

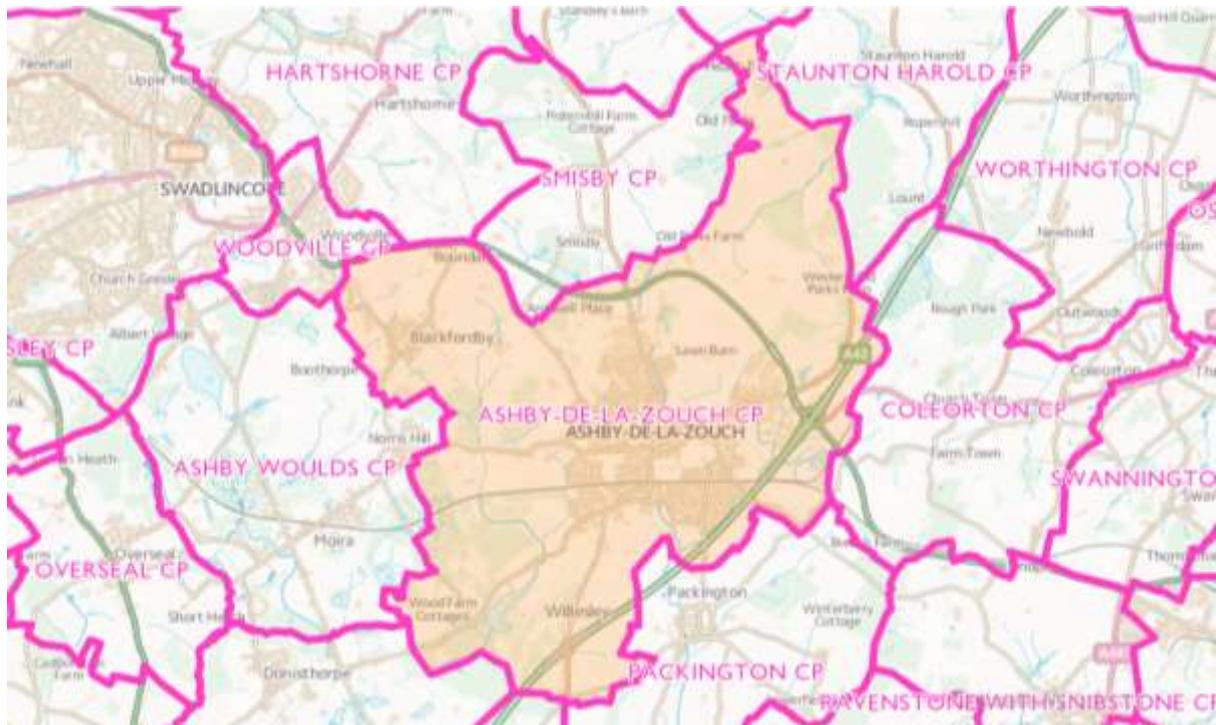
# Ashby de la Zouch Town Council – response to HS2 Working Draft Equality Impact Assessment Area LA03

## 1. Introduction

Ashby de la Zouch Town Council have considered the impacts of HS2 and the information in the Working Draft Equality Impact Assessment Report and wish to put forward this response. The current route passes through two sections of land towards the east side of the Council’s boundaries. The Town Council notes that the town will be subject to some significant impacts. The Town Council’s priorities are:

- To ensure that HS2 does not create social isolation for the residents of New Packington.
- To limit the impact on the children and elderly in our population.

The Town Council has compiled the following using its local community knowledge and the information that has already been provided about the HS2 project.



Ashby de la Zouch Town Council Boundaries

## 2. Housing

The hamlet of Willesley Woodside will be demolished. This will destroy a small community and the social networks within that community. The use of a cut and cover tunnel at Willesley Woodside would reduce the number of demolitions required.

### **3. Open spaces**

Fiveways Wood will no longer be accessible and removes a safe route for residents, especially children, in Measham to access Willesley Woodside and Hicks Lodge Cycle Centre.

### **4. Business and Employment**

There will be a small number of local losses; two units at Park Farm are earmarked for demolition, plus Meridian and the Ashby Road Sandwich Shop. It is hoped that compensation will enable business owners to set up locally.

HS2 prevents the development of the Lounge site as a Strategic Rail Hub, which could have brought 800 – 1,000 long term jobs to the area. Some of these will be off set by construction jobs created by HS2, but these will only be available for a few years.

### **5. Traffic and Transport**

#### **Impact on roads**

The closure of key routes in to the town will impact on outlying villages access to Ashby during the construction period. The town is the main shopping and service centre for the area and many people travel to Ashby for schools, doctors, leisure facilities and other services. It is essential that these smaller communities do not become cut off from the town. This will increase social isolation for village communities. With impacts on children who attend the local schools in Ashby and those in Ashby who attend schools in Packington, Twycross, Market Bosworth and Loughborough. The closure will also prevent children accessing leisure facilities in the town e.g. swimming classes, football, rugby, cricket and tennis clubs. All of these are used by children from the surrounding area. A number of youth organisations meet in Ashby and in Packington e.g. scouts, guides, army cadets and again access will be affected by the road closures.

The proposed diversion routes should be manageable for drivers, but this is dependent on levels of congestion. Many users of the Ashby Road and Leicester Road are children, who walk to school in Ashby, and non-driving older people, who are dependent on public transport to access medical care and the services in Ashby.

#### **Impacts on public rights of way and recreational routes**

The closure of the Ashby and Leicester roads and the numerous Public Rights of Way in the parish will reduce opportunities for the population to exercise, for example rights of way:

- Between Ashby and Packington
- North of junction 13 of the A42 Ashby, towards Rough Park
- Around Willesley Woodside.

#### **Pedestrian accessibility**

Ashby is the location of the two secondary schools, Ivanhoe College and Ashby School whose catchment areas include the surrounding villages. Some pupils from these villages can use the school buses, others, for example in Packington and New Packington cannot use that service. This is because they are within walking distance of the schools. Pupils in Packington use Ashby Road and those in New Packington use Leicester Road to walk to school. Both of these routes are proposed for closure.

It is essential that arrangements are made to keep these pedestrian routes open to enable children to reach their schools.

#### **Isolation effects on communities**

The small community at New Packington is significantly impacted by HS2. New Packington becomes a construction site cut off from the neighbouring town. This risks socially isolating the people living in that community, many of whom are elderly. The 2011 census figures reveal that the Output Area E00131511 which covers New Packington has 19.6% of the population over 65. This compares with a route wide figure of 13% and an East Midlands figure of 14%.

#### **Public transport**

Bus routes are crucial in keeping the elderly population connected with key services in Ashby. A number of bus routes will be affected by the Scheme and alternative services must be put in place. Diversions should include the villages affected.

### **6. Other Equality Impacts**

The Town Council is concerned at the potential lack of access to services in Ashby as a result of the influx of all these extra workers e.g. medical and dental services. There is only one hotel in the area, the Premier Inn which is alongside the main compound at junction 13. There are concerns that this will not be available due to block booking for the construction workforce. There could also be a shortage in rented accommodation within the town.

The access of residents in villages to GPs surgeries during the construction period, because of the number of major roads in the area which will be affected.

**Karen Edwards**  
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**20/12/2018**