This document is a compilation from various fieldwork notes to cover the length of the proposals running through Solihull. Inevitably access to and from the planned International station is the central focus of the notes and we anticipate that details will continue to evolve as the HS2 programme develops.

The route shown here enters Solihull via the Sheldon Country Park and Coleshill green corridor in the north, makes its way to the airport and the stations, and then leaves to the south via Hampton in Arden for Kenilworth or Coventry.

The proposed routes are annotated with maps and photographs.

Appendix 1 includes notes arising from meetings at the Airport and at Solihull held in June and July 2016. These confirm the general alignment shown in this document together with an emphasis on more core routes connecting the various sectors of UK Central.
Introduction

This document is one of 22 Annexes to the main HS2 Cycleway Project Report. It sets out the preferred routes which were identified in workshops, refined in subsequent field surveys and then discussed further with local authorities.

The detailed mapping shows the different traffic free and on road sections, and includes brief notes and photographs describing points of particular interest along the route.

Background to the First Stage

In January 2014, the Department for Transport (DfT) commissioned consultants, Royal HaskoningDHV, to carry out a Feasibility Study into creating a series of world class cycling routes from London to Birmingham, Manchester and Leeds. The project considers a study area that is generally three miles either side of the planned HS2 Rail alignment, and was conceived as an opportunity to deliver excellent local facilities for communities along the whole length of the proposed railway.

It is envisaged that each section of cycle route would serve as an important facility at a local level, connecting where people live to where they want to go to; and by linking the individual sections together, a continuous long distance could be created that would provide an attractive leisure and tourism facility as well.

As far as possible the project was also to enhance pedestrian routes, and in some cases bridleways too, all within the context of creating continuous, safe and attractive routes which would encourage the public to cycle for local trips, for leisure and as tourists.

The report of this first phase of work was completed in December 2014. It included a total of 18 detailed annexes, of which this is one, each of which described a section of the preliminary route options in some detail. The routes themselves were derived from discussions with local authorities and other interested bodies, backed up by cycling the routes as far as this was possible.

In order to avoid too much repetition in the text and explanation of details, a selection of photographs of appropriate arrangements and details from both the UK and the Netherlands is included here to indicate the sort of quality of route the HS2 Cycleway aspires to realise.
Second Stage

The second stage of the study was carried out during 2015. It comprised meeting with the local Highway Authorities and with the principal institutional landowners, such as Network Rail and the Canal & River Trust. Following on from these meetings, and any necessary further fieldwork, the route proposals were revised, and a series of “workbooks” prepared covering the details of how the proposed cycleway would interact with Network Rail, HS2 and others. In addition 4 further Annexes were prepared covering links to the Peak District, and HS3 cycle routes from Manchester to Liverpool, Sheffield and Leeds.

This document is a compilation of material to show the proposed routes through Solihull.

Frequently Asked Questions

How will it be funded?

As the project is still in the feasibility stage, no specific funding commitments have been made; part of this study has been to determine the likely costs. However, should the project be commissioned, it is envisaged that it would be funded by DfT separately to current funding packages.

How will it be delivered, practically and politically?

Part of this feasibility study has been to identify potential delivery models. We have recommended that the local Highway Authority takes the lead, backed up by a central support team to handle commonly difficult matters such as land assembly.

How will it affect current funding streams?

It is not expected that this project would affect current funding streams, so that this project would be in addition to existing cycle infrastructure investment. It would, though, be advantageous to badge current schemes as part of the National Cycle Route.

When will it be delivered?

This feasibility study has identified a potential delivery programme based on the dialogue with local authorities. Should the project be commissioned, we expect certain sections will be able to be delivered relatively quickly whilst others may take longer. Alternatively, funding arrangements could dictate that certain sections are delivered in a particular order. The findings of the feasibility study will help inform these decisions.
Design Standards - Summary

A set of design standards was developed as part of the first stage of the feasibility study. These are available as a separate document. The design standards strongly emphasise the need for continuity and integration of cycle infrastructure, and that facilities should be appealing to the end user and also consider the needs of non-users. The design standards are a working document, and will be reviewed throughout this stage of the feasibility study in order to best take into account differing local contexts.

The design standards are consistent with the project’s overall aim of the National Cycleway being a domestic exemplar of what high-quality integrated modern cycling infrastructure looks like: safe, direct, coherent, comfortable and attractive. The design standards also emphasise that adaptability will be important as the UK grows its cycling mode-share.

A strong focus is on the best practice seen in places with high levels of utility cycling like the Netherlands and Denmark. Attention is also paid to inclusivity, which not only covers all potential types of cyclists – including those with mobility impairment – but accessibility for all types of other users who will interact with the infrastructure. Benefits to the wider community should also be encouraged: even if individuals do not directly use the route for transport or leisure purposes, the design should take the opportunity for place-making along the route to improve the attractiveness of town centres or other areas through which the route passes.

The default position of the design standards is that cyclists should be afforded their own dedicated space with physical separation from other users. This is an effort to move away from infrastructure strategies that default to a shared use path, or on-carriageway facilities with limited protection from motor vehicles on busy roads. The design standards, however, do allow for sharing with motor traffic, pedestrians or equestrians in certain circumstances – normally where volumes are low. Steps may nevertheless be required to engineer these conditions where they are not currently present. It is likely that many extant greenways through open space or in the countryside which are shared with pedestrians and equestrians would already be suitable for use by the National Cycleway with few changes necessary. In more built-up environments, however, the design standards promote the implementation of dedicated infrastructure for cyclists, consistent with the best practice found elsewhere in the world where cycling for everyday journeys is commonplace.

The design standards acknowledge the varied contexts of the areas through which the route is likely to pass. Quality of infrastructure should be highest where potential for the route to be used is greatest, which is in urban areas or between sizeable settlements in rural areas. However, designs should not be put forward that prevent further expansion as usage grows or new journey possibilities are created that stimulate demand for movement.
42 The Green Lane from Bacon’s End has great potential to connect Coleshill to Birmingham across the HS2 route. The lane starts as a series of residential streets connected by fragments of lanes.

43 The Stonebridge Road is a major barrier. There is no crossing provision at all on this fast and straight road. A bridge is the only solution, with long gentle earthenwork ramps, which can be planted up as tree lined avenues to help shield traffic noise. Note that there is a woodland path and a roadside footway on the east side of the road but nothing on the west.

44 The first section of the Lane is now overgrown and scarcely used.

45 The second section is a farm access track and is too steep, its gradient needs to be halved and preferably these earthworks would be parallel to, but separate from the farm road.

46 The bridge across the TWO motorways is level and excellent.

47 The Green Lane is tarmac to start with. When the HS2 Rail goes ahead care should be taken to maintain a direct route and to bank the gradient up to the motorway bridges.

48 This last section of the wide Green Lane is only a narrow path, but set within the original width of land. It could readily be re-built to a good standard.

49 The subway is a commodious bridge, but blocked at the west end with a ruthless palisade fence and small gap. This should be removed and the problem of motorbikes dealt with in some other way.

50 The promenade greenway could be continued in this wide verge/forecourt.

51 Existing path through to Chester Road.

52 New toucan crossing. (Note that it would also be possible to loop around to pass under the side span of this road).

53 New path needed along narrow grassland.

54 Pass under Chelmsley Road Bridge to join start of narrow tarmac path. This road is the start of a direct route to UK Central running mostly adjacent to the main roads.

55 Formal cycle route crosses the River Cole and follows Kingshurst Brook to reach Airport and Sheldon Country Park.

56 Existing bitmac path, approx 3m wide with white line segregated pedestrian/ cycle route.

57 Existing Toucan crossing is provided over Chelmsley Road, but a bridge at river level, to meet the existing route on the opposite bank would avoid the need to cross the road completely.

58 Shared use cycle track along length of Kingshurst Brook. Approx. 3m wide

59 Requires a short new link to transfer the cycle route from the eastern side of the brook to the western side, continuing along Bell Walk (western bank of brook). Would probably require a priority/Toucan crossing on Gloucester Way

60 Existing Toucan crossing but off desire line. Requires path realignment on approaches. Also remove barriers at entry to park.

61 Path passes under side arch of railway viaduct to reach Sheldon Country Park. Notes 62-68 are covered in detail in the Central Birmingham section

62 Existing excellent cycle link to Marston Green station.

63 Follow Elmdon Lane, or construct greenway along airport perimeter green space.

64 At Digby Drive link into track between houses and noise bank.

65 Join path to airport via existing bridge.

66 Construct standard HS2 cycleway path along existing corridor between airport and railway.

67 Existing shared use cycle paths are narrow but mostly can be widened into adjacent space.

68 Clarify and sign cycling destinations at airport and at station as well as route to the International Convention Centre.
This section of the HS2 Cycleroute has a number of objectives including: creating a promenade avenue linking the airport to the HS2 station; enhancing the existing route from Birmingham International towards Solihull and opening up an attractive way to the airport and station from the south; extending the existing Kenilworth Greenway northwards to Hampton-in-Arden; following both the Warwick Road in Kenilworth and The Parade in Leamington Spa to contribute towards creating more attractive and less car dominated central streets; suggesting enhancements to the exiting Kenilworth and Leamington Spa Cycle Route; and including a memorable link to Kenilworth Castle.

The salient points along the routes are described in the following notes, and examples of the standard and quality of route envisaged for the HS2 Cycleway Project are summarised on the next few pages. The route via the HS2 station would become the National Cycleway when it is complete.

1. Planned route from Marston Green can be built all through to the junction for the International Station.
2. Provide continuity at the junction.
3. The existing cycle track is nicely set back behind trees, but needs cutting back hard to gain and maintain the full width.
4. Provide continuity across this junction.
5. The existing route crosses Airport Way at this point and a raised zebra crossing is needed to emphasis continuity of the route.
6. The existing Solihull cycling route is all in place but generally of a. Ope standard and there are numerous details to be attended to
7. Although the existing path is 2.5m wide its proximity to the main road traffic is wearying and it would be better reconstructed along the field edge. A crossing with a central island is required to reach Shadowbrook Lane.
8. Shadowbrook Lane is an attractive road. Removal of the central white line and adding advisory cycling lanes would be the appropriate solution.
9. A direct promenade route too HS2 station is absolutely essential for the movement of people between all the big sites here. Use the existing bridge under the railway.
10. Create a promenade and avenue all the way to the HS2 station taking in the shores of the lake for an attractive route.
11. Provide a dedicated route to the station entrance and past it to pick up the line of the former railway.
12. Reduce the width of the one way road under the main road to a single lane so as to create the space to take a dedicated walking and cycling route through
13. Follow the line of the old railway. For the first section use the west side field edge to avoid the industrial use of the site. Towards the south the railway formation is available and and informal path leads to the road.
14. The southern part of this old main road, now a cul de sac, is a bit busy on account of the small business park.
15. Provide a convenient crossing of the main road to facilitate a link to the station and a continuation of the route.
16. Of the options through Hampton-in-Arden, Fentham Road involves quite a climb, Station Road is now blocked by office development at its southern end and the main road is much too busy. We concluded that the best route was to make up the footpath east of the railway to effectively extend the nature park at Packhorse Bridge north to the village.
17. Marsh Lane is most attractive and is all but traffic free as it is a cul-de-sac to the Nature Reserve.
20 These roads are quiet and suitable but a more direct route adjacent to the railway fence would be better.

21 Construct a good path adjacent to the main road (this will require some realignment of the carriageways opposite the cottages) to reach the hotel and existing crossings and cycle track. Or better to follow Wooton Green Lane, convert the existing set back footway to shared use until a convenient crossing of the main road for Lavender Hall Lane so as to join the good paths through open space and then finally make a new link across the open space north of Riddings Hill to reach the cycle track for the station.

22 Existing Cycleway beside new road can be enhanced with avenue trees and continuity provision. Or it might be better to follow the paths through the village open space?

18 The 15th century Packhorse Bridge is a highlight of this route. Its approach paths need to be cleared out and resurfaced. Note the raised walkway for use in times of flood. This leads through to the Back Lane road option for Coventry.

19 The attractive bridleway around the south side of the fishing lake and golf club house (with restaurant) makes for an attractive way through.
**HS2 Cycleway Project: Birmingham International to Leamington Spa**

22. Existing Cycleway beside new road can be enhanced with avenue trees and continuity provision. Or it might be better to follow the paths through the village open space?

23. Treatment of road approaching Berkswell Station would enhance continuity of route.

24. Link to start of greenway needs to be completed on an embankment to avoid present flooding.

25. The whole greenway through to Burton Green is affected by HS Rail. It is important that the reconstruction of this route creates a greenway feel, that it is to a high standard, that gradient changes are easy (1:25 max to reflect this railway route) and that the road crossing at Burton Green is a protected raised zebra as currently the public enjoy a bridge under the road.

26. Existing Kenilworth Greenway along former railway.

27. Link to Warwick University and Coventry described is separate notes.

28. Connect 2 bridge over Coventry Road.

29. Section of existing path on land held under Licence from Network Rail.

30. Drop down to join Forge Road residential cul-de-sac.

31. Widen footpath over very short section of Stoneleigh Road so as to reach existing signed path.

32. Similarly improve link between the two paths at the end of Park Road, and ease the gradient of the existing path by riverside.

33. This ends at Bridge Street which is rather unfortunate since this is the main A452. However the existing arched bridge under the road is just purpose made for continuing the route straight through into Abbey Park.

34. Currently cycling is not permitted in Abbey Park. However a very few key links would knit together potentially popular route is Kenilworth, would give them a focus and would be a memorable highlight of everyday journeys. There are three routes of great interest.

34a. A diagonal route to Abbey End searching out the easiest even gradient possible to reach the top of the hill; and the town centre.

34b. A route along the valley floor to cross Castle Road for the back lane used for NCN52.

34c. A route to Kenilworth Castle. This might go one side or the other of the lake, cross Castle Road, negotiate the area of the flooding, to pass under the Castle approach bridge for the entrance. Alternatively, or additionally, looping around to the south of Castle Hill and approaching the Castle from the west.
HS2 Cycleway Project: Birmingham International to Leamington Spa

- Traffic free and access roads
- On road

January 2017
Although it has not been practical to survey links to this proposed station good access to the station is equally important, as is good access to Birmingham International Airport. At this time we have not seen detailed plans for this station, but we must assume that the provision for cycling will be carefully detailed.

These notes consider how best to provide access from the north, from the Airport and Network Rail Station and from the south.

0 Make new route from Elmdon Road bridge to avoid most of Bickenhill road.
1 The “Solihull” route envisages following Bickenhall Road. This is too busy to be an attractive route, so a separate path will need to be constructed.
2 Crossing Coleshill Heath Road will require detail.
3 Blackfirs Lane cul de sac.
4 Main road crossing required.
5 Station approach should be designed with high quality cycling route to station entrance passing under M42.
6 The Airport /Station Link needs to start with a dedicated path via a widened pavement.
7 Utilise the existing subway keeping it open at all times.
8 Make a dedicated promenade route around via car park verges and widened footways to reach the Lakeside. Note that this whole area is only semi-open to the public and a way needs to be found of resolving this regime so as to allow the public at all reasonable times.
9 Attractive lakeside path.
10 Cross the motorway adjacent to the planned Airport Link, or via north side of East Way.
11 Link to station entrance via promenade path.

12 **The Link to the South** is dictated by how best to cross the A45 Coventry Road. On the basis that at this stage in the HS2 procedures it will be difficult to be fitted in alongside HS2 Rail, the only practical option is to hunt along the alignment of the former railway.
13 Provide crossing of East Way.
14 East Way under the M45 is one way north and the wide carriageway could be reduced to allow a good cycling track along the east side of the road.
15 Although the railway (Stonebridge and Whiteacre Line) formation itself is occupied by adjacent industrial premises, the route could be negotiated along the field boundary edge.
16 Reach the Old Station Road (a cul de sac, although a cycling link could be made to the Motorcycling Museum at the north end) and travel down to Hampton in Arden.
17 Provide possible crossing of High Street and rejoin the main route from the International Airport.
18 The existing route to Solihull Town Centre needs to be developed to a high standard of surface and continuity. This will be an important component of the network of routes needed to serve UK Central and ensure that it is a popular area for the public to cycle.
Birmingham International HS2 Station linkages
HS2 Cycleway Project: Birmingham International to Leamington Spa: an option via Coventry

It would be difficult to bypass Coventry – the birthplace of the modern cycle- and a City lying so close to HS2 Rail. A number of options were suggested at the workshops and in the end there was a choice of the main route running via Kenilworth or Coventry, the former being the more direct. This Coventry Diversion is made up of two radial links to the HS2 Cycleway, the first offering a good quality cycling route to and from Birmingham International, and the second a route through Warwick University. The latter in particular follows much of the existing NCN 62 and sets out to resolve its defects and make it a truly attractive route for local people.

Please note that we also investigated an option via Meriden, but for the time being at least have failed to find a satisfactory route from Birmingham International to Meriden itself, although the remainder of the way to Coventry does have some potential.

A It would be most desirable to go via Meriden, the Centre of England. It is not clear how, or if, a good quality route can be achieved, especially at either end, and in dealing with this very wide, former main road.

B A link from Berkeswell to the station could be a reason for going this way but all the roads in this area are uncomfortably busy.

C This direct route via Four Oaks has the most potential of becoming a good route, memorable and popular, but this depends entirely on making a good crossing of the main A452 in association with HS2 Rail.

1 The core HS2 cycle route running from Hampton-in-Arden to Kenilworth.

2 Marsh Lane is interrupted by the main A452, at this point a fast dual carriageway. HS2 Rail is reconstructing the road to pass over the railway which gives an opportunity for the Cycleroute to travel under the road, adjacent to the railway. Such a protected crossing would be well worth achieving as Dale Road beyond is a most attractive traffic free route. The resolution of this crossing is critical to the viability of the route.

3 Dale Road is a soundly surfaced bridleway and miraculously hides the adjacent quarries from view.

4 Back Lane is a little too heavily trafficked to be entirely comfortable. Take measures to reduce through traffic by entrance features either end, remove through signing, access only, remove central white line and add cycle lanes and introduce speed tables.

5 Provide crossing of busy Broad Lane via central island and construct cycle track in the adjacent land separated from road by hedge trees.

a) Include a promenade access to the station from the east.

b) Include a crossing under the A452 to reach the open river valley.

c) Make a riverside route along the Blythe passing under the main road at Stonebridge.

d) Work a way past the lakes and past the Stonebridge Golf Club to reach Somers Road.

e) Create a new greenway route in the restoration of the gravel pit workings as a resource for Meriden residents.

f) Main Road has a considerable width which could be reduced to give a wide promenade route through the length of the settlement.

g) As the onward main road to Coventry is far from enticing take the Berkeswell Road to Four Oaks. This road would need some traffic calming measures such as the removal of the central white line and the inclusion of two advisory cycling lanes.
HS2 Cycleway Project: Birmingham International to Leamington Spa: an option via Coventry
### Appendix I

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<th>Notes arising from meetings at the Airport and at Solihull held in June and July 2016. These confirm the general alignment shown in this document together with an emphasis on more core routes connecting the various sectors of UK Central.</th>
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Background
On 12th August 2013 the Prime Minister announced an ambition to increase cycling in England towards the levels achieved in neighbouring countries in Europe where 10%-15% of all trips are commonly made by the bicycle compared with 2-3% in England. He also announced a Feasibility Study to explore how a new national cycleway could be created that would broadly follow the route of the HS2 railway line from London to Birmingham, Leeds and Manchester.

The primary objectives of a linear cycle way would be to:

- Provide a national exemplar of a modern and international cycling network and its infrastructure
- Serve both leisure and utility cyclists and walkers by providing a safe, convenient, attractive and continuous network of links to local stations, urban centres, existing and planned employment centres, tourist attractions and new housing developments
- Consider the option of a mainly traffic-free core route that would be attractive to non-confident cyclists and encourage domestic and international tourism

A Partnership of Royal HaskoningDHV, Phil Jones Associates, and John Grimshaw & Associates was appointed in January 2014 as the project consultants to undertake this feasibility study, with a brief to:

- Identify potential demand and opportunities for cycling in communities along a route that broadly follows a 3-mile corridor each side of the proposed HS2 railway
- Examine how we might create a new national cycleway, linking routes and upgrading existing cycle infrastructure or rights of way from London to Birmingham and then onto Manchester and Leeds
- Consider options for enhancements to local cycle networks in communities along the route

Engagement with stakeholders took place in 2014 to understand local context, economic development objectives, and transport aspirations in order to develop an in-principle route proposal for feasibility evaluation.

Sample demand assessment and cost estimates revealed a strong business case for taking forward a range of potential options: a series of local but unconnected links within the corridor; a linear spine route; and a linear route with additional satellite links. Providing the most local connectivity and thus the most compelling business case, the latter was recommended for further evaluation in Phase 2 of the feasibility study, for which the same project team was appointed to undertake in 2015.

This further evaluation included a second round of engagement with local stakeholders to check that local needs were accounted for in the draft route options, and to determine whether strategic support exists for the scheme in order for the Government to take it forward.

This note sets out the stakeholder engagement undertaken with Solihull Council in June and July 2015, and the resolution of the project team to recommend options that help meet its transport objectives.

The route in Solihull
The preferred route options in Solihull were agreed at two workshops, the first at Birmingham Airport and the second at Solihull Council House broadly covering the western and eastern sections respectively. Birmingham City Council representatives were in attendance for part of the first (western) meeting because of the cross-boundary interaction west of the airport.

Solihull (west) meeting attendees – 8th June @ Birmingham Airport, Diamond House:

- Graham Lennard, Andy Chidgey (Birmingham City Council);
- Alison Kennedy (Centro);
- Amrit Manku, David Keaney (Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council);
- Rob Eaton (Birmingham Airport);
- Andrew Saffrey, Adrian Lord (Phil Jones Associates – project team)

Solihull (east) meeting attendees – 22nd July @ Solihull Council House:

- Ken Harrison, Amrit Manku, Walter Bailey (Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council)
- Andrew Saffrey (Phil Jones Associates – project team)

The first meeting concentrated on routes to the north, south and west of the Airport. Solihull presented a network of cycle routes, attached as Appendix B, radiating out from the Airport site which had been identified as part of a cycle access strategy for “UK Central”. UK Central is Solihull’s branding of the key employment and commercial destinations within the Borough, and a means by which to develop these further with the arrival of the HS2 railway. The UK Central sites, from north to south, are:

- Birmingham Business Park
- Area around ‘Birmingham Junction’ HS2 station; the triangle between the M42, A45 and A446/A452.
- NEC and its campus
- Birmingham Airport and its campus
- Jaguar Land Rover Solihull; Lode Lane
- Solihull Town Centre
- Blythe Valley Business Park; M42 J4

There is a strong desire to link all these sites together multi-modally. It was acknowledged that Solihull was one of many examples where the HS2 corridor was perpendicular to the locally identified priority movement axis. As such, the outcome of the meeting was to recommend a series of satellite links and loops. Notwithstanding that, the “main” HS2 corridor which by-passes Birmingham Curzon Street dictates a cycleway that is more closely aligned to the UK Central corridor in Solihull, namely the connection between Marston Green, north-west of the Airport, and Coleshill. Coleshill itself if a location of many jobs and industries albeit lying within the jurisdiction of Warwickshire.

Resolution 1: that the direct London-to-Lichfield leg of the National Cycleway would link Coleshill to the HS2 Interchange station, as shown on the attached plan.

The project team had originally identified the preferred route into the Airport site from the west as being the upgrade of the existing path running south of and parallel to the railway line. There have been longstanding issues with the completion of this route, originally put forward by Sustrans, because of concerns about routeing via the backs of properties on Digby Drive. The second meeting with Solihull was able to clarify that this route could be resurrected under the auspices of the National Cycleway.

Resolution 2: that the London-to-Birmingham leg of the National Cycleway would link Birmingham Airport to Birmingham City Centre via Marston Green, Sheldon Country Park and the A45 corridor.
A more northerly parallel route from Marston Green, along Bickenhill Road, would help provide access to Birmingham Business Park and the northern tip of the HS2 station triangle, as identified in Solihull’s aspirational UK Central cycle network. Birmingham considered that a continuation of the A45 corridor scheme to meet the existing cycle paths on the south side of the Airport would provide alternative connectivity to the airport site itself and this is already an aim of the A45 sustainable transport corridor scheme being developed by BCC in partnership with SMBC as part of the Birmingham Cycle Revolution programme and under the Birmingham Connected roadspaces allocation policy.

Resolution 3: that a chord between the Birmingham and Lichfield legs be provided between Marston Green and Birmingham Business Park, as shown on the attached plan, which would mainly follow existing closed roads and residential developments.

The absence of connectivity to Solihull town centre appears to be a major oversight of the route options identified by the project thus far, especially considering that a bridge via Coventry has been recommended and places even further away from the 3-mile corridor such as Rugby and Loughborough have been included in satellite links. An existing cycle track running alongside Bickenhill Lane from the Airport exists as far south at Catherine-de-Barnes. It would require minimal intervention to develop this as a route into Solihull town centre. This could also be the basis for a link to the Lode Lane Jaguar Land Rover plant, via a possible new bridge link west via Castle Hills Farm, which would correspond to existing desires from local equestrians. This last suggestion would have considerable interaction with the mooted “two-junction solution for M42 access to the Airport, with a new link expected to be created from near the proposed Solihull Motorway Service Area site to the A45 east of Edmiston.

It is therefore recommended that the Bickenhill Lane to Lode Lane link be considered as part of mitigation or “cycle proofing” for that proposal as there would be an element of simplicity in Solihull dealing with Highways England directly without having to also interact with the National Cycleway project in addition.

Resolution 4: to recommend a spur off the Bickenhill Lane cycle route to connect into Solihull town centre, as shown on the attached plan, with potential for a further link from Bickenhill Lane to Lode Lane to be addressed as part of Highways England cycle-proofing works associated with the M42/A45 junction improvements.

Resolution 5: to recommend a spur off the Sheldon Valley cycle route (London-to-Birmingham leg of the National Cycleway) to connect to the Lode Lane Jaguar Land Rover site consistent with the aspirational UK Central cycle network, as shown on the attached plan.

The second meeting concentrated on the route in East Solihull and around the HS2 Interchange site. The HS2 station is problematic in terms of cycle access (and pedestrian access) as it is entirely surrounded by high speed dual carriageways (A45, A446/A452, and the M42 Motorway). Solihull are keen to connect communities in the East Solihull area to the proposed HS2 station, as these are rural settlements adversely affected by the railway scheme with the line compounding the severance to walking and cycling presented by the A452 dual carriageway in particular.

Solihull council presented the UK Central masterplan which preserves a “green corridor” across the M42 as a pedestrian/cycle link to NEC and the Airport. It was agreed the National Cycleway would use this alignment, although funding would be required to bring forward the “green bridge” across the M42 as this would support early use of the cycling and walking facilities, particularly during the HS2 railway construction phase.

Resolution 6: to align the National Cycleway with the internal cycling routes assigned in the UK Central HS2 Interchange masterplan, as shown on the attached plan.

Gaining access from the south and east into the HS2 Interchange was then discussed. The A45 barrier can be overcome by taking a greenway along the former Stonebridge-Whitacre railway line. Although this has been mooted for reopening once HS2 arrives, to provide a better connection from Derby Tamworth and Coleshill to both the Airport and the HS2 Interchange, Solihull’s own assessment of the scheme is that it is not viable because of the structures required (the M6 / M6 toll interchange for example is right in the path of the former railway line). Thus, as a link from the HS2 Interchange to Hampton-in-Arden, this would be the ideal solution. Solihull’s expressed a view that should an improved public transport connection to Tamworth be promoted by Centro, it would more practically achieved by a “fast bus” scheme or similar.

Resolution 7: to recommend a connection from the HS2 Interchange station area to Hampton-in-Arden via the former Stonebridge-Whitacre railway line, as shown on the attached plan.

South and east of Hampton, Solihull preferred for the National Cycleway to link to as many adjacent settlements as possible to each other as well as to the HS2 Interchange. Satellite arms to Meriden and Knowle were put forward, although the key spine would be HS2 Interchange / Hampton / Berkswell Station. Solihull’s preference was for existing rights of way and highways to be used to fulfil the route, with short “bridging” sections of new alignment across open land if necessary. Solihull were supportive of the principle of stopping up any country lanes if it would protect the traffic-free integrity of the route. This was seen to be consistent with Solihull’s objectives of preserving the rural character of villages such as Hampton-in-Arden.

The link via Berkswell station car park onto the Kenilworth Greenway is already being developed as part of HS2 mitigation, and would constitute the main spine route of the National Cycleway on to Kenilworth and Leamington.

Resolution 8: to recommend that the National Cycleway provides a connection from Hampton-in-Arden Station to Berkswell Station / Kenilworth Greenway by utilising existing rights of way and public highways, as shown on the attached plan.
Map showing principal cycling routes envisaged by Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council

- Principal National Route
- Direct everyday route from Coleshill to UK Central