Interfaces between HS2 and existing/potential cycling routes
A note on the potential interfaces between the HS2 Project and existing planned and potential cycling routes in Birmingham

The HS2 Project will cut across numerous local cycling routes and footpaths. The quality of its provisions will affect both everyday journeys and visitors trips in some way however small. The detail of the design of bridges and diversions, and the quality of provision for new paths will contribute greatly to the attractiveness of local journeys and to the overall level of cycling in the future along a broad swathe of the country.

In addition, unless we anticipate future plans and potential routes, the HS2 project may end up frustrating the development of popular cycling routes along its route.

These notes bring together the interfaces with HS2 of the proposals arising from the recent study into a National Cycleway along the general corridor of the HS2 project, and a number of other isolated locations arising from “cycle proofing” considerations. In this last respect these notes have only considered the limited number of locations where there are clear opportunities or advantages from providing for dedicated cycling facilities either crossing or parallel to the HS2 route.

We have excluded most minor roads where there is no need, as traffic flows will be small and those major roads where there is no reasonable or foreseeable expectation for anticipating a cycling route in the future.

The standards set out in the HS2 Assurances refer to current design standards. Their recommendations are set out in Appendix 1 and may be summarised as follows:

1. Types of parallel facility in relation to the volume of traffic in highway.
2. Typical cross sections showing Cycleway standards. Note that the Dutch CROW guidelines followed by the study of a National Cycleway associated with HS2 puts great store on the attractiveness of cycling routes and requires considerable verge widths near heavily trafficked roads.
3. Types of crossing requirements and standards in relation to traffic flows.
4. Gradients should be 1:20 or less except in areas where the adjacent road gradients are anyway steeper.
5. The surface of the routes should be of an adequate width and finished with a sealed surface to provide a durable and high quality route to encourage more people to cycle.
6. The study into a proposed National Cycleway associated with HS2 bypassed the leg of HS2 running to Curzon Street, and only considered the issues of reaching Curzon Street itself and overcoming the barrier to cross town routes caused by the bulk of the station. However, from the perspective of cycle proofing the HS2 route where it is constructing new sections of roads and bridges, there are a number of important details where existing cycling facilities can be extended, barriers overcome and potential routes released. These are discussed one at a time working in from Water Orton in the east.

Map showing the location of the cycling interfaces with HS2 works described in these notes.

1. Castle Bromwich to Water Orton: the Birmingham Road
2. River Tame Valley: Water Orton to Chester Road
3. Bromford Lane – works entrance to Depot
4. Aston Church Road
5. Saltley Viaduct
6. Eastern approach to Curzon Street Station
7. Curzon Street Station
1 Castle Bromwich to Water Orton – the Birmingham Road

Both Birmingham City Council and Warwickshire Council have constructed fragments of a route along Orton Road. If any road works are to be carried out in this area as part of HS2 then a new separate cycle track should be provided for along the south side of the road.
2 River Tame Valley: Water Orton to Chester Road

Extensive cycling provision has been provided on Chester Road and throughout Castle Vale, an area which is rather encircled by isolating railways. The works to divert the River Tame provide an opportunity to bring this area into the public realm so as to achieve the next part of the Council’s River Tame Strategy. The route shown here would give Castle Bromwich residents access to the countryside and we suggest that a good shared use route is provided from the Water Orton road through the valley, along the river’s new flood bank to link in with the Chester Road cycling facilities.

1. Link through to the existing cycling tracks on Chester Road to make a connection to the whole Castle Vale area.
2. Follow Tameside Drive and bridge over the new course of the River Tame.
3. Link through the subway to Kingsleigh Drive.
4. Make a good greenway route winding through the Tame valley.
5. Pass under the HS2 viaduct.
6. Link into the Water Orton Road cycling tracks.
3 Bromford Lane – works entrance to Depot

The Council has established extensive cycling facilities around the road system beneath the M6. These dedicated cycling facilities stop short of the residential roads south of the River Tame. The Depot entrance will be very busy with traffic and a new traffic free cycling route is required on the west side of the main road to include for crossing the works and depot entrance.

At the same time provision should be made for a good route to run along the south of the Depot site for eventual continuation in the adjacent development to reach the paths in Ward End Park.

1. Existing cycle tracks around the Fort Parkway gyratory.
2. Spacious shared used track needed on the west side of Bromford Lane leading through to Drews Lane. This will require a dedicated crossing of the Washford Heath Depot access road.
3. Provide for a link path adjacent to the HS2 works road and brook diversion in order to deliver link to future development of industrial site and Ward End Park.
4. Future traffic free link to Ward End Park
5. Separate cycle track in east side of Bromford Lane in order to reach through to Bromford Drive.
5 Saltley Viaduct

The reconstruction of this high level viaduct will allow for a new cycle crossing over the railway barrier something which has not been possible to consider previously on account of the narrowness of the present viaduct. The optimum side of the road is probably the south and provision should be made for an easy ramp down to the Grand Union Canal.

1 Provision needed all around the Heartlands Parkway Roundabout to provide a through route to Nechells Place and Mainstream for local cycling and walking routes.
2 Include a good shared use track on the south side of the new Saltley Viaduct.
3 Provide a ramped link to the Grand Union Canal towpath.
4 Construct a shared use track along the full length of the new road.
5 Connect into Aderley Road and Alum Rock Road.

4 Aston Church Road

Again there are extensive cycling provisions around the Heartlands Parkway junction with a connection to the towpath of the Grand Union Canal. The new HS2 bridge should provide for dedicating routes on each side of the main road to connect through to the network of minor residential roads.

1 Existing cycling provision around all four arms of the Heartlands Parkway junction.
2 Ramped link required to Grand Union Canal Towpath which runs on the north side of the water.
3 Shared use track needed on the south side of the new bridge in order to reach Arley Road.
4 Shared use path on the north side of the new bridge and Aston Church Road to reach Warren Road.
6 Eastern approach to Curzon Street Station

The National Cycleroute identified that the best opportunity for making a high quality greenway approach to come through the open space south of Great Francis Street, then join the “spare” railway land through to Lawley Middleway where there is to be a cycling crossing of the residential Curzon Street junction.

1. Construct a new path through these open spaces.

2. Provide for the path to continue below the viaduct works to reach the side of Lawley Middleway.

3. Provide for a controlled crossing of Lawley Middleway.

4. Make a ramped link to the canal towpath area where there are plans for extensive landscaping and public space works.

5. Continue to the station with a dedicated route to the south of Curzon Street.
7 Curzon Street Station

Here we have to provide cycling routes to and from the station itself, and to provide for cross town routes which would otherwise be suppressed.

a From the east. The main cycling route should be a high capacity route incorporated in the ground to the south of Curzon Street. (There is a narrow shared use path on the University side, but this can barely cope with the existing pedestrian volumes at peak times). The Lawley Middleton junction should be given the full treatment on all its four legs so as to allow an easy access to both the greenway route and one northwards via Windsor Street South. This Curzon Street cycle route should be designed to run the full length of the station frontage to join with the planned Phoenix route to New Street Station. A ramp to the towpath should be incorporated into the design.

b From the north. The route via Woodcock Street and the one along the east side of Corporation Street should both be connected through to the south side of Curzon Street.

c From the west, the City Centre, the Council’s route should deliver the main way to the station from New Street Station and beyond. This may be the opportunity for a large fleet of city bikes so as to make for a convenient and quick trip between these two stations.

d From the south it will be crucial to maintain New Canal Street as a cyclist through route, (as well as the main tram route) in order that the station does not become a barrier to everyday cycling routes. In addition, the stub end of Park Street needs to be linked through to the planned open space and the main entrance to the station.

Parking for cycles needs to be served by these routes and to be of a sufficient size to conveniently take the likely eventual total number coming to the station by bike (1000-2000?).

6 Link through the planned open space to Park Street and Bordesley Street taking into account the level differences.

7 Windsor Street to residential areas.

8 Woodcock Street and Cardigan Street make for a most important north south route. This needs to be linked across Curzon Street.

9 Corporation Street paths need to be taken through to the station entrance.

10 City Council proposals for cycling routes towards the City Centre and New Street.

11 Routes from the south to Curzon Street Station.