## EIA Quality Mark Case Study

### Key Issues –

- Numerous topographic, engineering and environmental constraints including crossing or running along existing major transport corridors, such as the Metropolitan underground line, M25 and Chilterns line;
- London Metropolitan area heavily constrained as route passes through existing development and infrastructure and extant planning issues;
- Country South route passes through the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty including significant amounts tunnelling though the AONB to avoid visual impacts and the associated management of tunnel materials;
- Country South route also passes through and in close proximity to a number of SSSIs and environmentally sensitive sites;
- High profile project with numerous affected land and property owners, crossing a number of administrative and local government boundaries, interested stakeholder groups, major organisations and

### Purpose of the project

The Government set out its case for High Speed rail in the January 2012. The main themes were improve capacity on the critically important north south routes, particularly the WCML where capacity is forecast to be exhausted by the mid-2020s and to improve connectivity and the performance of key north-south intercity rail routes. Construction and operation of a high speed rail network between London and Birmingham, Manchester and Leeds, linked to the existing rail network, was concluded to be the best means for delivering these goals.

### Description of the project

Phase 1 involves 186 miles between London to the West Midlands. The proposed route travels through central London, urban and suburban Greater London, rural southern and central England to suburban and central Birmingham with connections north via the West Coast Mainline. Temple Group in consortium with ERM and Mott MacDonald (ETM) were appointed to provide Environmental Impact Assessment advisory services throughout the design development process and produce area specific Environmental Statements for two contract areas – London Metropolitan and Country South.
Lessons learnt
Colocation within the same office was a key aspect of the successful integration of mitigation into the design. The design team were able to share ideas, discuss and constructively challenge examining potential advantages / dis advantages prior to formal design approval;

Engineering section managers and environmental Route Window Managers (EIA Coordinators) had responsibility for the same section of the route. This ensured an established point of contact to critically evaluate design decisions before formal inclusion into the design.

Initially sections of the route were divided between a large series of engineering features. This was reconsidered to assign the responsibility for each section by Community Forum Area which formed the basis of the Volume 2 ES reports.

Lessons learnt cont. -
Having an experienced EIA Coordinator assigned to each community forum area with knowledge of the area on hand to integrate emerging mitigation solutions into the design.

Aligning the engineering and environmental assessment programmes was a key aspect to the successful delivery. Key stages of the assessment were aligned to various control points or design freezes which was essential to integrate the mitigation response into the design.

ES delivered on time and successfully secured second reading in the House of Commons.

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