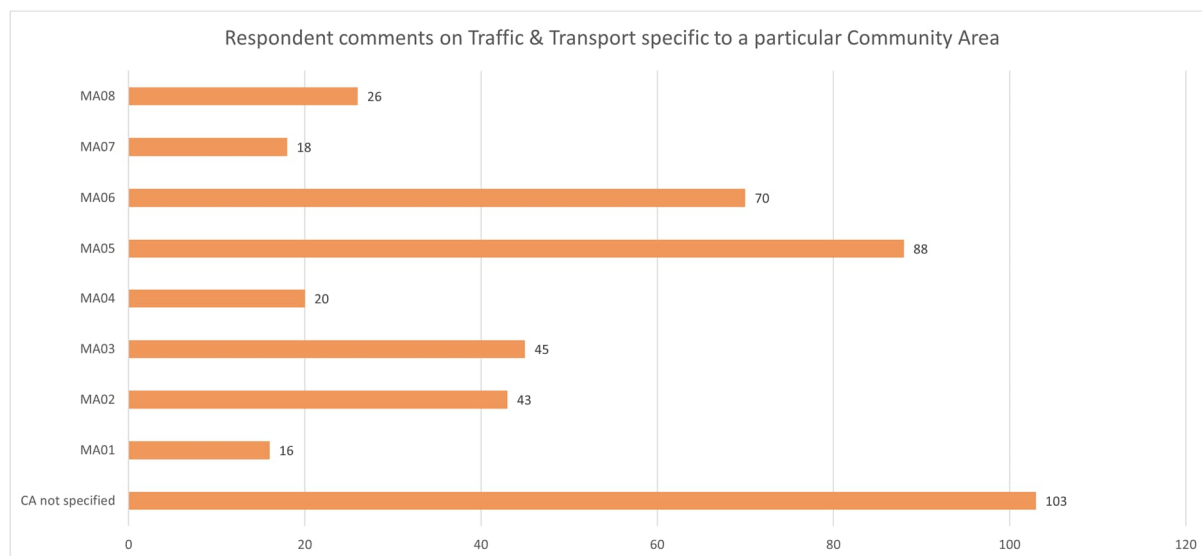
Some respondents also express concern around the level of the assessment and the proposed measures for mitigating the impact on climate change, such as for emissions reduction, achieving net zero and the use of green energy.

“we request additional detail on how the plan / construction / operation of this development lines up with nature recovery and climate change adaptation legislation and policy.”

Natural England (regarding Route-wide effects on Climate Change)

2.2.3 Traffic and Transport

A total of 429 respondents raised comments related to traffic and transport. Graph 9 below shows the distribution of these comments where they could be attributed to a specific CA.



Graph 9. Respondent comments on Traffic & Transport specific to a particular Community Area

The majority of comments categorised against this theme are related to the impacts of the traffic generated by the construction of the proposed scheme on specific roads. Particular concerns are raised about the number of HGVs that will be using roads regarded as unsuitable for such traffic, and the resultant risk to other road users.

“HS2 is intending to use our local roads for hundreds of HGVs on a daily basis to build the HS2 railway. Also, some of the roads will have to be upgraded as they are currently too narrow and winding.”

Member of public

“Construction routes need to be clearly defined, agreed with local stakeholders, and include forecast volumes of construction traffic that is expected on each route”

Manchester Airport (MAG)

Some comments query whether the transport assessment has properly considered the cumulative effects of large construction compounds with the existing traffic.

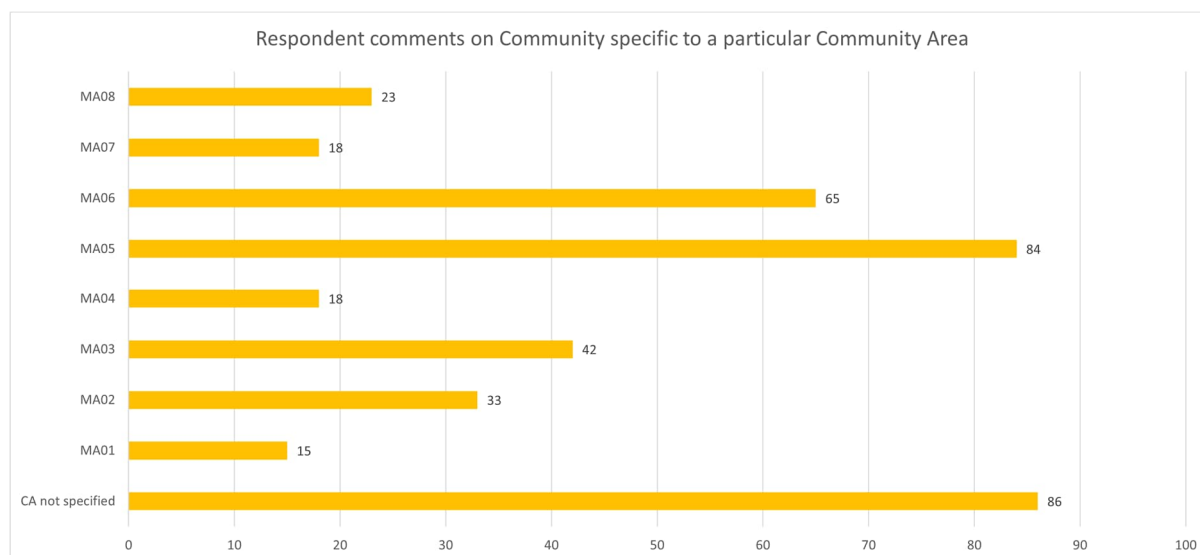
“traffic and transport impacts predicted are inaccurate leading to overly congested roads. The Department of Transport data indicates vehicular travel demand is higher at weekends than pre-covid, making models inaccurate”

National Trust

Several respondents express the view that the proposed scheme is ineffective as it will only lead to a negligible reduction in travel time to London and that expensive rail fares will make air travel a cheaper option. Several respondents would prefer to see the money for the project spent on investments in the local transport networks such as upgrading existing railways, local roads and improving the east-west connection of the country.

2.2.4 Community

A total of 384 respondents raised matters related to the community in their feedback to the consultation. Graph 10 below shows the distribution of these comments where they could be attributed to a specific CA.



Graph 10. Respondent comments on Community specific to a particular Community Area

The majority of matters raised that have been identified under this theme are linked to the concerns around the demolition of properties and facilities, disruption to local communities, and alternative use of funding that it is felt would provide greater benefits to local communities than the proposed new railway.

A considerable number of respondents express concern about the number of residential and commercial properties that will need to be demolished. A few also express concern about the disruption to waterways and mooring sites.

“Eighteen of these farm holdings will also be permanently significantly affected due to the proportion of land required, severance and/or demolition of farm buildings. Six holdings will have property demolitions.”

CPRE Lancashire, Liverpool City Region and Greater Manchester and CPRE Cheshire (regarding the proposed scheme in community area MA03)

A few respondents raise their opposition to the demolition of specific commercial properties such as a hotel at Manchester Airport and number of businesses between Pocket Nook and Stag Lane. A few respondents also highlighted the impact on the community of the demolition of listed or historical properties.

Several respondents express general concern about how the proposed scheme will affect local communities. Specific points raised include the impact of physical separation that some communities will experience as a result

of the construction of the proposed scheme, with Culcheth and Ashley both named as likely to be affected in this way. The impact on public footpaths (closures and diversions) and the effect this will have on the local community, loss of public open space and the opinion that the proposed scheme will not bring any benefits to many of those residents most directly affected were also raised.

Several respondents express the view that they would like to see the funding for the project spent in ways that they believe would benefit the local communities such as improving existing rail services, rural bus services, housing and other local infrastructure projects.

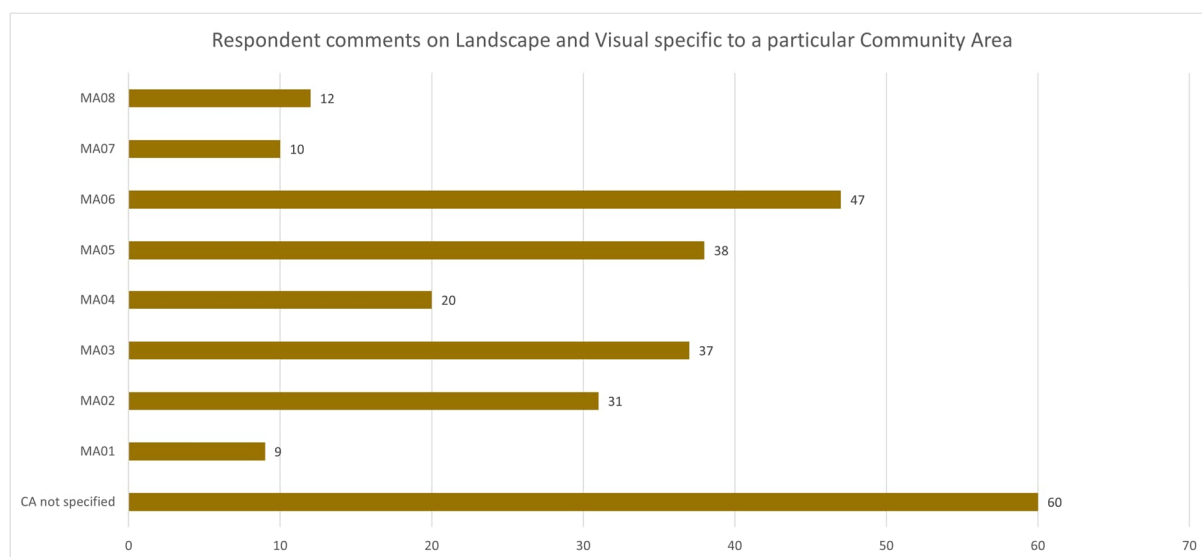
Several respondents express concern about the likely level of disruption and inconvenience caused by the construction phase and the impact this could have on people’s ability to access local services such as schools and hospitals.

“no mention of the ongoing and significant impact of construction for access to Leighton Hospital for anyone attempting to get to A&E along the A530 from the direction of Northwich, Middlewich and Winsford/Clive Green”

Member of public

2.2.5 Landscape and Visual

A total of 264 respondents raised matters related to the visual impact and effect on the landscape of the proposed scheme. Graph 11 below shows the distribution of these comments where they could be attributed to a specific CA.



Graph 11. Respondent comments on Landscape and Visual specific to a particular Community Area

The majority of the matters raised that have been identified under this theme are related to respondents concerns about significant effects on the character and appearance of the local landscape and viewpoints as a result of the proposed scheme. Most comments make reference to the effect of specific design features such as embankments, cuttings, viaducts, construction compounds, noise screens and proposed overhead lines to provide power to the railway.

Specific concerns are raised by some respondents about the visual impact of the proposed scheme as it crosses the Manchester Ship Canal due to the height of the line above the surrounding landscape.

“Design improvements to the viaduct to be non-generic and be designed to add visual interest to allow better integration into the otherwise open landscape”

Trafford Council

The appearance of the proposed scheme is generally considered unattractive by a considerable number of respondents who express the view that the railway will be damaging for the environment from a visual perspective.

“[the proposed scheme] will result in a significant loss of flora habitat, a CO₂ sink and ‘urbanise the view’ ”

School Lane Residents Group

“The necessary ‘improvements’ (i.e. widening) to our rural network of country lanes, most of which have a 7.5t weight limit, in order to accommodate HGVs and construction vehicles, will permanently blight our rural character by urbanising the character of the roads”

Pickmere Parish Council

Some respondents comment that the construction of embankments will obscure previously open views. Others express concern about the likely impact of additional light pollution on the local landscape linked to the proposed scheme caused by night-time working, additional construction traffic on local roads and the need for the creation of construction compounds.

Some respondents express the view that the measures proposed to reduce the adverse effects of the proposed scheme on the landscape are inadequate; such as the proposed planting to screening the railway from view, and offer site-specific advice; for example, suggesting that new electricity cables required to provide power to the proposed scheme should be buried to lessen the visual impact.

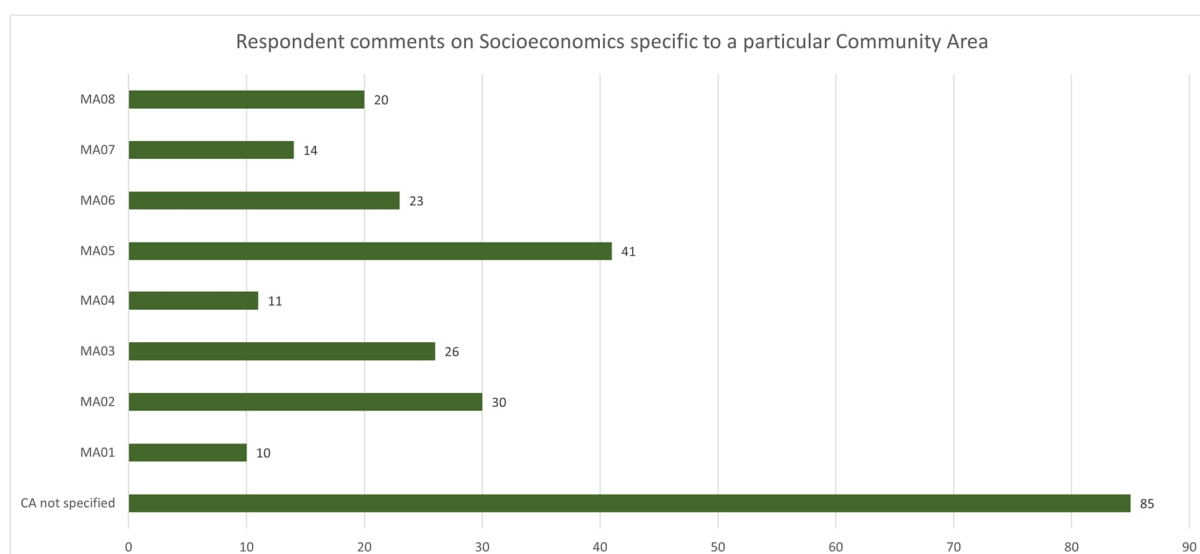
“it will take between 15 and 30 years for mitigation planting to fully establish and screen the route and until then the visual impact will be significant”

Member of public

A few respondents comment on the level of assessment of the likely landscape and visual impact and make specific reference to the images provided within the ES. A number of respondents express the view that the photographs and the locations they were taken from show poor understanding of the local area as they are not taken from representative locations, do not provide night-time images and do not reflect the true impact on localities.

2.2.6 Socioeconomics

A total of 260 respondents raised comments related to socioeconomic matters. Graph 12 below shows the distribution of these comments where they could be attributed to a specific CA.



Graph 12. Respondent comments on Socioeconomics specific to a particular Community Area

The majority of comments related to this theme are of the opinion that the proposed scheme is unnecessary, suggesting that there are limited economic benefits and that these do not justify the cost.

“The costs are significantly greater than the benefits of this project economically, socially and environmentally”

Member of public

Several respondents believe that public funds could be better spent elsewhere on projects linked to schools, hospitals or environmental conservation and that the HS2 project is taking away much needed funding from other projects. Several respondents believe that the funds dedicated to HS2 should be used to improve the current local transport network and that this would better aid the economic regeneration of their local area and increase employment opportunities for communities in the north-west.

Several respondents believe that the project needs rethinking in light of post-pandemic changes in travel patterns. Several respondents state that commuting has decreased as a result of the pandemic and has maintained a sustained low level. They state this is due to the change in business practices including the rise of online platforms that support remote working. Enhancing transport links to London is therefore no longer considered a priority for several respondents.

“The world has changed since HS2 was first initiated, in particular with the Covid-19 pandemic, with many travellers now working from home and workers relocating to countryside villages”

Member of public

Some respondents highlight, that although the cost of fares on the new high-speed railway are currently unknown, these are likely to be expensive and generally unaffordable for the working class. The benefit from the reduction of commuting time is also considered marginal by some respondents.

“a massive burden on the taxpayer for something that the majority of people will never be able to use”

Member of public

Some respondents believe that the proposed new railway will result in negative impacts on the local economy due to the loss of visitors because the area will become less appealing due to the impact of construction activities and the presence of the proposed scheme itself. Some respondents are concerned that the proposed scheme will devalue their properties and affect the economic viability of local business and farms.

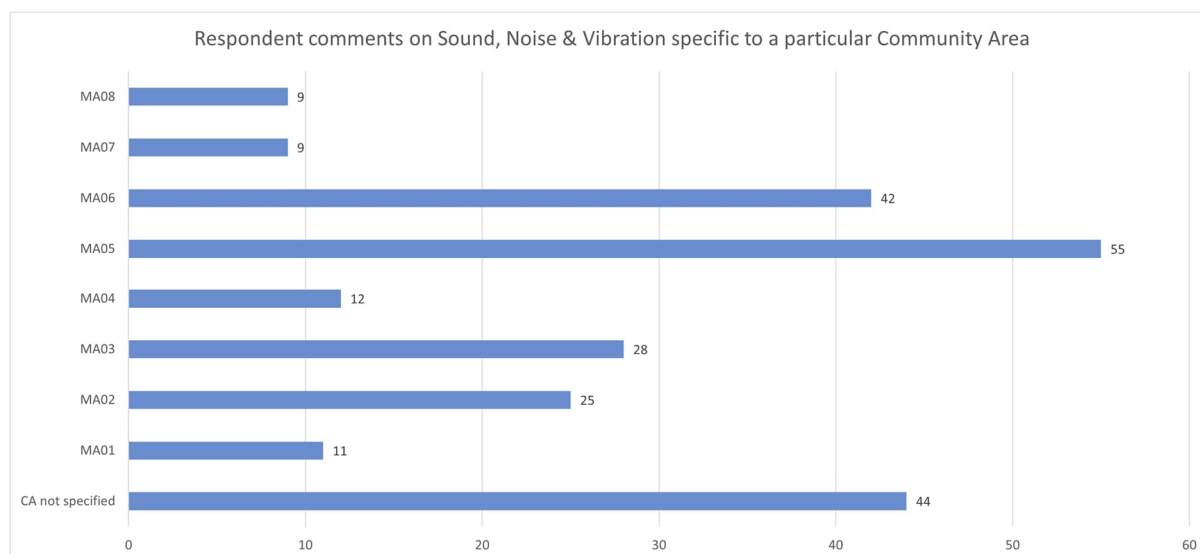
A few respondents discuss the loss of agricultural land and the socioeconomic implication of this on the rural economy in terms of food production, rural jobs, local communities and local supply chains.

“Many acres of good agricultural land will be destroyed by the construction of HS2. We need this land for food production”

Member of public

2.2.8 Sound, Noise and Vibration

A total of 235 respondents raised matters related to sound, noise and vibration as a theme of concern. Graph 13 below shows the distribution of these comments where they could be attributed to a specific CA.



Graph 13. Respondent comments on Sound, Noise & Vibration specific to a particular Community Area

The majority of matters raised that have been identified under this theme are related to respondents' concerns about impacts from noise and vibration generated during the construction of the proposed scheme. The concerns mainly relate to the movement of heavy goods vehicles transporting construction materials, the areas surrounding the construction compounds and the construction of tunnels such as on the approach to Manchester.

Several respondents describe their local area as peaceful villages or identify quiet woodlands that they fear will be impacted by the proposals. A few respondents express concern that noise pollution during construction may lead to mental health issues and disruption in the community, as many residents work from home or are retired. Several respondents are concerned that noise disruption will make outside areas unusable, and also harm local businesses. The impact of noise on pupils in school is a matter of concern for several respondents.

“The main depot on the A580 is very close to a primary school which is also close to the line of route. The children will be subject to unacceptable levels of noise and disruption”

Member of public

A few respondents are concerned about the adverse impact of noise disruption on the waterways especially around mooring areas during both the construction and the operational phases. A few respondents are worried about the affect of the noise disruption on livestock and wildlife, with cattle and horses specifically mentioned. Noise and vibration during night-time construction works is raised as a matter of concern by a few respondents.

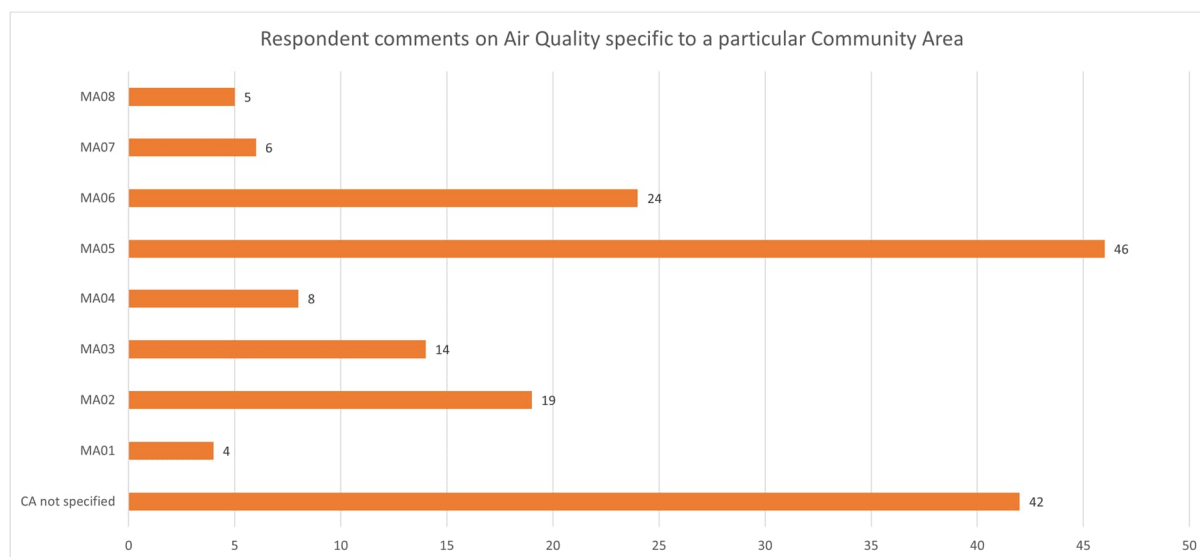
A few respondents express the view that the level of assessment in the ES of the likely impact and effects of noise and vibration from the proposed scheme is inadequate. A few respondents state that noise mitigation measures are either not appropriate, have not been proposed, or ask for more clarity or confirmation of the mitigation.

“would welcome confirmation that noise monitoring will regularly take place throughout the construction works”

National Trust

2.2.10 Air Quality

A total of 168 respondents raised matters related to air quality. Graph 14 below shows the distribution of all these comments where they could be attributed to a specific CA.



Graph 14. Respondent comments on Air Quality specific to a particular Community Area

The majority of comments categorised against this theme are related to concerns about the detrimental impact on air quality in the area caused by dust and emissions associated with the increased traffic, including heavy goods vehicles, during the construction period. For some respondents these concerns are exacerbated by the presence of vulnerable people in the study area, including young people in schools situated close to the proposed scheme. Residential areas in close proximity to construction compounds are specifically identified as areas likely to be affected by changes in local air quality as a result of the project. A few respondents also refer to a general increase in traffic, post-construction, in the vicinity of the proposed new stations and suggest this may also have a negative effect on local air quality.

A few respondents also highlight the risk from air pollution to sensitive sites, such as those with environmental designations (i.e. Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Special Areas of Conservation and Ramsar sites), located in close proximity to the proposed scheme. Concerns are also specifically raised about potential detrimental effects of air pollution on bee colonies.

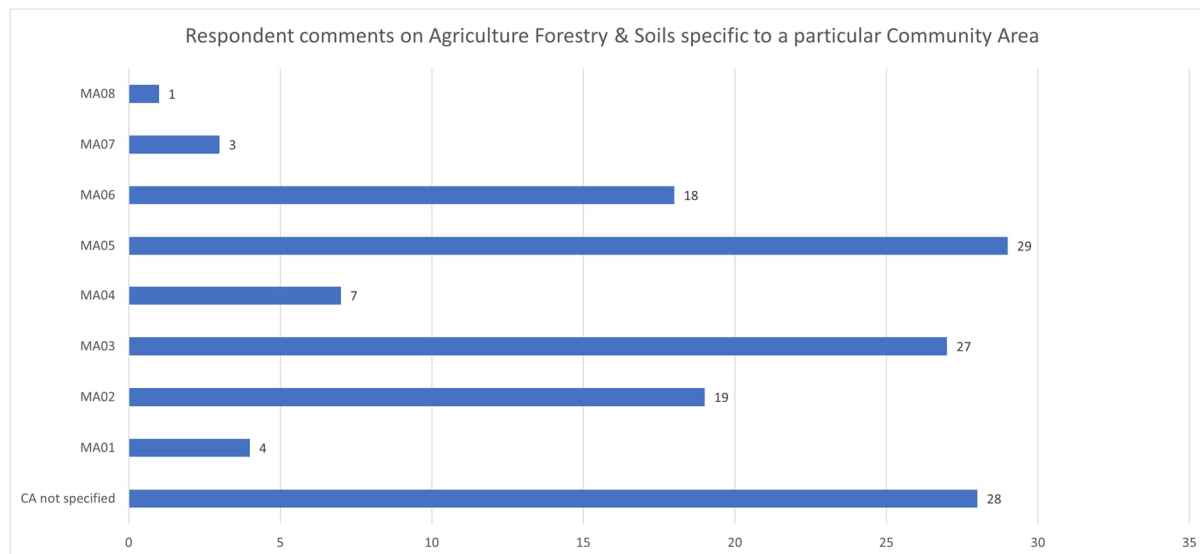
A few respondents are unconvinced by the methodology, the range of potential air pollutants considered in the environmental assessment, the number of monitoring stations, and request clarification of any proposed mitigation related to air pollution.

“the Air Quality monitoring does not appear to consider Clean Air Plan (CAP) which was approved by Manchester City Council and other 9 districts within Greater Manchester in July 2021”

Manchester City Council

2.2.12 Agriculture, Forestry & Soils

A total of 136 respondents made comments related to agriculture forestry and soils. Graph 15 below shows the distribution of these comments where they could be attributed to a specific CA.



Graph 15. Respondent comments on Agriculture Forestry & Soils specific to a particular Community Area

The majority of comments categorised against this theme are related to concerns about the potential impact of the proposed scheme on agricultural land and farm businesses with specific concerns expressed about the loss of hedgerows, grazing, equestrian and livery land areas.

“The loss of hedgerows in Phase 2B is high, with over 157 km being permanently lost.”

Bat Conservation Trust

A few respondents are concerned that alternative route alignments which, in their view, could reduce the impact on high value agricultural land have not been adequately explored.

Some respondents are specifically concerned by the loss of prime agricultural land by the proposed scheme and a few respondents are concerned that the assessment of the impact of the project on soils across the route is inadequate, with specific reference to the impact on peat soils, as it is felt that more detailed understanding is required to protect this important resource.

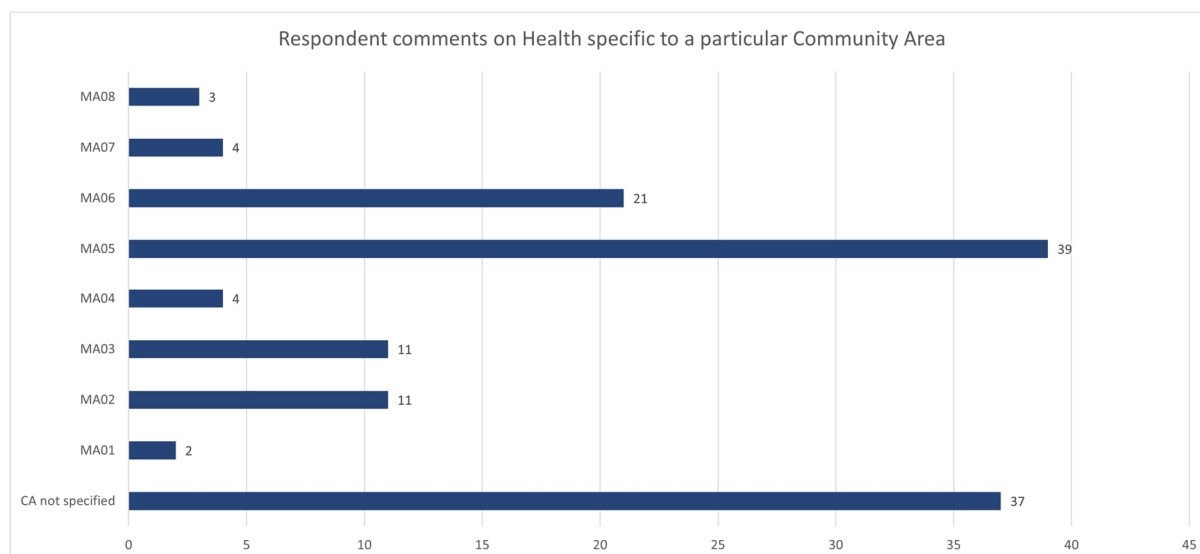
A few respondents also question the scale of land required for proposed ecological compensation as they believe this would cause a disproportionate loss of higher value agricultural land noting for example, that woodland planting should not be carried out on land that was originally high value agricultural land. A few respondents requested clarification on the extent of land which would not be returned to its original use, post-construction.

Some respondents specifically raise concerns about the impact of the proposed scheme on farming operations, which they believe will be significantly affected by the proposed scheme both during and after construction. Some respondents state that the proposed scheme will make it impossible for farms to function as viable businesses, given the significant impact of land-take and the impact on field sizes which may make them difficult to farm effectively. A few respondents also raise concern about the impact of the proposed scheme on access to farms and individual fields.

Note: Comments related to ancient woodlands and veteran trees which were referred to in all the Woodland Trust campaign responses and many non-campaign responses, have been considered under the Ecology and Biodiversity heading (see 2.2.1).

2.2.14 Health

A total of 132 respondents raised matters related to human health. Graph 16 below shows the distribution of these comments where they could be attributed to a specific CA.



Graph 16. Respondent comments on Health specific to a particular Community Area

The majority of comments categorised under this theme are related to concerns that the proposed scheme may cause an increase in levels of stress and anxiety and may have other detrimental impacts on the mental and physical health of people living in the vicinity of the proposed scheme. Specific concerns are raised in relation to the impact on the health of children, older people and people with disabilities.

Several respondents recognise the value of the natural environment, including public green space, woodland and watercourses, as helping to support general wellbeing and believe that any loss or deterioration of these assets due to the proposed scheme may have a detrimental effect on people's health.

“Nature, the great outdoors, woodlands, wild spaces... research shows the benefits these places have for everybody - physically, mentally, emotionally and even spiritually. Those benefits will far outweigh high speed rail travel for the few.”

Member of public

In addition, several respondents highlight the negative effects of air pollution on human health, including dust, which may trigger respiratory diseases such as asthma. Several respondents also believe that long-term exposure to excessive noise generated by the proposed scheme will cause distress and worsen people's quality of life.

Some respondents believe that human wellbeing will be at risk from increased stress caused by issues such as increased traffic on local roads and longer commuting time due to construction activities. Some respondents express concern about reduced road safety due to additional traffic and congestion on local roads, in particular surrounding schools.

A few respondents are concerned that construction of the proposed new railway will result in some people being left in isolated locations, losing community support, and that the closure of footpaths and roads may create areas susceptible to anti-social behaviour, making residents and users fearful for their safety.

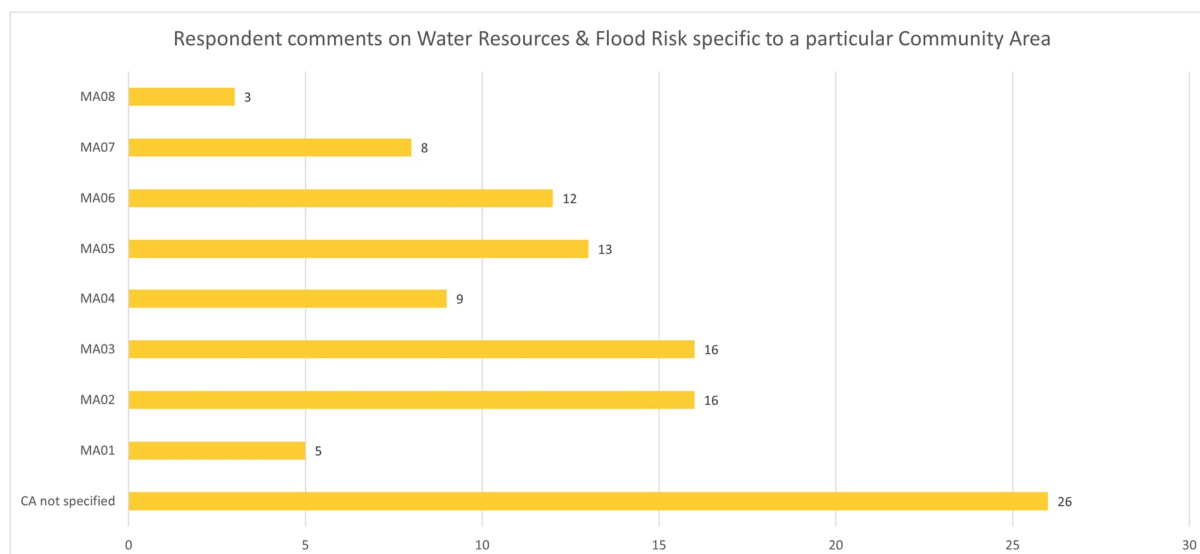
“The reports fail to assess the long term physical and mental health implications from the temporary and permanent closure of public rights of way and paths that are heavily used by local residents.”

Member of public

A few respondents are concerned that the level of assessment of the potential effects of the proposed scheme on health and wellbeing have been inadequate, and that the negative impacts may have been underestimated. A few respondents state that the proposed mitigations may not be sufficient and that better community engagement on matters related to wellbeing would have been beneficial for the assessment.

2.2.15 Water Resources and Flood risk

A total of 108 respondents raised matters related to water resources and flood risk. Graph 17 below shows the distribution of these comments where they could be attributed to a specific CA.



Graph 17. Respondent comments on Water Resources & Flood Risk specific to a particular Community Area

The majority of the comments categorised against this theme are related to concerns about the potential increased risk from flooding caused by the construction of the proposed scheme. Specific locations identified in responses include the River Dane, Adgen, Little Bollington, Heatley and Lymm and, Bollin, Northenden and Manchester Airport.

A few respondents are concerned about the loss of floodplains and impact on the current drainage system.

Some respondents express the view that the flood risk assessment undertaken to inform the ES was inadequate and that further research is needed. A specific concern raised is that the assessment does not properly consider extreme weather events and the impact of climate change and the resultant effect on flooding.

“The ground is completely unsuitable for a trainline and flooding in my area is becoming increasingly worse.”

Member of public (in relation to The Golborne Spur)

Some respondents express the view that the proposed measures to mitigate the potential effects of flooding are inappropriate, citing examples of the proposed balancing or attenuation ponds; the proposed drainage system; or express concern about the impact of dewatering activities at the proposed borrow pits. Some respondents also comment that they would like assurances that the current drainage systems will not be impacted by the proposed scheme; and the risk of flooding to residential property will not increase.

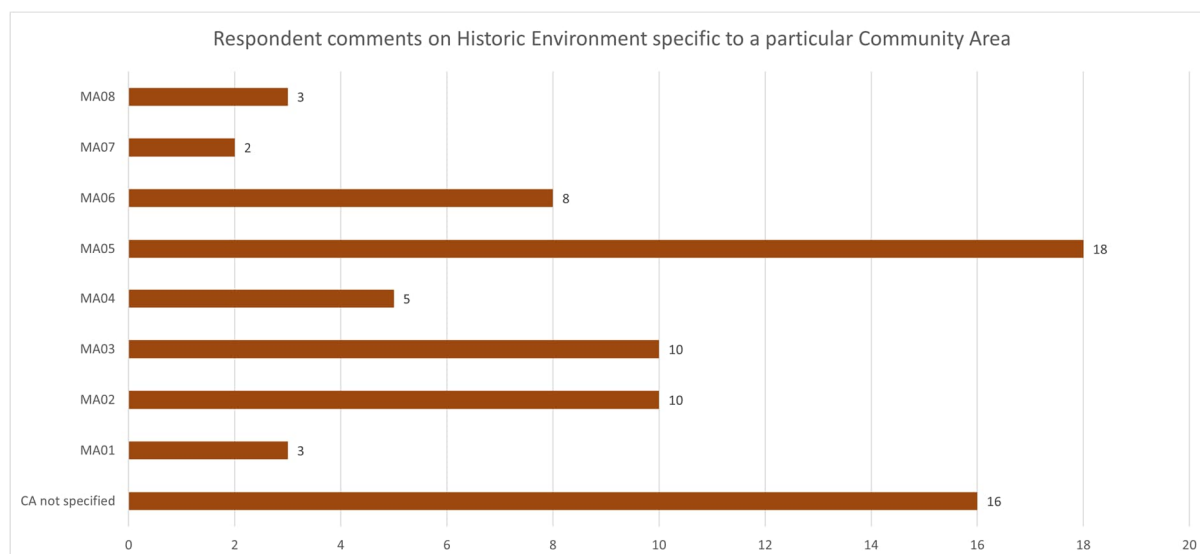
Some respondents express concern about the impact of the proposals on ponds, watercourses, ditches and springs including both the complete loss of these features and associated habitat, or restricted access to these assets. A few comments relate to the potential hydrological impacts on Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and woodlands in the vicinity of the proposed scheme. Some respondents also express concern about worsening of surface and groundwater quality, during construction.

“The water quality should not be adversely impacted by the works. Surface water discharges need to be more adequately assessed and consent must be sought from The Trust before discharging into the canals to avoid negative effects.” and “Waterways provide an important environmental, landscape and heritage resource, this is put at risk by proposed developments”

The Canal and River Trust

2.2.16 Historic Environment

A total of 75 respondents raised comments related to the historic environment. Graph 18 below shows the distribution of these comments where they could be attributed to a specific CA.



Graph 18. Respondent comments on Historic Environment specific to a particular Community Area

The majority of comments categorised against this theme are related to concerns about potentially significant detrimental effects on designated and non-designated heritage assets and conservation areas. In particular, several respondents are concerned that the loss of historical buildings may significantly damage the character of their local area. Specific historic assets identified by respondents include Mersey Conservation Area; heritage assets throughout the Holford Estate; Whatcroft Hall and related cottages; the historic brick wall enclosing Tatton Park; Grade II listed Milestone adjacent to Withington Fire Station; a Grade II listed hotel; RAF Cranage scheduled monument; and Grade II listed Piccadilly Station.

“the extent of removal of significant historic fabric to Grade II Piccadilly Station is unclear, and options for maximum retention are not clearly investigated”

Manchester City Council

“the loss of many historical buildings which ... will significantly damage the character of the area”

Member of public

A few respondents believe that the assessment of the historic environment undertaken to support the ES lacks clarity or does not include all the potential receptors.

“HS2 did not agree baseline of affected designated and non-designated heritage assets with local relevant stakeholder” and “a number of heritage assets have been missed from the assessment”

Manchester City Council

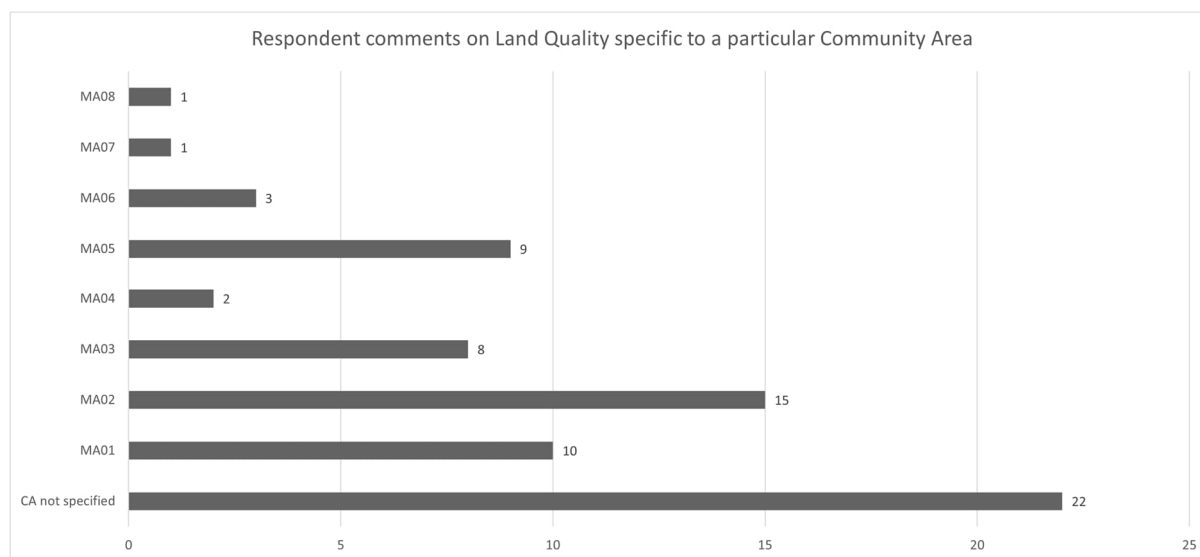
A few respondents indicate that the village hall and Grade II listed buildings within the village of Pickmere and Agden Hall were not identified or included in the assessment.

Suggestions are also made by respondents about additional features that should be considered as heritage assets such as the historic network of waterways and the known remains of a Bronze Age landscape in the archaeological assessment.

Note: Comments related to ancient woodlands and veteran trees which were referred to in all the Woodland Trust campaign responses and many non-campaign responses, have been considered under the Ecology and Biodiversity heading (see Section 2.2.1).

2.2.17 Land Quality

A total of 71 respondents raised matters related to land quality. Graph 19 below shows the distribution of these comments where they could be attributed to a specific CA.



Graph 19. Respondent comments on Land Quality specific to a particular Community Area

The majority of comments categorised against this theme are related to matters such as land stability and subsidence, associated with areas linked to salt or brine workings. A few respondents consider that the level of geotechnical surveys has not been adequate for the ES.

“The planned route for HS2 north of Crewe passes through 22.5 km of geologically unstable land known as the Cheshire Brinefields. It is an area prone to subsidence, with a history of salt mining and brine extraction dating back to Roman times.”

Member of public

“The nature of the Dane valley and its flood plain is of a soil structure, that it is difficult to build on, mainly due to subsidence, land slippage / movement”

Member of public

A few respondents express concern about contamination deriving from disturbance of burial grounds located within the proposed scheme. A few respondents are also concerned that soils restored following construction will be of poor quality.

A few respondents believe that additional land quality studies are needed to support the ES in certain areas, including where the proposed scheme requires land that was formally used as Ministry of Defence barracks, landfill sites and areas of former mine workings. A few respondents also believe that more detailed understanding is required regarding impact on sensitive sites from the disturbance of contaminated land, including SSSI and Special Areas of Conservation (SAC).

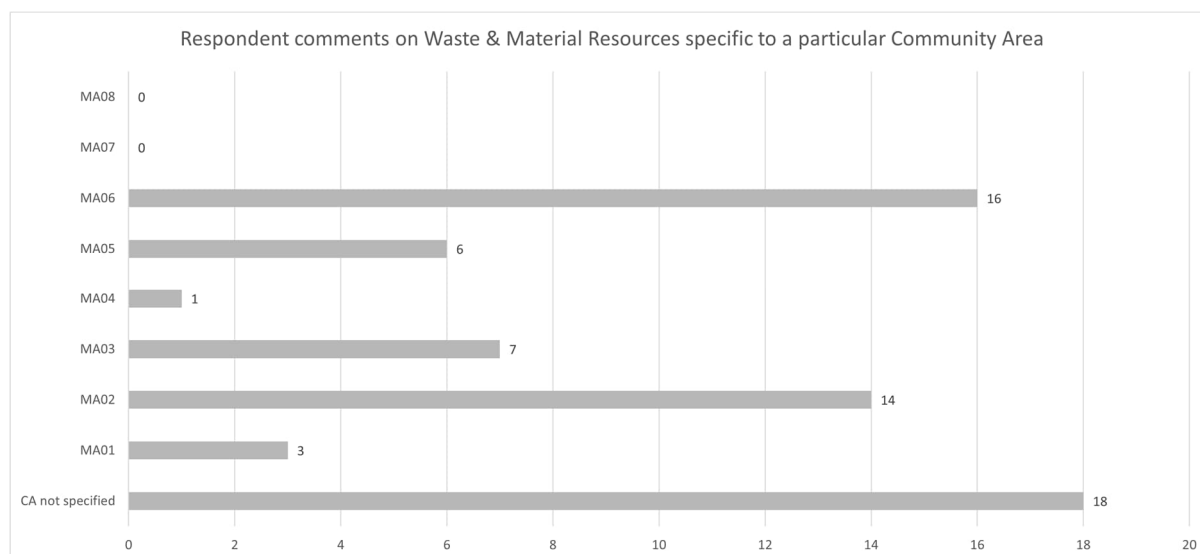
“Rostherne Mere SSSI is also notified for a Karst geological feature and this should be stated here. No reference to this geological feature is made in the geology section of the land quality chapter of this report.”

Natural England

A few respondents request that the proposed scheme utilises brownfield land rather than greenfield sites or agricultural land.

2.2.18 Waste and material resources

A total of 65 respondents raised comments related to waste and material resources. Graph 20 below shows the distribution of these comments where they could be attributed to a specific CA.



Graph 20. Respondent comments on Waste & Material Resources specific to a particular Community Area

Comments categorised against this theme relate to a range of matters predominantly linked to waste generated by the construction of the proposed scheme. Some respondents raise concerns about the volume of waste likely to be generated by the works and the loss of capacity of inert waste landfills in the north-west of England.

A few respondents request that waste management proposals be prepared against each local authority since waste capacity information is set on a regional basis.

“the Environmental Statement should also demonstrate greater consideration of waste management and inclusion of circular economy principles to minimise the significant environmental impact of waste generated by the project”

Chester Zoo

A few respondents express concern about the significant impact of the proposed scheme on the local salt mines and the prevention of future mineral extraction.

“loss of 4 out of 7 caverns and the potential sterilisation of this nationally significant salt resource ... Cheshire supplies 85% of UK salt and that the Warrington brinefield provides a significant majority of the salt used in industry and food processing.”

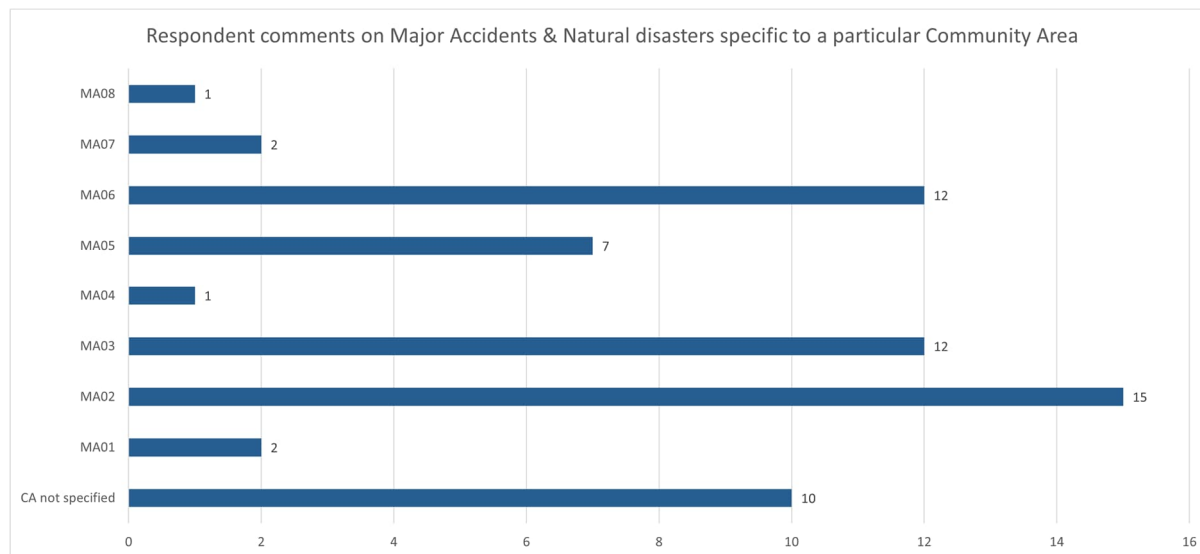
Cheshire East Council

Concerns are also raised about how material required for construction of features such as embankments will be managed on-site. Respondents suggest there is a lack of information on this matter which leads to concern as to whether it will be suitable, and on how the surplus will be disposed of, or reused in other areas.

The storage of waste and material near residential areas and on agricultural land is raised as a concern by a few respondents as they suggested this will put the land out of use for a number of years.

2.2.20 Major Accidents and Natural Disasters

A total of 62 respondents raised comments related to major accidents and natural disasters. Graph 21 below shows the distribution of these comments where they could be attributed to a specific CA.



Graph 21. Respondent comments on Major Accidents & Natural disasters specific to a particular Community Area

The majority of the comments categorised under this theme are related to the risk of ground collapse due to the presence of salt mines and brine fields along a section of the proposed route which are susceptible to subsidence. Some respondents believe that the level of the assessment of these risks has been inadequate.

“My main concern though is the effect on the brine caverns beneath parts of Cheshire”

Member of public

“the potential of the collapsing of the salt mine due to the pilling for the viaduct support structure”

Member of public

A few respondents also express concern about the risk from construction activities on high voltage cables, gas pipelines and gas storage facilities.

Several respondents express concern about the increased potential for road traffic accidents from additional vehicles on public roads due to project construction traffic. A few respondents believe that the proposed road diversions are not safe due, for example, to poor visibility. Several respondents are generally concerned for the overall safety of residents, drivers, recreational users, cyclists, horse riders and children in the local schools due to an increased risk of road traffic accidents.

“Ashley’s rural roads do not conform to HS2’s own minimum road standards with bridges to have exceeded weight limits with Heavy Goods Vehicles use”

Member of public

Some respondents are concerned by flood risk and the resultant contamination which may be exacerbated during construction.

A few respondents raise concern over the ES assessment and related mitigation regarding the risk of a high-speed train derailment from a very high embankment, and the potential for suicides on the new rail infrastructure.

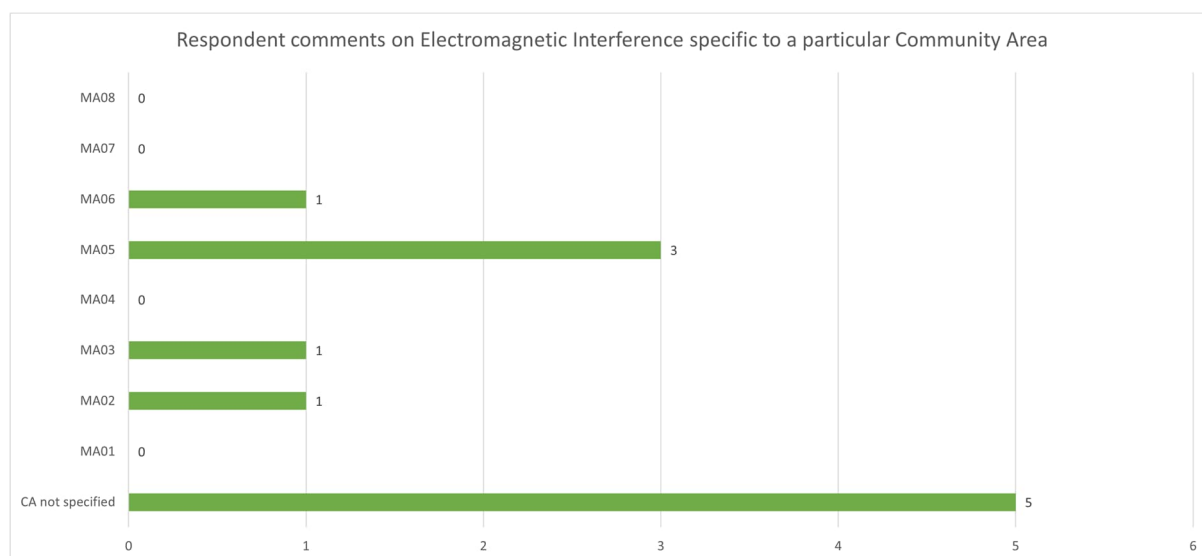
A few respondents express concern for the adjacent airport and hazards to aviation over birds being attracted to open surface water.

“The safe operation of aircraft operating to, from, and in the vicinity of Manchester Airport is a matter that cannot be compromised. There is a need for close engagement and agreements with MAG in relation to aerodrome safeguarding at Manchester Airport. (3) Emergency service access routes in and out of Manchester Airport needs to be agreed. (4) Appropriate engagement is required with the Manchester Airport fuel farm consortium and pipeline owner to ensure these assets are protected from construction and operation of HS2”

Manchester Airports Group

2.2.21 Electromagnetic Interference

A total of 11 respondents raised comments related to electromagnetic interference. Graph 22 below shows the distribution of these comments where they could be attributed to a specific CA.



Graph 22. Respondent comments on Electromagnetic Interference specific to a particular Community Area

A few comments categorised against this theme relate to the requirement for appropriate monitoring and mitigation of any electromagnetic interference caused of the operations of the proposed scheme with specific receptors such as Manchester Airport air traffic and communication systems, INOVYN (a chemical company) and Merlin National Facility radio telescope at Pickmere. Some respondents comment that they felt the assessment of electromagnetic interference in the ES is inadequate. One respondent also expressed the view that bats may be affected by electromagnetic signals caused by the project.

2.3 Themes not covered in the Environmental Statement

This section of the report provides a summary of the matters raised in responses that are not directly related to the environmental topics covered in the ES. These comments have been categorised against a series scheme-wide themes and as such comments have not been linked to specific geographical areas. The results are presented in rank order with the themes receiving most comments first.

2.3.1 Design

A total of 5,968 respondents made comments related to the design of the proposed scheme. The majority of these comments were as a result of the Woodland Trust campaign which requests that alternative routes are investigated to reduce the impact on ancient woodland and veteran trees. Respondents cite lessons learned from Phase 1 of HS2 where ancient woodlands were stated as being lost due to a lack of assessment of suitable alternatives.

“re-routing part of the Hulseheath to Manchester airport section to the north of the M56 may significantly reduce the number of ancient woodlands impacted.”

Member of public

The majority of the respondents whose comments have been categorised against this theme express the view that the design of the proposed scheme needs to be improved. Several respondents criticise the design in some areas or provide specific suggestions along the whole route. For example, the design of the line near the village of Ashley is not supported as it is felt the embankment will increase the impact of the railway on the local community. Some respondents believe that the Golborne Spur is unnecessary and suggest the West Coast Mainline could be ungraded and utilised as an alternative. A few respondents do not agree with the need for the Crewe North Rolling Stock Depot, suggesting Aldersley’s Rough in Staffordshire as an alternative.

Some respondents express concern over the design of the stations, such as disagreeing with the design of Piccadilly Station, preferring an underground option to overground. A few respondents express concern over the location of the Manchester Airport High Speed station and consider it to be too far from the airport terminals.

Some respondents express a general preference for the line being in a cutting instead of an embankment to reduce the visual impact of the proposed scheme.

“putting the train in a cutting instead of going overground on an embankment.”

Member of public (referring to Ashley village in Cheshire)

2.3.2 Environment (general)

A total of 5,931 respondents made a series of general points related to the environment, but not specific to any of the environmental topics covered in the ES. The majority of these comments were as a direct result of the Woodland Trust campaign and are linked to the general impact of the proposed scheme on the environment.

“the price our environment will pay is unacceptable”

Member of public

Some comments state that the project should not go through green belt and that new planting does not compensate for the loss of existing habitats. A few respondents comment on the claims the scheme will be powered by 100% renewable energy, suggesting that this is ‘greenwash’.

A few respondents criticise the assessments undertaken to inform the development of the ES for underestimating the environmental damage caused by the construction of the railway.

A few respondents comment that construction will devastate the small amount of green space left in Culcheth and that the local environment around the proposed spur to link to the West Coast Main Line will be heavily impacted and will be unable to recover.

A few respondents ask for the project to be reassessed, in consideration of the current state of the environment and climate change. They raise the view that the government has made numerous statements and pledges to

reduce our carbon footprint and protect the environment for future generations, and that the proposed scheme seems to completely go against these commitments.

2.3.3 Expense

A total of 159 respondents made comments related to the cost of the project.

A considerable number of respondents express their disappointment at the overall cost of a project and state the view that it will bring “*negligible benefits*”. Suggestions for better use of the money include alternative public services, electrifying the existing rail network to reduce its carbon footprint, funding research into alternative energy and waste recycling, supporting the construction of more affordable housing, subsidising non-fossil fuel based road travel, stabilising the economy, providing more support to the health care sector, and increasing the minimum wage.

A few respondents question how inappropriate it is to spend this money in the current financial situation.

“no more public or private money should be spent on this damaging and wasteful scheme”

Member of public

“The astronomically rising costs of constructing HS2 must be reassessed. The country cannot afford it. Tweaking a few minutes off railway travel time for what, after all, is just a very small percentage of people is nonsensical. There are so many other vitally needed services the country needs which the MAJORITY of people will benefit from, the NHS, our social services, better resources for schools, are prime examples.”

Member of public

2.3.4 Public Consultation

A total of 73 respondents made comments related to the consultation on the ES. The majority of comments related to the content of the ES documentation made available during the consultation and level of engagement linked to the public consultation.

Some respondents feel that plans contained within the ES are not sufficiently detailed, the scale of maps is too small, use of photographs would have been better to illustrate specific points, or that information provided is too long and complicated for the average person to understand and respond to.

A few respondents comment on what they believe is incorrect or incomplete documentation from outdated research and plans included in the ES; or express the view that not all the areas affected by the proposals had been included.

A few individuals express the view that previous comments or feedback has not been taken into account. Others feel that the use of the adjective ‘temporary’ for construction compounds that will be required for 15 years is inappropriate.

Cheshire West and Chester Council, Trafford Council, Manchester City Council, Greater Manchester Council and MAG all express disappointment at the level of engagement and what they believe to be a lack of responses from HS2 Ltd to their questions and comments. While several respondents comment on a perceived lack of engagement with some local communities, groups and local authorities, such as Mersey Forest and Lowton and Golborne Traffic Advisory Committee (LaGTAC).

2.3.5 Not specified

A total of 64 respondents raise a series of general comments about the project or proposed scheme which could not be categorised against a specific theme.

The majority of these are where respondents express general opposition to the project or proposed scheme.

Several respondents state that the proposed scheme will only benefit a small minority of the population and some think that the project is outdated and inefficient. They doubt that the benefits will override the economic and environmental consequences.

“After 2 years of the pandemic it’s proven we don’t need to travel to undertake business, the need for this commuter train has surpassed.”

Member of public

2.3.6 Government

A total of 47 respondents raise matters that have been categorised under the theme of government. The comments generally relate to the Government’s perceived failure to protect the environment.

Several respondents directly criticise the Government for what is viewed as an *“unjustified”* project and request that the project be stopped altogether.

“As a signatory to last year’s COP26 Agreement, the Government should not be seen to be ignoring the protection it is supposed to be affording our pitiful remaining areas of ancient woodland by trashing them in favour of a railway.”

Member of public

A few respondents state that, in their view, HS2 have presented inaccurate cost estimates and timescales for the project to the Government.

2.3.7 Report

A total of 41 respondents made comments related to the ES Report itself. The majority of comments categorised against this theme are related to respondent concerns that the report is not exhaustive and is unclear to a non-technical reader.

Some respondents express the view that there is a need for a more comprehensive study of the various combination of options, costs, benefits, and timescale.

A few respondents state that the vast number of documents make it difficult to navigate through the report.

“extremely difficult to navigate the documentation and found information to be buried or inaccessible, and in some cases justification completely absent”

North West Waste Network

A few respondents express disappointment about the Non-Technical Summary (NTS), suggesting that it is not exhaustive and does not reflect the detail within the supplementary documentation.

A few respondents suggest that both the NTS and the ES include mistakes and inaccurate information, including (but not limited to) incorrect house names, road names, housing stock missing, and inaccurate maps, which is stated as reducing confidence in the documents. An example given is that the map for CA MA05 does not identify a community woodland / open space that will be affected.

A few respondents express concern at the level of the assessment, omissions, and lack of justifications in the documents. A few respondents indicate that specific sites (which are potential receptors) are not mentioned in the ES or related maps, or are not properly assessed.

“the omission of the Manchester Airport High Speed Station from the ES operational phase assessment”

Trafford Council

“no justification given for the construction, operation and removal of the Ashley Railhead over a period of 10½ years”

Ashley Parish Council

A few respondents express concern regarding the appropriateness of the Code of Construction Practice (CoCP) document.

“The Code of Construction Practice as presently drafted is too reactive and focussed on resolution of impacts and effects after they have arisen, rather than avoiding impacts in the first place.”

Manchester Airports Group

2.3.8 Property Value

A total of 40 respondents raise comments related to property values. The majority of comments categories against this theme are connected to respondents concerns about reduction in the value of property as a consequence of proximity to the proposed scheme; with specific reference to its impact on the local environment, loss of local amenities and noise pollution.

A few comments are related to the reduction in of the value of heritage / historical sites such as Holford Hall, St. Elizabeth’s Church, the Ashley Cricket Club, and the Greyhound pub in Ashley.

2.3.9 Questions from Respondents

A total of 36 respondents raise questions in their response. These covered a range of matters related to the scheme as a whole, specific design features, the information contained in the ES and the assessments undertaken

2.3.10 Compensation

A total of 34 respondents raise comments related to compensation.

Several respondents comment on what they feel is insufficient compensation as compared to the disruption caused to residents and local businesses as a result of the proposed scheme. It is also requested that woodland habitat lost should be compensated in line with Trafford Council’s Core Strategy Policy R2.

A few respondents express disappointment at what they feel is the “*inadequate*” compensation available to tenants of rental properties or that no compensation is available to the owners of boats with moorings affected by the proposed scheme.

Respondents are also critical of the way that the distance between the proposed scheme and people’s property is measured.

“the distance is measured from the centre of the track, not the edge of the proposed scheme which would reduce the distance to properties”

Member of public

A few respondents express concern that they will lose compensation due to Phase 1 of the HS2 project running over budget, and that they were promised compensation from the proposed Northern Powerhouse Rail project that is at a much earlier stage of development so is unlikely to progress in the near future.

2.3.11 Sustainability

A total of 28 respondents raise comments related to sustainability.

A few respondents raise concerns regarding the volume of CO₂ emissions during construction, the materials needed for the construction and the length of time that will be required for the project before it can be considered carbon-neutral. The request to invest in renewable energy and storage and the question of why we are felling woodland which will soak up carbon, when we are meant to be cutting carbon emissions is raised by a few respondents.

“By HS2 Ltd own admission, HS2 will not be carbon neutral for at least 100 years, probably 120 years, how can that be reconciled with our ‘green credentials’ ”

Member of public

A few respondents comment that to make the project sustainable there is a need to electrify the trains on the branch lines that link into HS2, as they are currently operating diesel services.

The time lag between planning and the proposed completion of the construction is considered to be large enough that the scheme will be redundant by the time it will be ready to operate. A few respondents question the need to expand airports and how high-speed trains can help reduce emissions.

“A 50% increase in speed over a conventional locomotive would require roughly 125% more power. That has not been factored into the sustainability case.”

Member of public

2.3.12 In Favour

A total of 20 respondents, including both individuals and organisations state they were in favour of the proposed scheme.

A few individuals recognise the long term economic and wider social benefits of the project, the improvements in travel time and connectivity, the reduced necessity for air travel with the extension of the high-speed railway beyond Crewe to Scotland, the benefits of HS2 in enabling greater use of the existing rail network for freight transport, and the creation of a Crewe transport hub, providing a major economic boost for Crewe and its surrounding area are all specifically identified.

“MAG is supportive of major investment in the national rail network that contribute to the enhancement of the economic performance of the North, and that help to close the economic and productivity gap with London and the South East.”

Manchester Airport Group

A few Councils express their support for the proposed scheme, including Trafford Council, Wigan Council, Cumbria County Council, Manchester City Council and Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council.

“The proposed development and NPR are key to the future success of Greater Manchester and the North, and an essential part of the levelling up agenda”

Trafford Council

“HS2 will bring significant benefit to Cumbria, utilising the West Coast Mainline and play a key role in terms of national and regional connectivity”

Cumbria County Council

‘welcomes and fully supports the proposed HS2 Phase 2b, and the Government’s decision to incorporate provision for Northern Powerhouse Rail within the designs of HS2 hybrid Bill’

Manchester City Council

2.3.13 Tunnels

A total of 10 respondents raise matters related to tunnels.

Some respondents specifically request that the section of the line from Ashley to the proposed Manchester airport station be put in a tunnel rather than on the surface to reduce the impacts and effects on the local environment.

“I am dismayed by the destruction of Whitmore Wood and its neighbours, when a tunnel would prevent this.”

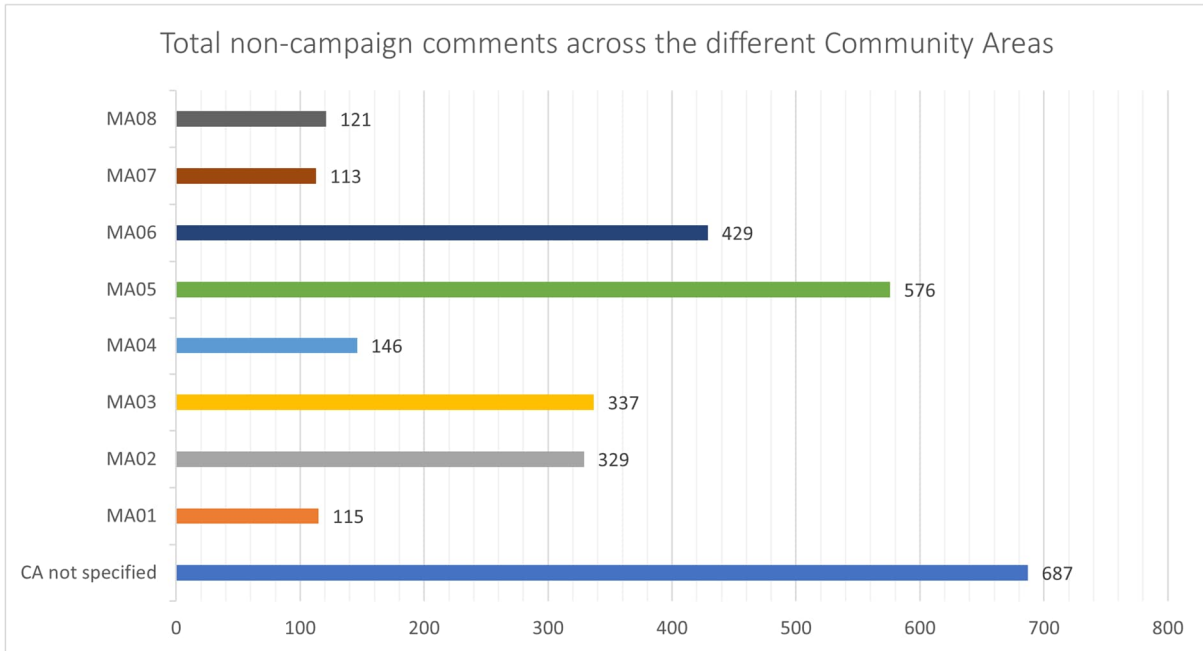
Member of public

United Utilities comment that the settlement contour plans have not been provided along the line of the tunnels.

2.4 Summary of matters raised by Community Area

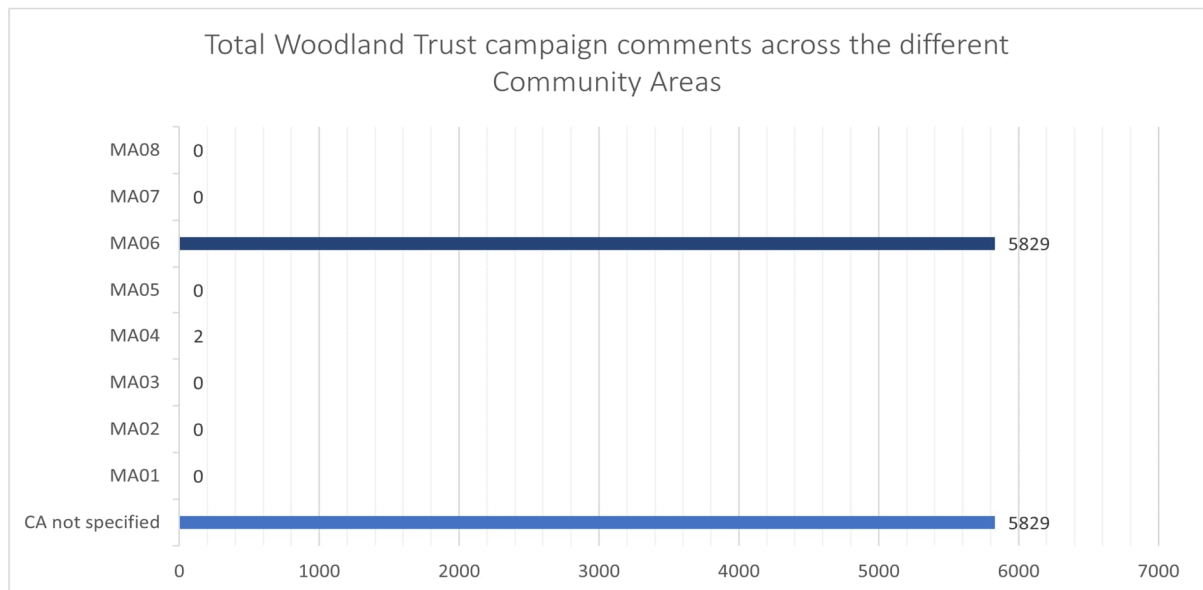
This section of the report provides a summary of the matters raised related to the environmental topics in the ES for each of the Community Areas (CAs) defined in the ES. Not all responses referred to specific geographical areas but, where possible during the analysis process, individual comments and matters raised were linked to a CA via specific settlements or geographic features referenced in the response.

Graph 23 below illustrates the distribution of non-campaign comments across the eight CAs and shows the comments that were not linked to any specific location. The total number of comments is greater than the number of responses because a number of respondents commented on multiple themes linked to the ES topic areas.



Graph 23. Total non-campaign comments across the different Community Areas

Graph 24 below illustrates the distribution of comments from the Woodland Trust campaign responses that could be linked to the eight CAs and shows the comments that were not linked to any specific location.



Graph 24. Total comments from the Woodland Trust campaign responses by Community Areas

Comments related to route-wide matters or that could not be linked to a specific geographical area have not been captured in the Community Area summaries presented in this section of the report. The matters raised in these responses are include in the theme-based summaries in Sections 2.2 and 2.3 above.

Each CA section includes a statistical summary of the matters raised against each of the identified environmental topics in the ES and an overview of the main points raised by respondents relevant to each specific geographical area. Quotes have again been used to illustrate a selection of the matters raised but not additional weight is attributed to these views.

2.4.1 MA01 - Hough to Walley's Green

There are 115 respondent comments linked to the environmental topics covered in the ES which can be related to MA01.

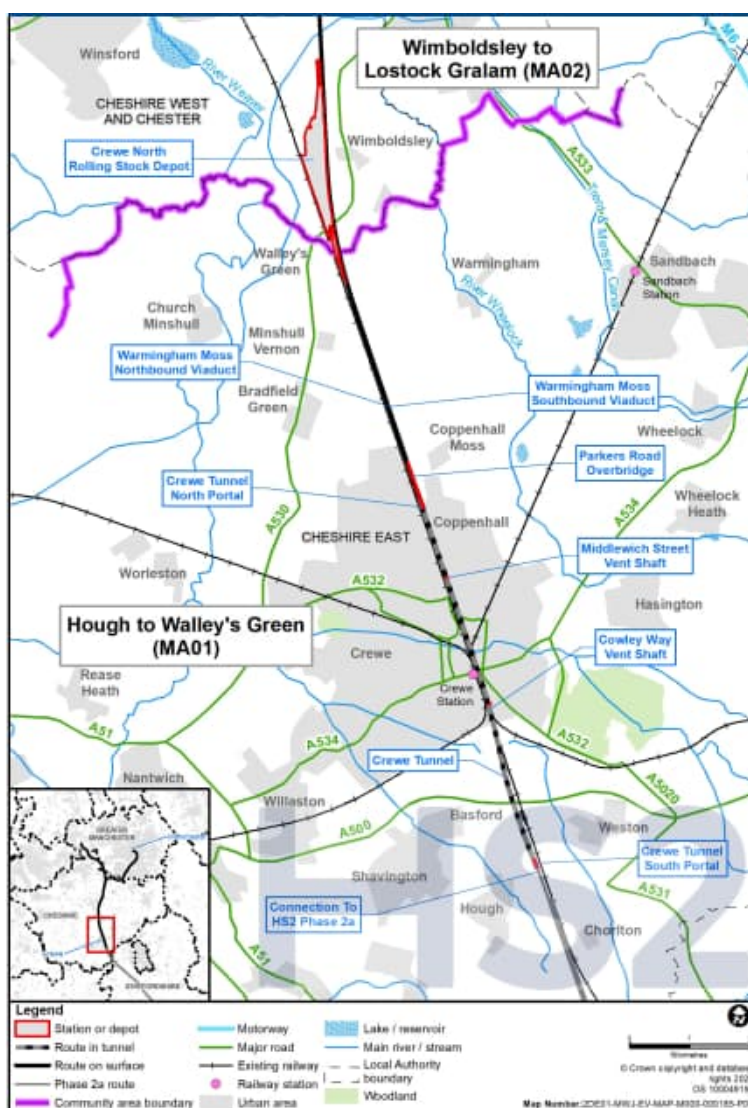


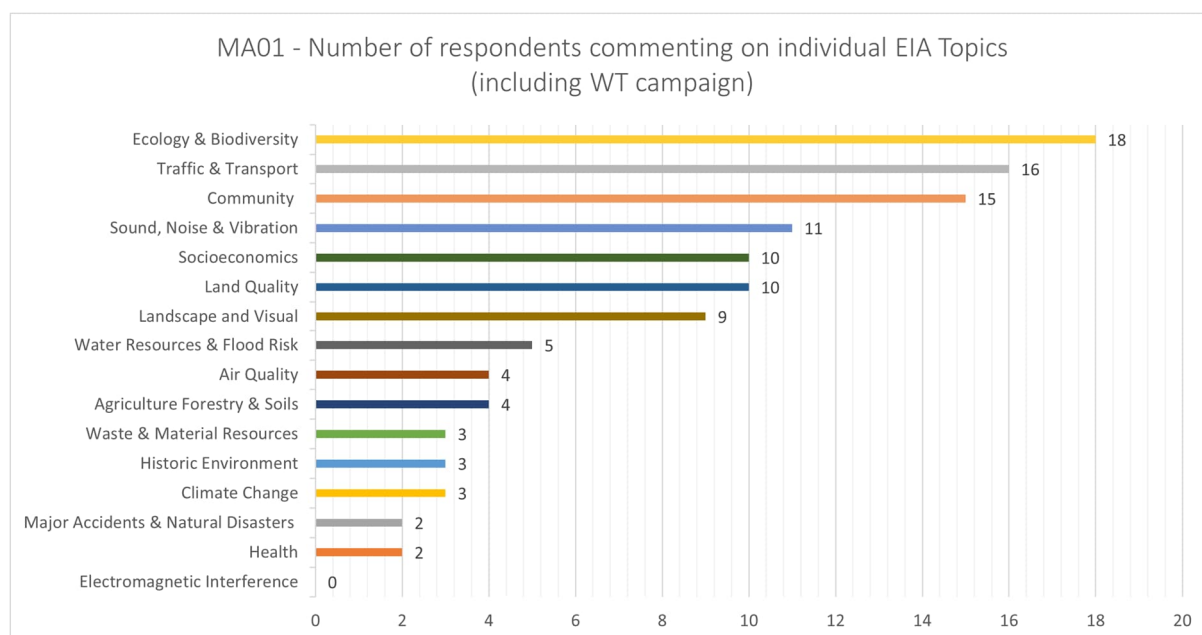
Figure 2. Hough to Walley's Green - MA01

The section of the proposed scheme passing through Hough to Walley's Green covers 10.8 km (6.7 miles) in length. The route starts to the south of the existing Crewe station before entering the Crewe tunnel. The route transitions onto an embankment towards Wimboldsley, to the east of Walley's Green.

The region surrounding this section of the route is governed by Cheshire East Council. The southern part of the route near Crewe is used for industrial, commercial, railway and residential purposes. The northern part of Crewe is predominantly agricultural. South-eastern Crewe is occupied by Crewe Gates Farm Industrial Estate. The main

residential areas within this region are Crewe, Wistaston, Wistaston Green, Coppenhall, Maw Green and Barrows Green.

Graph 25 below shows the distribution of the comments that could be attributed to this CA (MA01) against the environmental topics covered in the ES.



Graph 25. MA01 - Number of respondents commenting on individual EIA Topics

Ecology and biodiversity is the most common theme raised in comments related to MA01. Several comments relate to the impacts of the proposed scheme on ancient woodlands, veteran trees, hedgerows, grassland and rare and threatened wildlife. Particular species such as water voles, great crested newts and bats are mentioned, as is the importance of maintaining a landscape suitable for wetland habitats and species.

A few comments relate to traffic and transport, with concern expressed about congestion and disruption from road closures (such as Parkers Road), potential congestion on the A530 and access to local services during works to widen roads in preparation for the construction works.

“The bridge crossing is not designed for the volume of construction traffic it is anticipated would be associated with the construction of HS2. The bridge is critical to EDFs safe operation of the gas storage facility.”

EDF (about the bridge over the River Wheelock, in Warmingham)

A few respondents raise concerns about disruption to local footpaths, insufficient parking spaces planned for Crewe Station and the demolition of private properties.

Some respondents express concern over potential adverse impacts to residents and local businesses from noise and vibration generated by construction activity and the railway itself once operational. AXIS PED Limited on behalf of EDF Energy (Gas Storage) Limited is concerned about the commitments regarding noise and vibration monitoring.

“it is considered essential that a mechanism is established to allow EDF to alert HS2 if their vibration monitoring procedures detect any increases in vibration that could affect the integrity of the gas storage cavities and the associated infrastructure”

EDF (regarding the operations in proximity of their site, in Warmingham)

The cost of the proposed scheme is raised as a concern by some respondents, with the view expressed that investment in the current local transport network in this area would be preferable.

Effects on land stability and subsidence as a result of the construction of the proposed scheme especially in relation to the Cheshire brine fields and salt mining are raised by some respondents. A few respondents are not satisfied that the assessment of mining and salt workings in the ES has been sufficient.

“the salt resources and seven salt caverns that will be lost because of development.”

Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) Lancashire, Liverpool City Region and Greater Manchester and CPRE Cheshire (regarding the salt caverns in the Warmingham area)

2.4.2 MA02 - Wimboldsley to Lostock Gralam

There are 329 respondent comments linked to the environmental topics covered in the ES which can be related to MA02.

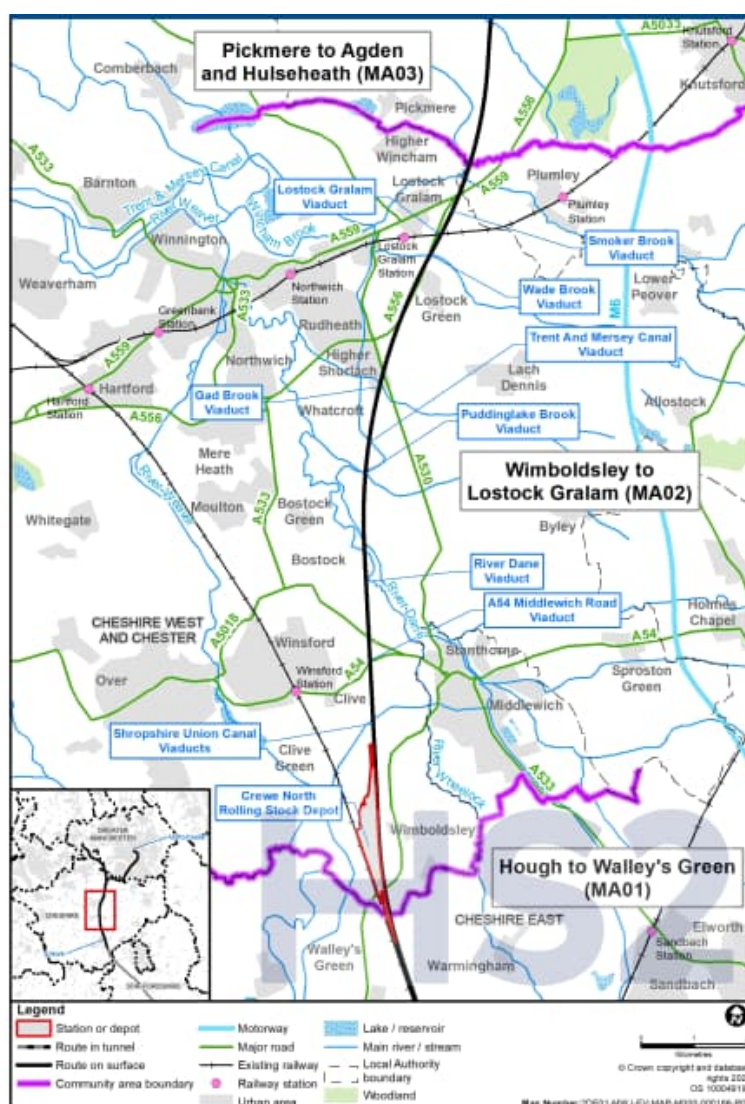


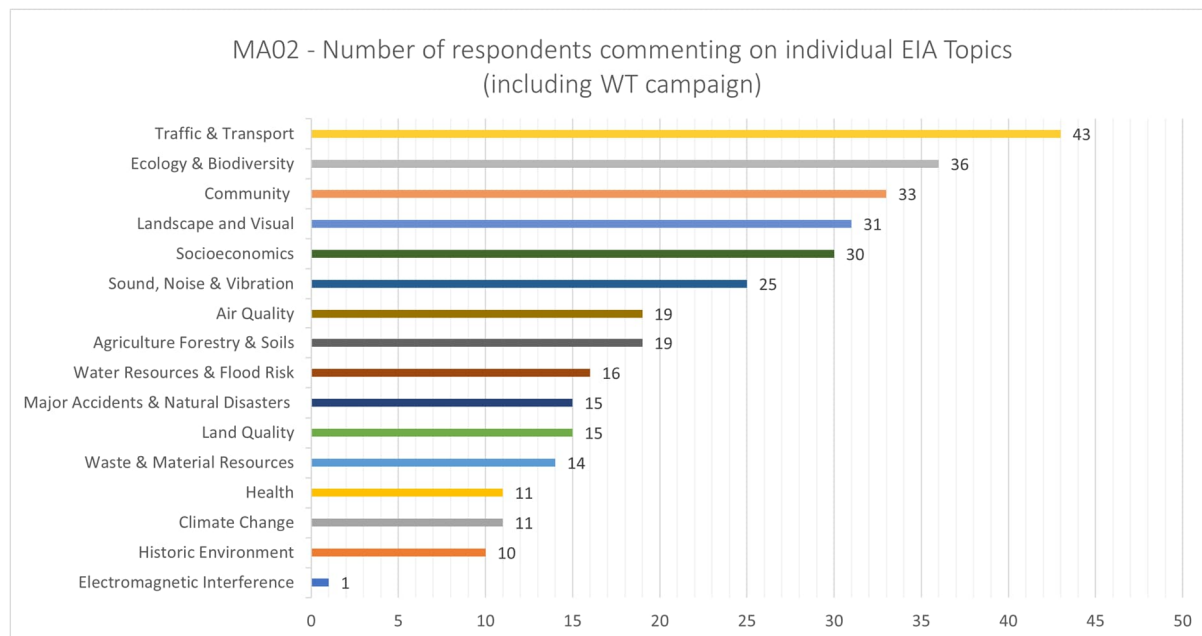
Figure 3. Wimboldsley to Lostock Gralam area - MA02

The section of the proposed scheme passing through Wimboldsley to Lostock Gralam covers 14.6 km (9.1 miles) in length. This section of the route continues on an embankment before crossing a viaduct across the Middlewich branch of the Shropshire Union Canal. The route then passes along an embankment and crosses a viaduct spanning the River Dane. The proposed scheme travels across a series of viaducts and embankments to cross the Puddinglake Brook, the Trent and Mersey Canal, Gad Brook, Wade Brook, Peover Eye and Smoker Brook before heading to the Pickmere to Agden and Hulseheath area.

The regions surrounding this section of the route are governed by Cheshire West and Chester Council and Cheshire East Council. The surrounding area is mainly used for agricultural activities and are often scattered with

woodland areas, some of which are ancient woodland. The main residential areas within this region are Middlewich, Winsford, Northwich, Lostock Green and Lostock Gramam.

Graph 26 below shows the distribution of the comments that could be attributed to this CA (MA02) against the environmental topics covered in the ES.



Graph 26. MA02 - Number of respondents commenting on individual EIA Topics

Traffic and transport is the most common theme raised in comments that can be attributed to MA02. Some respondents feel that the road infrastructure is not designed for the proposed volume of construction traffic, such as the route towards Crewe and the Gad Brook viaduct; and some are concerned with congestion on the A556 and A530.

Several respondents identify the impacts of the proposed scheme on ancient woodlands, veteran trees, hedgerows and wildlife in this area as a concern. A few specifically comment on a perceived lack of mitigation plans for badger setts, owls, otters and geese, and the effects on Smoker Wood and Winnington Wood.

Natural England highlight the loss of an active otter holt and two potential holts due to the construction of the proposed Puddinglake Brook viaduct. They also suggest that insufficient consideration has been placed on bat movement corridors.

The negative impact on canals and saline spring habitats in this area has been raised by a few respondents.

A few respondents highlighted the effect of road and footpath diversions and closures on communities as well as the impact of increased traffic and air pollution due to construction works. Lostock Green is identified as being isolated from local services and facilities due to the effect of the proposed scheme. A few respondents express concern about the loss of private housing and businesses, loss of Wimboldsey school, demolition of Park Farmhouse and the mooring docks.

Several respondents express concern over the visual impact of the proposed scheme in this area, which they believe will “destroy” the countryside through the loss of green spaces and trees, and spoil the “quiet and beautiful views”. A few respondents raise concern about the impact of night-time light pollution from construction compounds and realigned roads in Mid Cheshire, and the proposed mitigation.

“Any mitigation planting will take decades before it performs only a partially affective role in concealing the presence of the track”

Land Agent (Regarding the proposed planting along the A530 Nantwich Road/ Coalpit Lane roundabout)

“HS2 to re-consider the landscape mitigation strategy which better reflects the existing landscape character of the area and adheres to the HS2 Design Principles on Place and Identity”

Canal and River Trust (Regarding the proposed Rolling Stock Depot)

Several respondents express the view that the benefits of the proposed scheme to this area are limited compared to the cost, and instead request improvement of the current local transport network and local infrastructure. Some respondents believe the ticket prices will be unaffordable and that there is no economic need for the project due to the reduction in commuting. Devaluation of local properties, and financial impacts on local business, including farms, wedding venues (such as Holford Estate), Oakwood marina, and other tourism venues has been raised by some respondents.

“These two businesses are of national importance to the UK as the manufacturer of chlorine for the purification of 98% of the UK’s potable water supply. Should chlorine production be stopped, water purification in the UK would cease within a matter of days.”

INOVYN Enterprises Limited (regarding INOVYN Chlorvinyls Limited (ICV) site at Runcorn and the INOVYN Enterprises Limited B&W business in Northwich)

Several respondents express concern about the impacts of noise and vibration, effecting the community, including residents, schools, local businesses, farms, heritage sites, livestock and wildlife and generally reducing the appeal of the area.

Archaeological remains at Holford Hall, and buildings at Grade II listed Whatcroft Hall are specifically identified by a few respondents as important sites of historical interest which they consider to be at risk from the proposed scheme.

2.4.3 MA03 - Pickmere to Agden and Hulseheath

There are 337 respondent comments linked to the environmental topics covered in the ES which can be related to MA03.

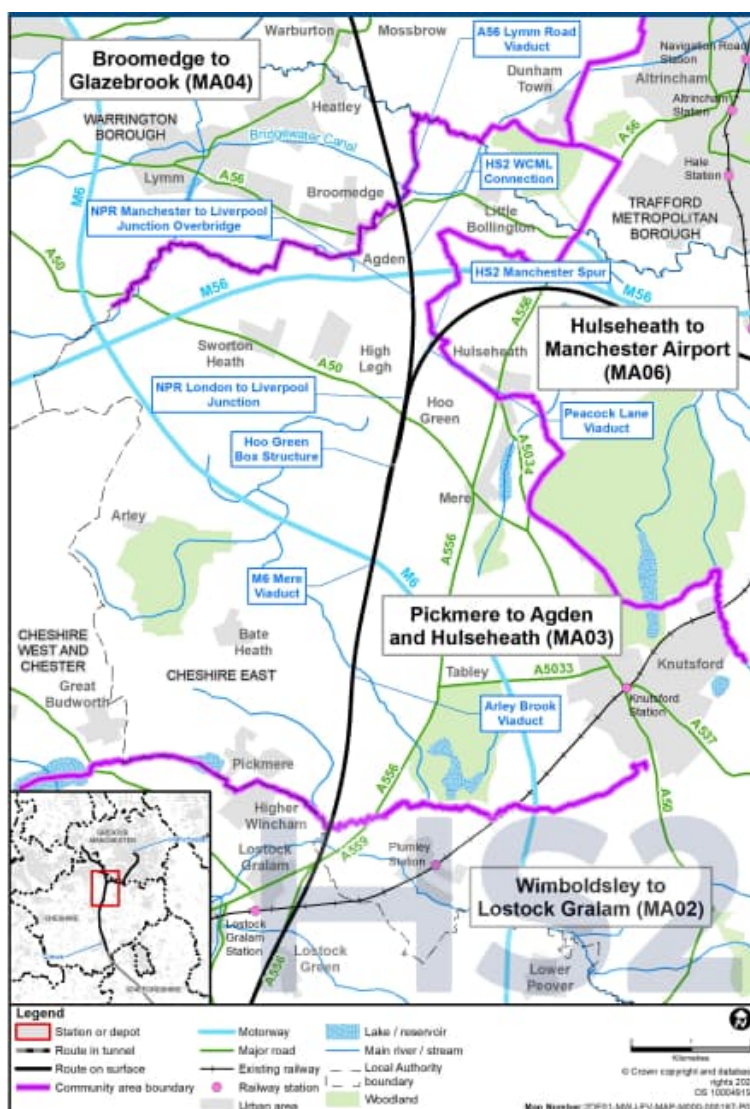


Figure 4. Pickmere to Agden and Hulseheath area - MA03

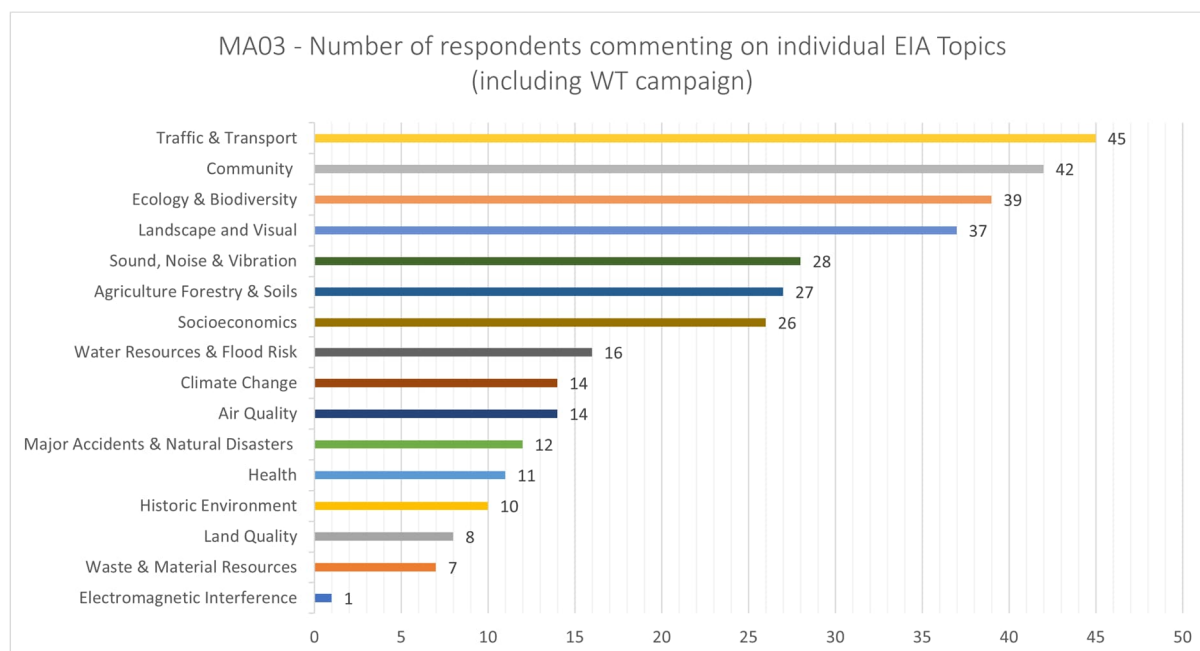
The section of the proposed scheme passing through Pickmere to Agden and Hulseheath is 10.6 km (6.6 miles) in length, and includes the Manchester spur which is 3.3 km (2.1 miles) in length.

The proposed scheme will extend north to Lostock Gralam on a viaduct before passing onto an embankment and then crossing a viaduct spanning Arley Brook. The route will revert to an embankment before using a viaduct to cross the M6. It will return to an embankment before arriving at the junction between the HS2 West Coast Main Line (WCML) connection and the HS2 Manchester spur. The HS2 WCML connection will enter a box structure and head north-west on an embankment and later, a cutting, before passing under the M56. The route transitions onto an embankment before using a viaduct to cross the A56. The scheme then transitions onto an embankment to arrive at the Broomedge to Glazebrook area.

The HS2 Manchester spur will run along an embankment and cutting before entering a tunnel under the box structure supporting the HS2 WCML connection. The route will extend north-east on a cutting and then an embankment towards Hulseheath.

The region surrounding this section of the route is governed by Cheshire East Council. The surrounding area is mainly used for agricultural activities and is scattered with isolated farms. Ancient woodland, namely Leonard's and Smoker Wood are located to the south of the region. The main residential areas within this region are Knutsford, Pickmere and High Legh.

Graph 27 below shows the distribution of the comments that could be attributed to this CA (MA03) against the environmental topics covered in the ES.



Graph 27. MA03 - Number of respondents commenting on individual EIA Topics

Traffic and transport is the most commonly raised theme in comments that can be attributed to MA03 with several comments expressing concerns about the narrow country roads in the area being unsuitable for large construction vehicles and increased traffic that is anticipated during the realignment of major roads. Respondents identified increased traffic as likely to cause disruption in High Legh and on Hulseheath Lane, Pickmere Lane and Peacock Lane. Specific concern is raised about the potential damage from heavy construction traffic on the small access bridge for Booth Bank Farm and about traffic accessing the Hoo Green Lane compound.

“Footpaths/road widening on Hulseheath Lane; Pedestrian crossing on A50; Reduce the road speed from 60mph to 40mph on A50, 30mph in Hoo Green; Public transport for HS2 staff and locals; Access to nature / community space; Planting of woodland and creation of new habitats as soon as possible before temporary works begin; Use of local services/hire local staff/limit car parking so that staff must car share, use local transport or cycle; Use of local residential obtained baseline data - photos, traffic use count, note bats, lapwings and other rare wildlife in Hoo Green; Confirmation that lights will not be used overnight; Car and window cleaning to be provided by HS2.”

The Hoo Green community (regarding the compound in the Hoo Green area)

Some respondents raise concern about road and footpath closures in this area, and suggestions are made such as an additional crossing close to the A56 Lymm Road, keeping Budworth Road open and building an underpass instead of widening School Lane in Pickmere.

Some respondents express concern about the loss of housing, businesses and the negative impact on farms in this area.

The impacts of the proposed scheme on areas of ancient woodlands, veteran trees, hedgerows and wildlife and the effect of the new railway on nature corridors (especially around High Legh) are raised by several respondents.

“the HS2 scheme design has been developed in such a way that it potentially extinguishes my rural business namely Windmill Nurseries. Established by myself in 1991 Windmill Nurseries raises annual and perennial plants which by the nature of photosynthesis help reduce the carbon footprint. Other environmental benefits include helping the bees, butterflies and birds.”

Owner of Windmill Nurseries

Several respondents express concern over the visual impact of the proposed scheme on the countryside through loss of green space and trees and the effect of high embankments and viaducts and new overhead power lines on the local landscape. Specific requests related to this area include relocating the Budworth Road Auto-transformer station, burying the National Grid pylon line diverted through Belt Wood and putting the railway in a cutting or a tunnel around High Legh.

A few respondents are concerned about the visual impact of the proposed scheme on the Arley Lower Wooded Farmland; that there are no formal landscaping plans for the cutting at Agden and that the embankment and viaduct will be a visual blight on local residents.

Several respondents express concern about noise and vibration from the proposed scheme affecting the community in this area, including local residents and businesses, farms, livestock and wildlife. A few respondents raised concerns about proposed noise insulation methods for old buildings, which they believe are inappropriate for listed buildings, and express the view that the assessment on noise impacts is not accurate as it is based on an unconfirmed number of trains.

The loss of agricultural and grazing land both temporarily and permanently; and the isolation of agricultural land through partitions making it difficult to manage are raised as a concern by a few respondents. Specific reference is made to eight rail lines around High Legh in this context.

Several respondents express the view that the proposed scheme will devalue properties and have a negative financial impact on local business, including farms, hotels, Windmill Nurseries and local events such as the Royal Cheshire show which takes place on the Clay House Farm.

2.4.4 MA04 - Broomedge to Glazebrook

There are 148 respondent comments linked to the environmental topics covered in the ES which can be related to MA04.

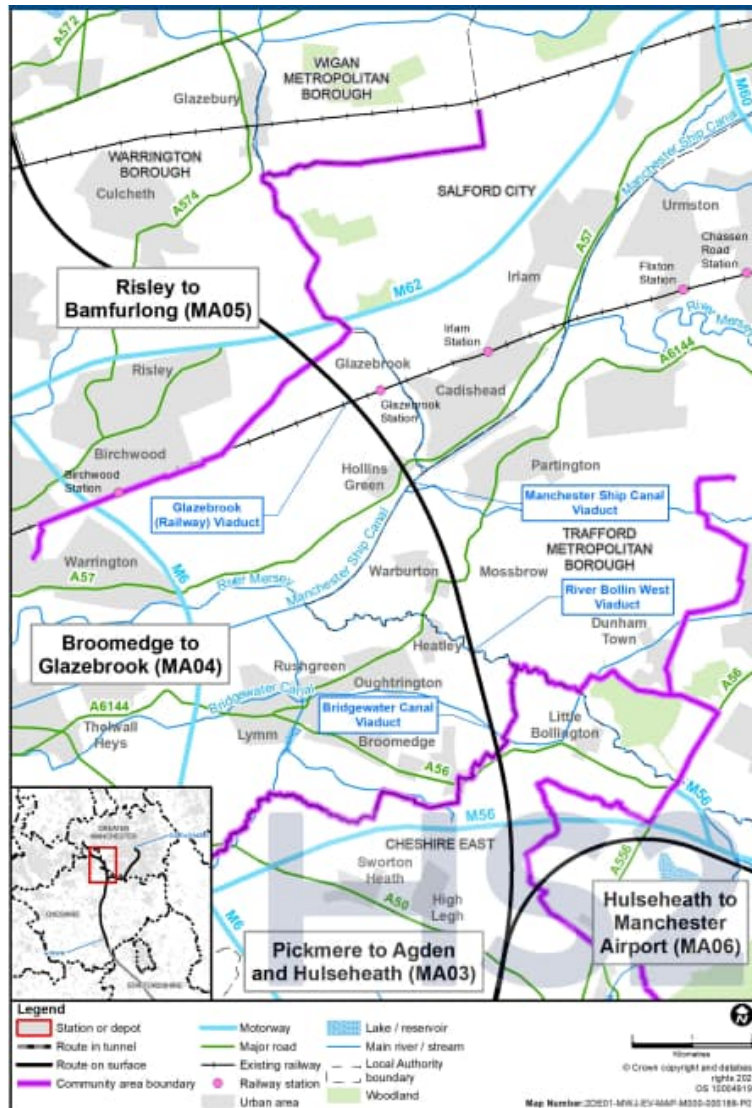
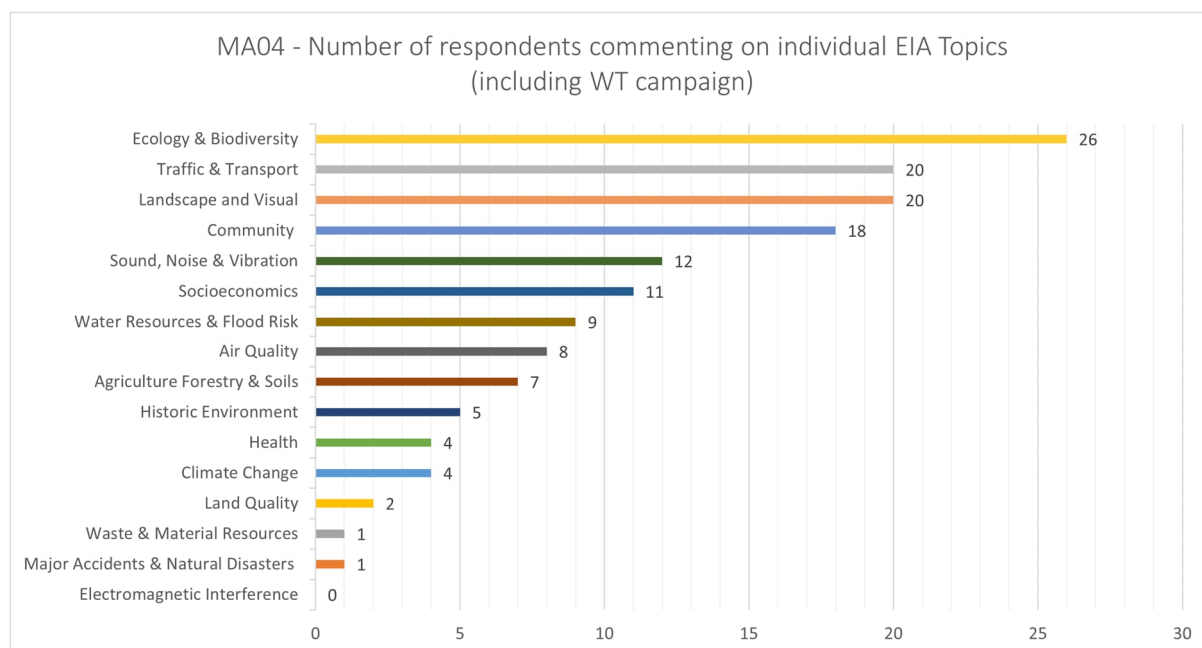


Figure 5. Broomeedge to Glazebrook area - MA04

The section of the proposed scheme passing through Broomeedge to Glazebrook covers 7.3 km (4.5 miles) in length. This section of the route continues north on an embankment before crossing a viaduct across the Bridgewater Canal and River Bollin. The scheme runs along an embankment which transitions to a cutting before returning to an embankment near the Manchester Ship Canal. The route will cross a viaduct spanning the canal and will continue onto an embankment before passing onto a viaduct on the approach to the Risley to Bamfurlong area.

The regions surrounding this section of the route are governed by Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council, Warrington Borough Council and Salford City Council. The surrounding area is mainly used for agriculture with areas of woodland scattered amongst hamlets, villages and farms. The main residential areas within this region are Lydd, Partington, Cadishead, Irlam and Hollins Green.

Graph 28 below shows the distribution of the comments that could be attributed to this CA (MA04) against the environmental topics covered in the ES.



Graph 28. MA04 - Number of respondents commenting on individual EIA Topics

Ecology and biodiversity is the most common theme raised in comments related to MA04. Several comments relate to the impacts of the proposed scheme on the ancient woodlands, veteran trees, hedgerows and species of rare and threatened wildlife in this area.

“The confirmed presence of a common lizard population at Holcroft Moss points to the need to ensure mitigation measures improve the habitat connectivity between Holcroft Moss and other suitable sites in the area such as Risley Moss and Pestfurlong Moss. Options to provide habitat connectivity across the M62 should be explored. The proposal in development for a Mosslands potential NNR has relevance to this species.”

Natural England

Natural England specifically request that Cadishead and Little Woollen Moss restoration works are not included in any mitigation plan as works in these areas have almost been completed. They are concerned about the omission from the report of Little Woollen Moss “an area of lowland bog that has been undergoing restoration for several years”.

The unsuitability of country lanes such as Glazebrook Lane B5212, Dam Lane, Dam Head Lane, Mill Lane and Wet Gate Lane for construction traffic is raised by several respondents.

Several respondents comment on communities being negatively affected by the loss of residential and business properties, green spaces and the division and isolation of villages such as Warburton and Hollins Green.

“The Proposed Route will sever the A6144 Paddock Lane link between the two small rural settlements of Warburton village and Moss Brow hamlet and create a sense of isolation.”

Trafford Council

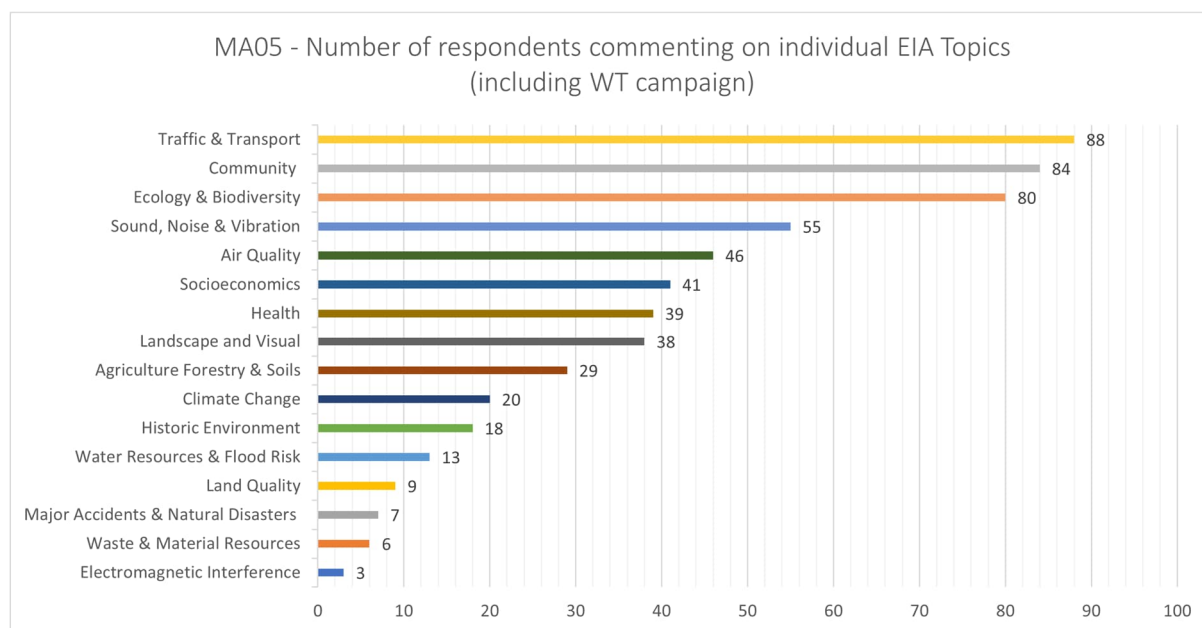
Several respondents express general concerns about the visual impact of the proposed scheme on the countryside and in particular the approach and crossing of the Manchester Ship Canal.

“To put an embankment and viaduct 9 metres high will be a permanent and visual blight on Ashley residents.”

Member of public

Several respondents express concern about the impact of noise from the proposed scheme affecting the community, including residents, school pupils and areas that they identify as “tranquil” such as Hollinfare Cemetery and the Manchester Ship Canal. Some express the view that the proposed mitigation is inadequate.

The cost of the proposed scheme is raised as a concern by some respondents, with the request that investment in the current local transport network and infrastructure would be preferable.



Graph 29. MA05 - Number of respondents commenting on individual EIA Topics

Traffic and transport is the most common theme raised in comments related to MA05, with several respondents highlighting concerns around the impact on narrow country roads in this area which they believe are unsuitable for large construction vehicles and anticipated increases in traffic during construction of the proposed scheme.

Some respondents raise concerns regarding the displacement of traffic and associated congestion caused by road closures on the A57, and the realignment of the M62 that they believe will gridlock other roads. A few respondents specifically identify increased traffic and congestion in Golborne and Culcheth as a particular issue.

Several respondents also comment on increased congestion caused by construction activities linked to the proposed scheme on roads through Lowton (Slag Lane) and Golborne.

“In conclusion none of the roads designated as construction traffic routes are suitable for the intended HS2 construction.”

Lowton and Golborne Traffic advisory Committee (LaGTAC) (regarding traffic congestion within the Lowton Golborne road system)

Several respondents express concern about the detrimental impact of the proposed scheme on the lives of people living in Culcheth, Winwick and Lowton and the surrounding villages. Respondents specifically identify the section of the route that is proposed to be on a viaduct in this area which they believe will have the effect of cutting some communities in half.

A few respondents also comment that they are unhappy about the loss of a number of footpaths in the Lowton area and the relocation of some sports pitches to an area they believe is unsuitable.

Several respondents comment on the impact of the proposed scheme on ancient woodlands, veteran trees, hedgerows and wildlife in this area. A few respondents make the specific point that the CO₂ absorption capacity of the old trees that need to be removed to construct the proposed scheme will not be replaced with planting new trees, and that the effects on Byrom Hall Wood will not be mitigated by the creation of new wetlands areas at the far end of the wood.

A few respondents express concern about the disruption to fishing lakes in Culcheth, and effects that the proposed scheme will have on beekeepers near Byrom Hall.

The risk of a reduction in groundwater levels within Abram Flashes SSSI is raised as a concern and confirmation is requested that the proposal to discharge water into Coffin Lane Brook will compensate for any loss.

Several respondents express concern about noise and vibration affecting the community, in particular residents and schools (such as Lowton Junior and Infant schools) during both the construction period and operational phase.

Specific reference is made to noise associated with construction compounds in this area with a few respondents suggesting that the level of assessment of potential noise impacts and the proposed mitigations are not adequate.

Several respondents express concern about the likely increase in air pollution caused by increased traffic, mainly during construction; highlighting the presence of vulnerable members of the local community that are likely to be most affected including pupils in local schools. A few respondents express specific concerns about levels of air pollution at the junction at Lowton Lane Head, which is identified as already being very congested. A few respondents state that an increase in the nitrogen concentration of the local atmosphere will adversely affect the Holcroft Moss SSSI.

The cost of the proposed scheme is raised as a concern by some respondents, with the request that investment in the current local transport network would be preferable. Several respondents believe that the proposed scheme will have a negative financial effect on local business, including shops and devalue people's properties in the area.

A few respondents believe that the proposed scheme will not bring business and prosperity to Culcheth and that people living and working in Lowton and Golborne will have poor access to the proposed scheme. Some respondents suggest that Warrington has seen reduced economic growth due to the Golborne Spur bypassing Warrington's Bank Quay station.

2.4.6 MA06 - Hulseheath to Manchester Airport

There are 12,087 respondent comments linked to the environmental topics covered in the ES relating to MA06. Of this total, 429 are from non-campaign responses.

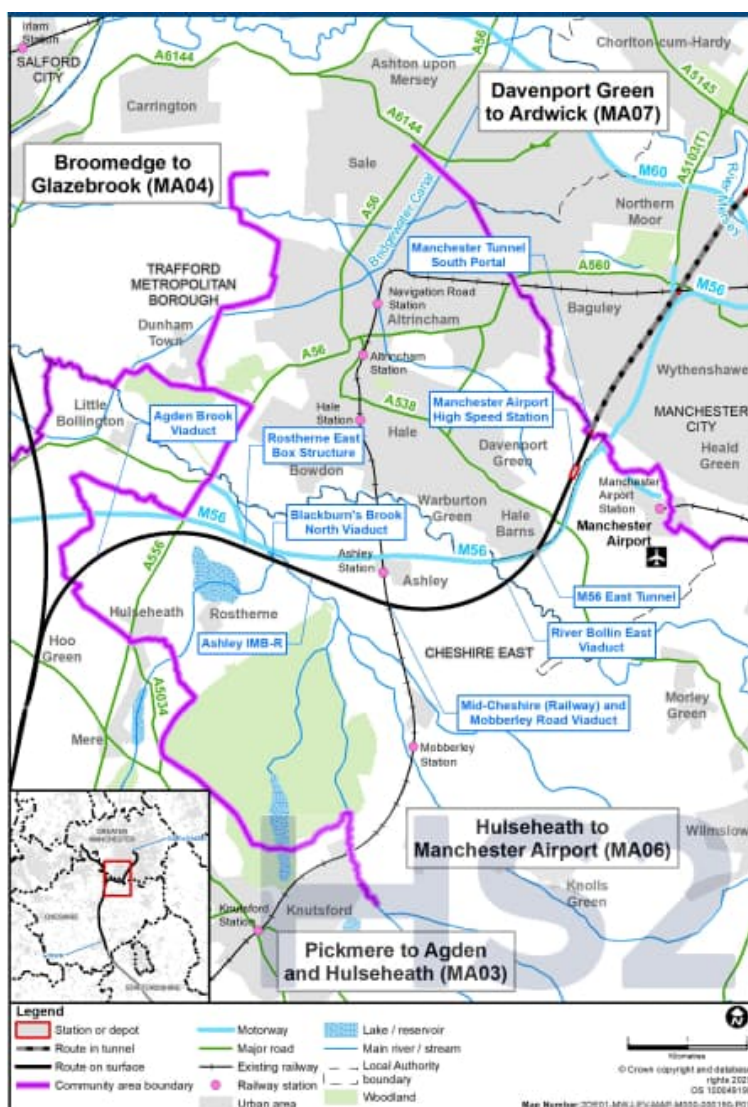


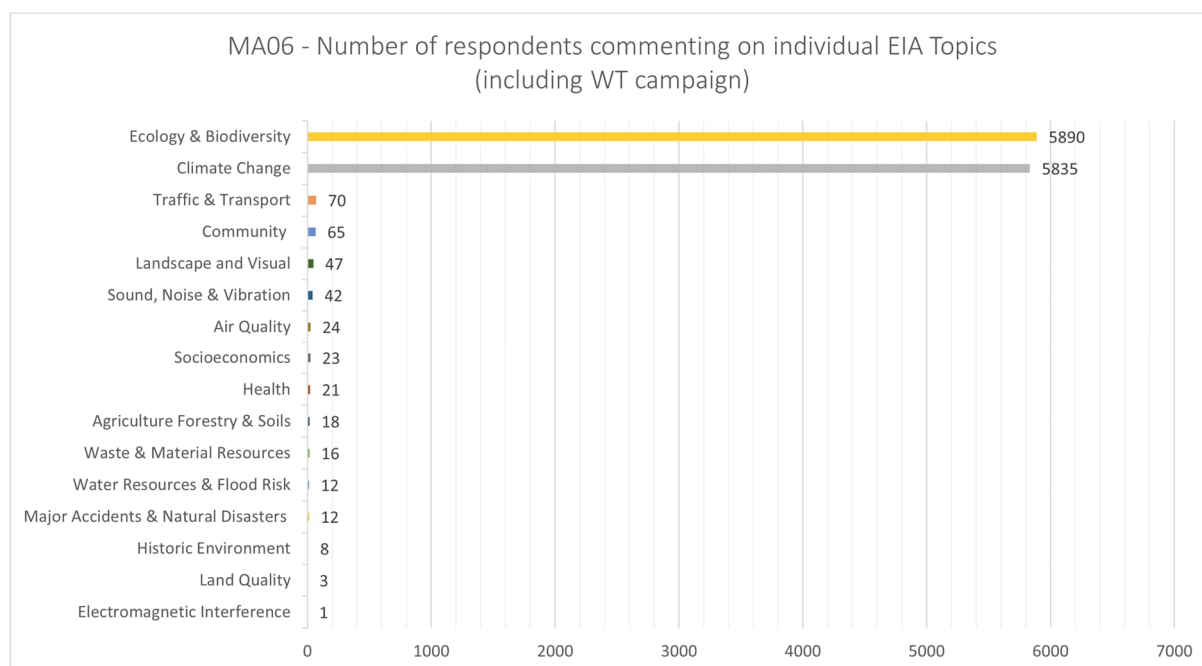
Figure 7. Hulseheath to Manchester Airport area - MA06

This section of the proposed scheme involves the route passing through Hulseheath to Manchester Airport, covering 10.7 km (6.8 miles) in length. The route runs east on an embankment before travelling across a viaduct spanning Agden Brook. The route will pass along a cutting and later, an embankment crossing the A556 Chester Road before travelling under a box structure connecting HS2 and a future NPR route between Manchester and Liverpool. The route will then pass along an embankment and cross a viaduct spanning Blackburn's Brook followed by another embankment. The route will continue on a viaduct across the Mid-Cheshire Railway and pass along several embankments and cuttings before travelling across the River Bollin on a viaduct. The scheme travels along an embankment, viaduct and then cutting towards the Manchester Airport High Speed station.

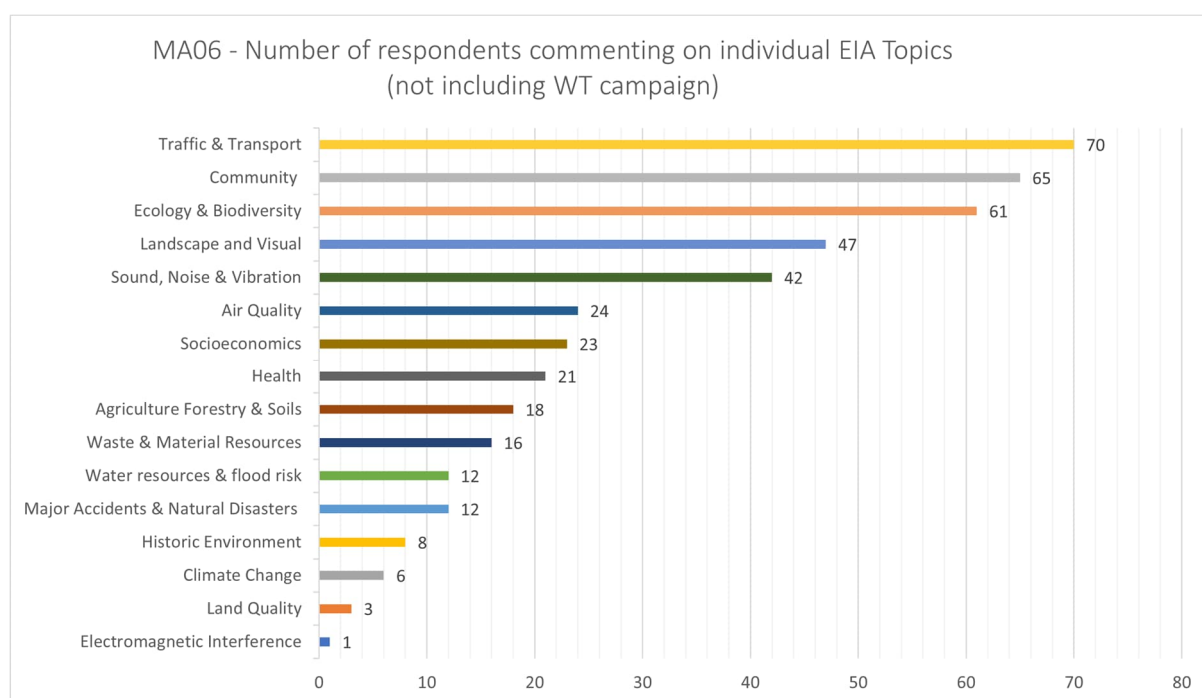
The regions surrounding this section of the route are governed by Chester East Council, Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council, Manchester City Council and the Greater Manchester Combined Authority. The surrounding area is semi-rural with a mixture of land uses including agriculture and recreation. Manchester Airport is located to the south-east of the scheme. The main residential areas within this region are Altrincham, Hale, Hale Barns and Bowdon.

The graphs below show the distribution of the comments attributed to MA06 against the environmental topics covered in the ES. The Woodland Trust campaign included comments that specifically identify this CA, hence the number of responses linked to MA06 is significantly higher than the other CAs. To help illustrate the relative level

of responses linked to the various environmental topics, the two graphs below show the distribution of comments including the Woodland Trust campaign (Graph 30) and then excluding the Woodland Trust campaign (Graph 31).



Graph 30. MA06 - Number of respondents commenting on individual EIA Topics (including Woodland Trust Campaign)



Graph 31. MA06 - Number of respondents commenting on individual EIA Topics Topics (not including Woodland Trust Campaign)

Ecology and biodiversity is the most common theme raised in MA06 with the vast majority of the comments being a direct result of the Woodland Trust campaign. Ecology and biodiversity is also the third most commonly raised theme in the responses not linked to the Woodland Trust campaign.

The majority of the comments relate to the impacts of the proposed scheme on the ancient woodlands, veteran trees, hedgerows and wildlife. The importance of the wetland at Rostherne Mere (a small Ramsar feature), badger setts, bat and barn owl populations are specifically identified by respondents.

The impact of artificial light and noise associated with the proposed scheme are identified as a particular concern by a few respondents based on the detrimental effect this could have on wildlife.

“The most damaging part of the route lies between Hulseheath and Manchester airport (MA06), where 10 ancient woods will be directly impacted by the works.”

Member of public

A few respondents consider the proposed mitigation measures insufficient to protect the local wildlife. The establishment of a dense habitat buffer is recommended as needing to be retained around ancient woodland to protect wildlife during construction works, and Natural England suggest a number of specific additional measures to help protect barn owl, bat and newt colonies identified in MA06.

“MCC feel that the fragmentation of habitat, and in some cases periods of complete habitat isolation (Wood near Chapel Lane SBI, for example), are not adequately reflected on, catered for, or mitigated against.”

Manchester City Council

Concerns are raised by Manchester Airport Group about locating ponds for ecological mitigation in the proximity of the airport due to the resultant risk to aviation and requested a Bird Hazard Management Plan for the construction and operation of the proposed scheme.

Climate change is a theme also raised in the responses submitted via the Woodland Trust campaign with respondents commenting that the project is a major producer of carbon-emissions, and is therefore not appropriate in light of the current climate emergency. A few respondents comment that the creation of additional transport links to the airport will be an added incentive for air travel.

“The case for a station at Manchester Airport must also be reassessed, given that it would, under current plans, result in significant loss of ancient woodland and facilitate growth in carbon-intensive air travel for decades to come.”

Member of public

Several respondents express the view that the roads around Ashley are too narrow to be suitable for construction traffic and some express concern about traffic in Hale, Hale Barns, Thorns Green, Halebank, Warburton Green.

A few respondents also raise concern about the safety of cyclists, specifically regarding the temporary closure of Sunbank Lane, meaning cyclists will be forced to use an alternative route along A538 Hale Road which is considered dangerous and not suitable for children. There are a few concerns expressed about increased journey times due to proposed closures and diversions of existing roads and public rights of way.

A few respondents suggest that this section of the route should be constructed in a tunnel to avoid disruption in south Manchester.

Manchester Airport Group express concerns that the outcome of the road traffic modelling presented in the ES is an under-estimation of current traffic volumes and levels of congestion in the Manchester Airport area, and is concerned about its ability to operate effectively.

Manchester City Council is opposed to using Runger Lane/Thorley Lane as a construction route because of its critical role for airport access and believe a railhead system is more appropriate to remove spoil from the South Manchester tunnel portal.

Several respondents express concern about the loss of businesses, community recreational facilities and footpaths as a result of the proposed scheme in this area and the likely impact on Bollin Valley.

Several respondents express concern over the detrimental effects of the proposed scheme on the local landscape, with particular reference to the countryside around Ashley. The concerns relate to the scale of the project as a whole and height of the line, construction sites and proposed overhead lines. A few are concerned about light pollution from construction sites and night-time working, and consider the proposed mitigation to not always be adequate.

“The visual and landscape impact on this corridor should be considered both during and post construction. This route should be integrated within the Green Corridor proposals.”

The National Trust (regarding corridor between Dunham Massey and Tatton Park also comprising MA06)

Several respondents express concern about potential adverse effects from noise and vibration associated with both construction and operation of the proposed scheme, on residents and local businesses, including the Holiday Inn Express Hotel and the Children’s Adventure Farm trust near High Legh. A few respondents state that the level of noise assessment or the proposed mitigation in this area is inadequate.

“Ashley PC considers that the locations used for baseline noise surveys to be unrepresentative and do not accurately characterise the background noise environment of residential properties in the parish that are likely to be significantly impacted by the development.”

Ashley Parish Council

2.4.7 MA07 - Davenport Green to Ardwick

There are 113 respondent comments linked to the environmental topics covered in the ES which can be related to MA07.

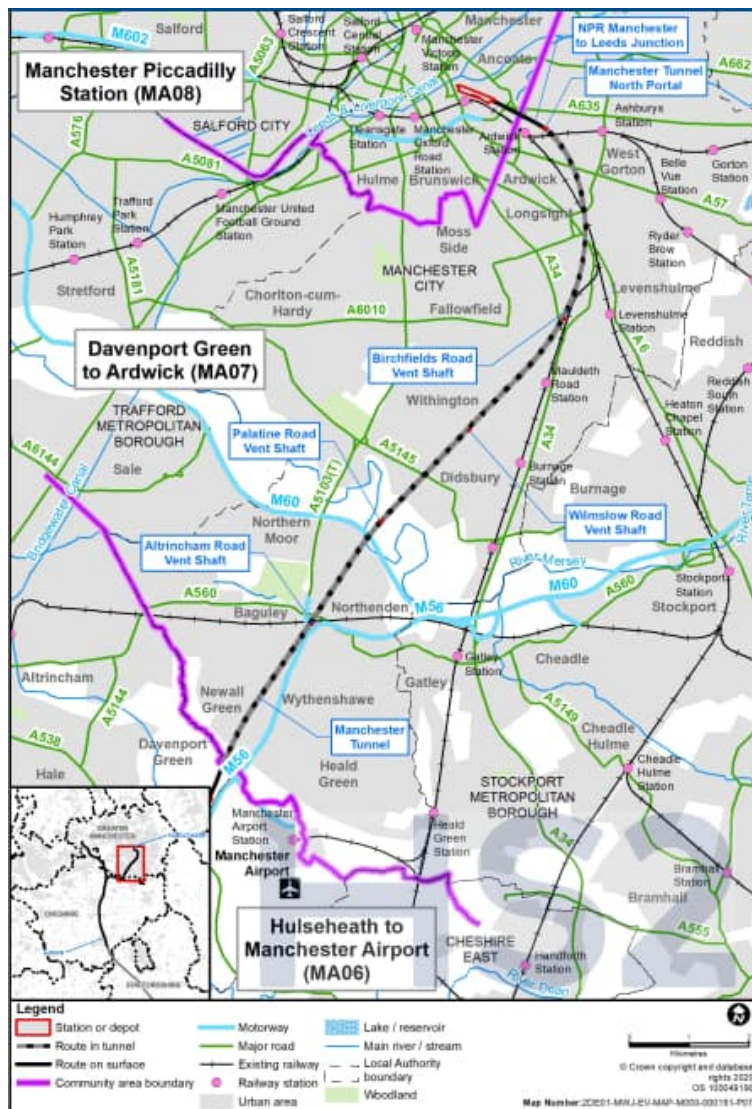
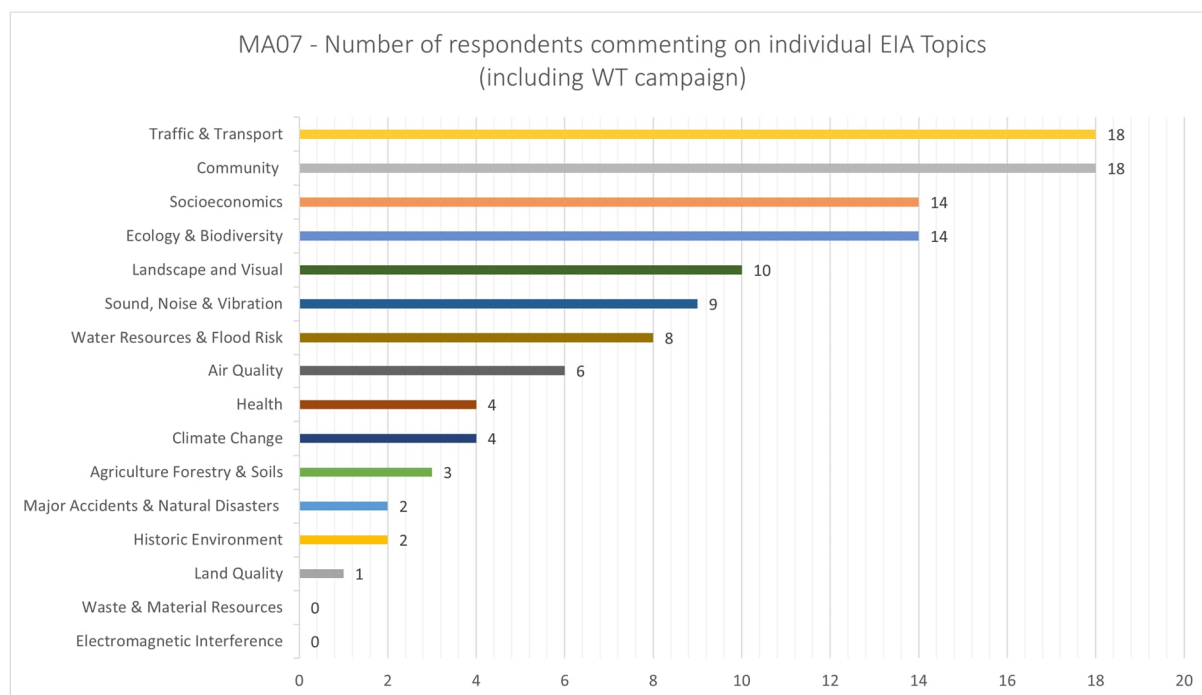


Figure 8. Davenport Green to Manchester Ardwick area - MA07

The section of the proposed scheme passing through Davenport Green to Ardwick covers 13.4 km (8.3 miles) in length. This section of the route enters the Manchester tunnel south portal and will emerge in Ardwick before continuing north-west along a cutting to Manchester Piccadilly station.

The regions surrounding this section of the route are governed by Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council, Manchester City Council and the Greater Manchester Combined Authority. The surrounding area is suburban with dense residential areas amongst recreational grounds, parkland and woodland. The main residential areas within this region are Newall Green, Wythenshawe, Northenden, Didsbury, Withington, Rusholme, Longsight, Roundthorn, West Gorton and Ardwick.

Graph 32 below shows the distribution of the comments that could be attributed to this CA (MA07) against the environmental topics covered in the ES.



Graph 32. MA07 - Number of respondents commenting on individual EIA Topics

Traffic and transport and community are the joint most common themes raised in comments that could be attributed to MA07. Some respondents comment on the need to build the railway underground to reduce the impact on other rail and road systems.

“Marriot Street and Tatton Grove are not suitable for construction route traffic (as shown in Map Book TR-08-312). These are side roads and construction traffic should be routed down more suitable roads”

Manchester City Council

Respondents also believe that the traffic has worsened since the original traffic surveys that informed the ES were carried out due to the scale of new development taking place within this area.

Several respondents raise concerns focused on what they regard as the detrimental effects the scheme will have on local communities regarding the destruction of private homes and businesses in this area. A few concerns were raised about the disturbance expected from the tunnel excavation works.

The cost of the proposed scheme is raised as a concern by some respondents, with the request that investment in the current local transport network and local infrastructure would be preferable. Several respondents believe that the proposed scheme will financially damage local business and shops, including Sims Metal's business and David Luke Ltd.

Natural England make a number of suggestions related to the proposed scheme within MA07, such as proposing that HS2 work towards the commitment to a net gain in biodiversity. Suggested through joining a partnership at

Highfield Country Park LNR scheme to naturalise a section of Fallowfield Brook; design appropriate mitigation on a landscape scale to ensure long term viability for the two bat assemblages and birds species such as black redstart, little ringed plover, and peregrine falcon; and planning a new 'green corridor' along the line of the proposed tunnel and at the Piccadilly Station terminus.

A few respondents raise concern about the lack of information on the effects that increased nitrogen will have on SACs, SSSIs and SBIs; and that the ES is failing to acknowledge the rich biodiversity of the woodland area needed for the satellite compound associated with the Palatine Road vent shaft development.

The visual impact of the proposed scheme, which is believed will damage the countryside and impact on the green belt, is raised by some of the respondents.

“Furthermore I understand all the public footpaths and bridleways around the Bollin (The Bollin Way) are to be closed too. These are outdoor areas which are used constantly by huge volumes of people and it would be devastating to lose this access.”

Member of public

“We contend that the transformation of a tranquil golf course and woodland into a 24 hour industrial estate with cranes visible above the hoardings is going to cause considerable distress and loss of wellbeing to both residents and walkers - made worse by the length of time it will take for replacement tree cover to mature.”

West Didsbury Residents Association (Regarding the Palatine Road vent shaft)

Some of the comments express concern for potential adverse impacts from noise and vibration, effecting residents and local businesses in this area. The concerns relate to both the construction period (including heavy goods vehicle movements and tunnelling) and the operational phase. A few respondents express the view that the noise assessments within the ES and the proposed mitigations for this area are inadequate, and that the impact of lighting associated with the construction work have not been assessed.

2.4.8 MA08 - Manchester Piccadilly

There are 121 respondent comments linked to the environmental topics covered in the ES which can be related to MA08.

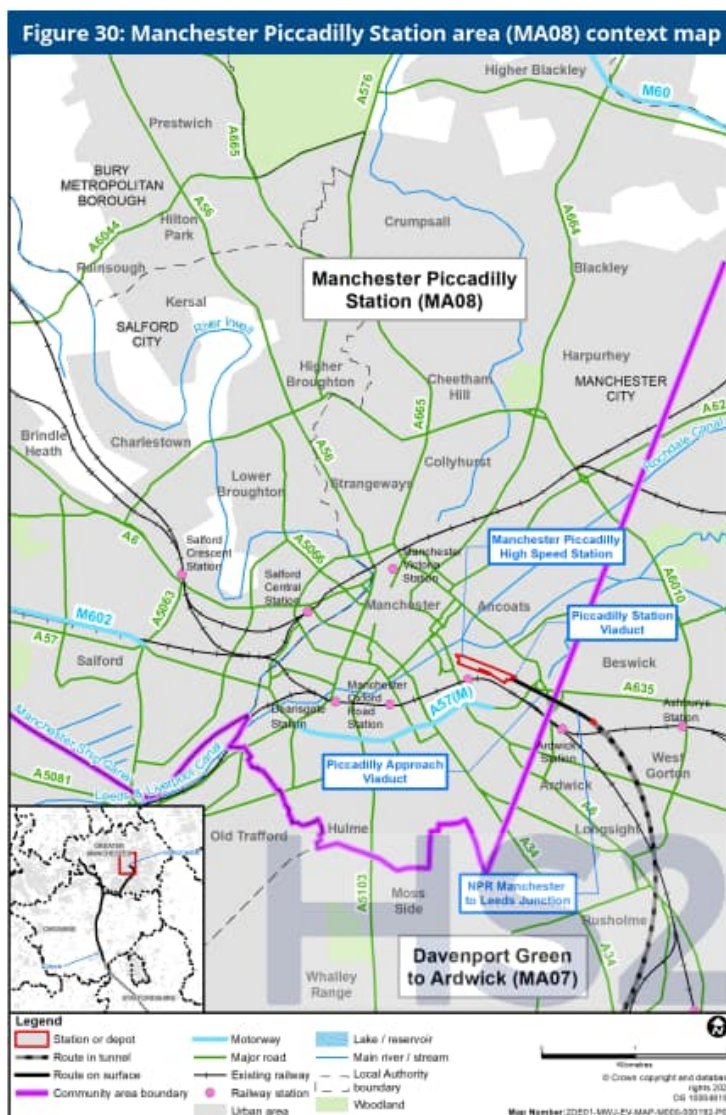
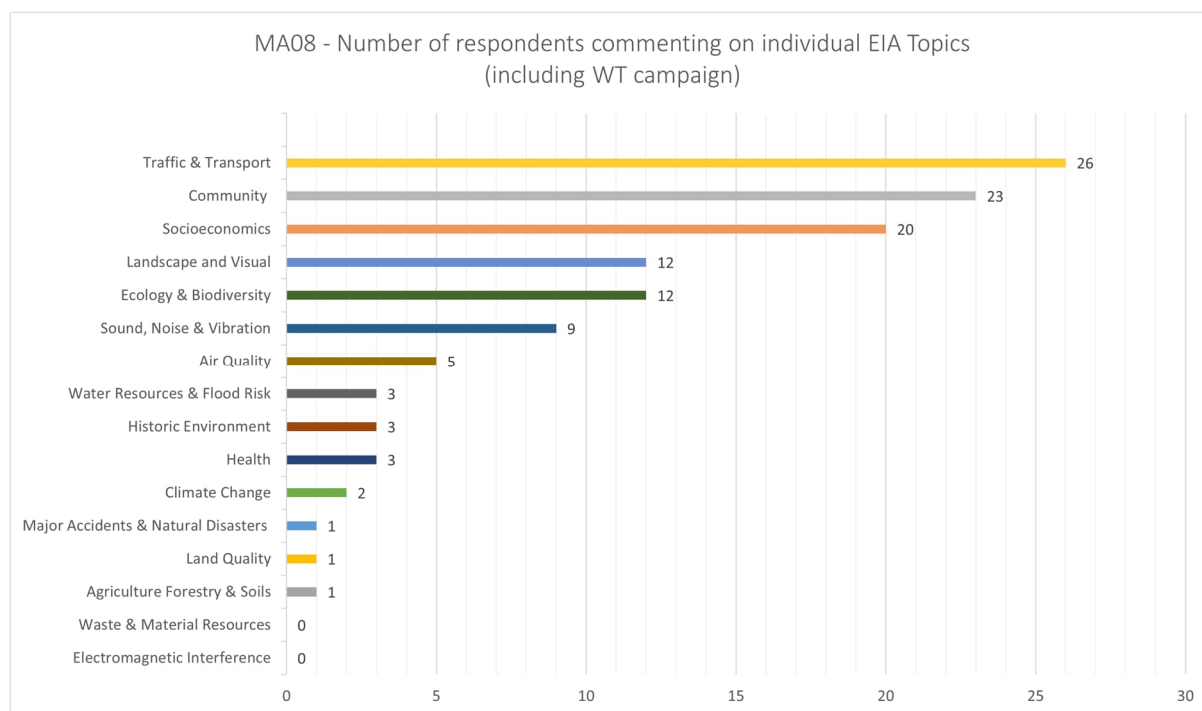


Figure 9. Manchester Piccadilly Station area - MA08

The section of the proposed scheme up to Manchester Piccadilly Station area covers 1 km (0.6 miles) in length. This section of the route enters the Manchester tunnel south portal and will emerge in Ardwick before continuing north-west along a cutting to Manchester Piccadilly station.

The regions surrounding this section of the route are governed by Manchester City Council and the Greater Manchester Combined Authority. The surrounding area is urban with industrial and commercial land uses amongst road and rail infrastructure such as the existing Manchester Piccadilly Station and railway. The River Medlock is located along the southern part of the region and Rochdale Canal is located to the north of Piccadilly. The main residential areas within this region are Piccadilly and the city centre.

Graph 33 below shows the distribution of the comments that could be attributed to this CA (MA08) against the environmental topics covered in the ES.



Graph 33. MA08 - Number of respondents commenting on individual EIA Topics

Traffic and transport is the most common theme raised in comments that can be attributed to MA08 with some respondents objecting to the closure of part of the Metrolink described as an “essential transport link” for local people, especially the disabled.

A few respondents express support for the proposed tunnel on the approach to Manchester and the underground station at Manchester Piccadilly, citing the avoidance of taking up a large amount of land, disruption to existing tram routes and creation of further traffic congestion in south Manchester as reasons for their support. A few respondents however express the view that an overground station at Manchester Piccadilly would be a better option due to reduced costs.

The adequacy of the pedestrian assessment reported in the ES is questioned by Manchester City Council who suggest that it fails to accurately assess existing crowding during peak times.

A few respondents raise concern about the proposed scheme cutting off east Manchester from central Manchester, describing east Manchester as one of the most deprived areas in the north of England.

The cost of the proposed scheme is raised as a concern by a few respondents, with the request that investment in the current local transport network and local infrastructure would be preferable. Some respondents also express the view that the proposed scheme will have a negative financial effect on businesses in the Manchester Piccadilly area and devalue properties.

“Given the station’s location at the very heart of the city region, in an area of huge regeneration potential, we see the land take of the surface option as leading to the sterilisation of a significant area of land that offers the opportunity of capitalising on HS2’s catalytic potential.”

Bruntwood (Property Company, Regarding the station planned in Manchester)

“the full closure of the Ashton Metrolink Line for a period of approximately two years, with a replacement bus service, will present a level of disruption that is totally unacceptable and will have significant negative impact on the ability to deliver growth, investment and level up Tameside.”

Tameside Metropolitan Borough

The potential adverse effects from noise and vibration on residents and local businesses is raised by some respondents. A few respondents state that the level of assessment and the proposed mitigation is inadequate, with the realignment of the Metrolink under Gateway House highlighted as not having been assessed.

