## EXHIBIT LIST

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HIGH SPEED RAIL (LONDON - WEST MIDLANDS) BILL

PARLIAMENTARY PETITION

P2A-000053 – R & A Williams and J & S Thornhill

Presented by
Charles Roger Bedson BSc MRICS FAAV
HIGH SPEED RAIL (WEST MIDLANDS-CREWE) BILL

Please find set out herewith our Parliamentary Petition in respect to Mr Richard & Mrs Alison Williams and Mr Jeffrey & Mrs Sheila Thornhill.

1. **Background**

1.1 Wrinehill Hall Farm comprises a highly geared and highly efficient dairy enterprise, currently milking 450 cows each producing 11,000 litres per cow per annum.

1.2 The farm concentrates on a high welfare system with cows milked three times a day, and with high attention to detail regarding diet and feeding regime.

1.3 In addition, there are 300 followers on the farm being the dairy heifers that are raised specifically to go into the dairy herd. The herd is essentially a closed herd with only home reared heifers being introduced to the milking herd. Calves tend to be sold off.

1.4 The farm is in the fourth generation with the three younger members of the family now actively involved and with the business moving forwards.

1.5 Significant investment has been made over the last few years with many new buildings constructed and silage and slurry stores built to modern standards. The milking parlour was built in 2008 and can house 50 cows at a time on a 25:50 swing over system.

1.6 The farm has certain borrowing for the investment that it has made and these are being paid off swiftly through an efficient farming system.

2.0 **Impact on the Farming System**

2.1 It is estimated that during the construction process around 80 acres of land will be taken from the farm.

- Plan CT-05-234 (Appendix A) shows the farm boundary edged in red. Fundamentally, due to Nitrate Vulnerable Zone limits, losing 80 acres could mean losing 80 cows.

- With each cow producing 11,000 litres of milk there will be a reduction of 880,000 litres in production per year.

- In turnover terms, at around 30p per litre it equates to £264,000 per annum.

2.2 Essentially then, land take needs to be minimised to reduce the impact of the scheme on this business.

2.3 Referring to plan CT-05-235 (Appendix A) the following points are noted:

- Point 1 - there is a soil dump at this location which takes around 11 acres of productive grassland. Petitioners request this be minimised or better still, moved, such that it forms a longer, thinner embankment towards point 1a which they note is potentially to be planted with trees.

- Indeed, your petitioners do occupy this adjoining land and have received no justification as to why this area should be planted with trees (see below).
• Point 2a – there is a temporary material stockpile. Again, petitioners request this is kept to an absolute minimum as it is vital land near to the farmstead.

• Request assurances in this regard.

• Point 14 – there is an area of land noted as potentially required during construction. This area of land is directly on top of the farm’s milking parlour. It is the area where 450 cows are milked three times a day. They stand in a collecting yard at this point and exit to the rear of the parlour to go back to their cubicle sheds. See Appendix A1.

• Any disruption of this area will potentially close down the business and so your Petitioners request it is avoided altogether or alternatively, HS2 construct a new milking parlour in a location to enable the business to continue.

• Point 12 – petitioners note farm drive (BW2) is noted for construction traffic use. Not suitable for this purpose. Route passes underneath the railway bridge on the West Coast Mainline which is a single track access suitable for low heavy goods vehicles only. Farm has own alternative access at point 13 at Appendix A.

• Some loads arriving at the farm have to be unloaded on the north eastern side of the West Coast Mainline in the layby at point 12b, with goods and products then transported by a lower, smaller trailer under the West Coast Mainline underpass. Cannot interfere with farm access, milk tankers, feed lorries, cattle lorries etc. See Appendix A2.

• Apparent that there is a construction traffic route between the milking parlour and the cattle cubicle sheds. 450 cows are milked in this location three times a day. Petitioners suspect HS2 has not taken this on board despite warnings to the contrary. See green dotted line at 14 and Appendix A1.

2.4 Land take elsewhere is significant and petitioners request HS2 do all it can to minimise this land take in order to assist the business and mitigate as much as possible compensation claims. Fundamentally, the farm simply wants to carry on with its main focus which is milking cows and producing high quality milk primarily for the UK market. As with most claimants, not interested in rowing about compensation simply wish to continue to run their business.

2.5 Referring now to plan CT-06-234 (Appendix B) the following points are noted:

• Points 3 & 4 – there are two areas of woodland habitat creation at these points. Despite requests, petitioners have received no justification as to why these areas need to be provided.

• Almost five acres of land taken up which could otherwise remain in agricultural production to provide vital feedstuffs for the cows throughout the year. There are already significant areas of woodland in the location, very few of which are impacted by HS2’s scheme.

• The neighbouring land parcel shown edged brown on CT-06-234 is rented under a long term agreement. There are three parcels of land noted as 4a, 4b and 4c, in all around 12.5 acres. Petitioners are not aware of where such a quantity of grassland habitat is being lost as a result of the scheme. This is a vital area of land to the farm business and needs to be retained in agricultural production.

Petitioners have seen no justification or proof that the wildlife in the area will be significantly disturbed if these areas are not used for grassland habitat creation and so request they be removed from the plans.
• Petitioners request HS2 seek a second opinion on ecological mitigation measures from an independent and perhaps more commercially minded team of ecologists.

• Point 5 – there is a balancing pond which in its current configuration surrounded by hedgerow, takes up around 3.9 acres of land.

• Unnecessary area of land take and the impact on the farm can be mitigated by moving it to point 5a. This would do away with one of the turning heads and take up less land and therefore have a lower impact on the farm business. This will help the farm business and save taxpayers’ money.

• Point 6 - the severance impact of the railway will be immense and whilst at present there is field to field access throughout the length and width of the farm, this will be reduced to just one crossing point being the Madeley Bridleway 2 Accommodation Underbridge shown at point 10. As a result the track shown at point 6 will become the main artery throughout the farm and hence will need to be a hard metalled surface track. Petitioners request HS2 provide this.

• Point 7 - a track is likewise required at this point to gain access to the neighbouring land which is rented under a long term agreement.

• Point 8 - petitioners note the structural edges of the railway embankment. They request HS2 limits its scheme to the structural embankment. There are significant areas of landscape mitigation planting (SCRUB/woodland) along the length of the scheme on this land. Petitioners see no benefit to it. They are the only residential property looking at the railway line and they would like it to be removed from the scheme.

• Point 9 – petitioners have previously requested on several occasions that an additional track be constructed from approximately point 10 leading round the toe of the embankment to point 9. This will give further access to the fields on the northern and western extremes of the farm. Request assurance.

• Point 10 – petitioners have requested on several occasions a specification for the Madeley Bridleway 2 Accommodation Underbridge. As this is likely to be the main or only access point to cross the farm, your petitioners suggest and underpass of 6 metres in width and 6 metres in height to allow the farm machinery and equipment to pass safely underneath.

• Point 11 – there is a track at this point leading up the side of an embankment to gain access to the railway. Petitioners wonder why such a large area of land (around 2.5 acres) is necessary to achieve this and wonder if there is a simpler solution at a different location.

• Petitioners have previously asked about mitigation measures for the Checkley Brook Viaduct and what noise mitigation measures will be put in place. They require clarification on this point please because there are some residential dwellings in the vicinity.

• Petitioners have also raised the issue of notice periods for entry for either temporary possession or permanent acquisition. Petitioners request a minimum of 12 months’ notice of entry to enable the farm to plan. If it is to lose 80 acres of cattle feed/forage then it needs to know and to plan well in advance. This land is also used for spreading slurry and manure and if the land is to be lost then again, it needs to plan for alternative arrangements. 28 days’ notice will not suffice.
3. As has been raised previously, engagement with HS2 has been woefully inadequate with a failure to engage on important points even at a basic level. Only three on farm meetings with no substantive feedback.

4. A copy of the NFU assurances are provided at Appendix C. Request assurance please that these will apply to your petitioners in this case.

5. Assurance requested that HS2 will meet the reasonable cost of this petition and for your petitioners’ advisor to attend the committee hearing. Petitioners have tried to meet with HS2 to seek to mitigate the impact of the scheme on their property. Petitioners believe had HS2 engaged more meaningfully then the petition would not have been necessary.

We commend these points to the Committee.
HIGH SPEED RAIL (WEST MIDLANDS – CREWE) BILL – HOUSE OF COMMONS SELECT COMMITTEE: THE NATIONAL FARMERS UNION

Part A – Assurances specific to NFU

Assurance No.1 – Agricultural liaison service

1.1. The Secretary of State will require the Nominated Undertaker to ensure that there is an agricultural liaison service providing individuals experienced in agricultural matters in place and contactable by telephone 24 hours a day, 7 days per week, during the construction of HS2 works on agricultural land.

1.2. The Secretary of State will require that the Nominated Undertaker will:

1.2.1. Provide the name and contact details of the agricultural liaison service provider(s) (and any replacement) to the NFU before he or she takes up his or her post;

1.2.2. Arrange meetings between the agricultural liaison service provider(s) and the NFU on a regular basis, and at least every three months to discuss the activities of the agricultural liaison service provider.

Assurance No.2 – Prompt payment of compensation

2.1. The Secretary of State will, in line with wider Government policies, require the Nominated Undertaker to pay promptly compensation that has been agreed or determined by the Upper Tribunal of the Lands Chamber to be payable to a claimant under the Bill in respect of the compulsory acquisition of agricultural land/rural businesses.

Assurance No.3 – Estimated claims for compensation

3.1. Where a farmer/rural business owner submits to the Promoter detailed particulars of an estimated claim for compensation arising from the compulsory acquisition of agricultural land/a rural business (a “detailed request”), the Promoter will provide in writing within three months of receipt of the detailed request the Nominated Undertaker’s estimate of the compensation (including for disturbance) payable in respect of the compulsory purchase of that agricultural land/rural business.

3.2. Where possession of land is taken by the Nominated Undertaker under Schedule 15 of the Bill and an owner occupier or agricultural tenant submits to the Promoter a particularised and evidenced claim for compensation based upon agricultural losses arising from the temporary occupation of agricultural land pursuant to paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 15 to the Bill (a “compensation request”), the Promoter will make interim payments of compensation as appropriate on a case by case basis. For example, payments could be made on a three monthly, six monthly or (as a minimum) annual basis taking account of the particular characteristics of the agricultural business in question. Before making the interim payments, the Nominated Undertaker may require the owner occupier or agricultural tenant to enter into a Temporary Possession Agreement in advance of the exercise of powers.

Assurance No.4 – Relocation matters

4.1. In respect of farmers/rural business owners, the Promoter will use reasonable endeavours to reach an agreement with that farmer/rural business owner, where a business case is
approved and where it relates to a relocation necessary for a particular business in consequence of permanent acquisition by the Promoter of land required for that business, such agreement to provide that compensation will be paid in advance of entry after Royal Assent, subject to the Promoter being satisfied there is no subsisting mortgage over the land in question and that suitable security for any advanced payment can be adequately secured.

Assurance No.5 – Liability and claims

5.1. The Secretary of State confirms that the Nominated Undertaker will be liable to farmers and rural business owners for the actionable acts and omissions of the Nominated Undertaker’s contractors and sub-contractors in constructing the works authorised by the Bill, and as a consequence the Secretary of State will require the Nominated Undertaker to:

5.1.1 Set in place arrangements to deal promptly with any claims made by farmers and rural business owners arising as a consequence of the construction of the works authorised by the Bill (including as a consequence of the acts or omissions of the Nominated Undertaker’s contractors and sub-contractors).

5.2. The Secretary of State will require the Nominated Undertaker to implement contractual monitoring, reporting and enforcement procedures to ensure that third party claims against the Nominated Undertaker arising out of the execution of HS2 works on the farmer/rural business owner’s land are being dealt with promptly and effectively.

Assurance No.6 – Water supply

6.1 Where an existing private water supply to a farm is adversely and directly, affected by the construction of the Proposed Works, the Nominated Undertaker will, if requested by the farmer or landowner to do so, provide or procure or meet the reasonable cost of the provision of an alternative supply of water where reasonably practicable to do so and if there is no other practicable alternative means of supply available.

6.2 Where the supply is so affected temporarily by the construction of the Proposed Works, then the alternative supply need only be supplied for the period during which it is so affected.

6.3 Where a request is made by the farmer or landowner under 6.1 for a permanent supply due to permanent severance of the existing supply caused by the construction of the Proposed Works the Nominated Undertaker will where provision of an alternative means of supply can be demonstrated by the land owner/farmer to be reasonably required for his business, provide or procure or meet the reasonable cost of a permanent means of alternative supply of water.

Assurance No.7 – Borrow Pits

7.1 Following the completion of preliminary Ground Investigation of the sites proposed under the Bill for development of Borrow Pits but prior to the termination of proceedings on the Bill before the House of Commons Select Committee, the Promoter will publish a review of the extent of land likely to be required and in preparing the report the Promoter will consult with the NFU and those landowners on whose land the Borrow Pits are proposed to be developed.

Part B – Generic assurances to be offered to farmers or rural business owner petitioners on a case-by-case basis

Assurance No.8 – Provision of information
8.1. The Promoter will keep the Petitioner informed of the progress of the Bill and of likely target dates for implementation of Phase 2A of the HS2 project.

Assurance No.9 – Notices of entry and taking possession

9.1. Notwithstanding the requirements under the Bill to give 3 months' notice of entry in relation to the outright acquisition of land, where reasonably practicable, the Nominated Undertaker will provide a longer period of notice to the Petitioner in respect of any of the Petitioner's land to be acquired outright under the Bill.

9.2. Notwithstanding the requirements under the Bill to give 28 days' notice of entry under Part 1 of Schedule 15 in relation to the temporary occupation of land the Nominated Undertaker will use reasonable endeavours, and in advance of any formal notification required under the Bill, to notify the Petitioner of the expected quarter of the calendar year in which the Petitioner's land is planned to be occupied temporarily under the Bill.

9.3. Following the receipt by the Nominated Undertaker of the programme of works from the relevant works contractor in relation to the Petitioner's land, the Promoter will provide to, and discuss with, the Petitioner an estimate of the likely period of occupation of the Petitioner's land and shall from time to time update the Petitioner with further information as to the likely extent of the period of temporary occupation.

Assurance No.10 – Relocation of agricultural buildings

10.1. The Promoter will require the Nominated Undertaker to offer appropriate assistance to the Petitioner in respect of the relocation of any agricultural buildings displaced for the purposes of the project where the replacement is either:

10.1.1. to be provided for under a deemed planning consent granted by the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015; or

10.1.2. the subject of a separate application for planning consent.

10.2. The assistance referred to in paragraph 10.1. shall (if requested by the Petitioner) include the provision of a statement of impact and timing for the Petitioner in respect of the need for relocation of an agricultural building.

10.3. Paragraph 10.4. applies where notwithstanding any assistance provided in paragraph 10.1., a Petitioner provides to the Promoter evidence to the reasonable satisfaction of the Promoter that consent referred to in paragraph 10.1. and required to give effect to the relocation of an agricultural building, is unlikely to be obtained and requests the Secretary of State to take steps to authorise the relocation of the displaced building by the exercise of the powers of clause 46 of the Bill.

10.4. Any request to the Secretary of State by the Petitioner under paragraph 10.3. shall be considered by the Secretary of State in accordance with the policy relating to reinstatement of undertakings set out in section 7 of HS2 Information Paper C7, Business Relocation.

10.5. In this assurance and in Assurances 11 and 12, "agricultural building" includes a residential building occupied as part of an agricultural building.

10.6. In this assurance, a "statement of impact and timing" means a statement describing the impact of the work proposed to be undertaken in relation to the agricultural building(s) in question and the timescales in which those impacts are intended to be implemented.

Assurance No.11 – Identification of land for the relocation of agricultural buildings

11.1. If prior to the giving of notice of entry or prior to the notice of vesting under a general vesting declaration to acquire land permanently (whether or not before Royal Assent) the Petitioner identifies suitable land for the relocation of an agricultural building (whether within or outside the Petitioner's ownership) and the Petitioner provides to the Secretary of State a detailed course of action substantiating the relocation, the Secretary of State will confirm
whether or not he accepts that the land identified and evidence supporting the course of action provides a reasonable basis for the Petitioner’s claim for compensation in the event that the Bill receives Royal Assent and the Secretary of State exercises his powers of compulsory acquisition.

Assurance No.12 – Professional costs and fees

12.1. The Promoter acknowledges that proper professional costs and fees reasonably incurred by the Petitioner for the purposes of seeking to identify suitable alternative premises at which to relocate an agricultural building which is subject to the power of compulsory acquisition under the Bill, will form a Head of Claim as part of any disturbance claim arising from the acquisition of that land under the Bill.

Assurance No.13 – Land acquisition

Where land can be identified at this stage as not being required for permanent works and is not materially changed.

13.1. The Secretary of State shall not exercise the powers of compulsory acquisition conferred by the Bill in relation to the Property [describe] but instead the Nominated Undertaker may exercise the powers of Schedule 15 to the Bill to enter and take temporary possession of the Property.

Where land cannot be identified at this stage, but it may be possible to do so following detailed design.

13.2. If at the date when it is proposed to implement the powers of the Bill in relation to the Property [describe] the Secretary of State is satisfied, in the light of detailed design of the project, that any part of the property will not be required for the accommodation of any permanent works authorised by the Bill the Secretary of State shall not exercise the powers of compulsory acquisition conferred by the Bill in relation to that part of the Property but instead the Nominated Undertaker may exercise the powers of Schedule 15 to the Bill to enter and take temporary possession of the Property.

Where land is materially changed but there is no need for maintenance of that change.

13.3. Subject to the Petitioner entering an agreement in a form satisfactory to the Secretary of State which provides that the Property [describe] need not be restored to its former condition following completion of construction activity on the land, the Secretary of State shall not exercise the powers of compulsory acquisition conferred by the Bill in relation to the Property [describe] but instead the Nominated Undertaker may exercise the powers of Schedule 15 to the Bill to enter and take temporary possession of the Property.

Where land is materially changed and there is a need for an obligation to maintain.

13.4. Provided that–

13.4.1 the Petitioner enters into an agreement in a form satisfactory to the Secretary of State which–

13.4.1.1 provides that the Property [describe] need not be restored to its former condition following completion of construction activity on the land; and

13.4.1.2 restricts removal or interference with land or works adjoining the railway which are to provide support or protection to the railway; and

13.4.1.3 provides for the maintenance of the environmental mitigation to be provided on that land; [and

13.4.2 the Secretary of State is satisfied that the Petitioner is an appropriate person, having regard to the nature and objectives of the mitigation required to be provided, to be responsible for securing the maintenance of that mitigation;] [N.B. only relevant where this is a site identified for ecological mitigation]
the Secretary of State shall not exercise the powers of compulsory acquisition conferred by the Bill in relation to the Property but instead the Nominated Undertaker may exercise the powers of Schedule 15 to the Bill to enter and take temporary possession of the Property.

13.5 Where the Nominated Undertaker exercises powers of temporary occupation over land under the Bill which is subject to compulsory acquisition and the Nominated Undertaker proposes to the Petitioner that the Petitioner enters into an agreement with the Secretary of State for the purposes of assurances 13.3 and 13.4, the Petitioner may at any time prior to entry into an agreement under assurances 13.3 and 13.4, make a written request to the Nominated Undertaker to request that the Secretary of State exercises the powers of compulsory acquisition conferred by the Bill in relation to the Property.

13.6 On receipt of a request pursuant to paragraph 13.5 the Secretary of State will review the need to acquire the land in question and where he is satisfied that it is required for permanent works for Phase 2a purposes he will give notice of acquisition as soon as is reasonably practicable.

13.7 In reaching a decision pursuant to paragraph 13.6 the Secretary of State will need to be satisfied that necessary rights of access can be secured to the land in question.

13.8 In this assurance “Petitioner” means a Petitioner who is the freehold owner and occupier of land which is the proposed subject of an agreement referred to in assurance 13.3 and 13.4.

Where land is temporarily occupied and permanent ownership is required.

13.9 Where the Nominated Undertaker exercises powers of temporary occupation over land under the Bill which is subject to compulsory acquisition, (other than land required for utility diversions, highway related works or other advanced works) the Secretary of State will prior to the exercise over that land of compulsory powers of acquisition:-

13.9.1 consider the extent of land to be acquired for permanent works required to construct and maintain the Phase 2a railway; and

13.9.2 seek to acquire that land permanently as soon as reasonably practicable following appointment of the main works contractor and when detailed design plans are sufficiently advanced to enable the Secretary of State to identify the required land and having regard to the economic and efficient construction of the Phase 2a project.

13.10 Subject to paragraph 13.11 the Secretary of State shall not exercise the powers of compulsory acquisition conferred by the Bill in relation to the Property [describe] but instead the Nominated Undertaker may exercise the powers of Schedule 15 to the Bill to enter and take temporary possession of the Property.

13.11 The Secretary of State [or any statutory undertaker authorised by the Secretary of State] may exercise the powers of the Bill so as to acquire permanent rights over the Property in respect of [installing, maintaining, renewing, replacing or upgrading cable, pipes, ducts and other services and to have access to the Property in order to maintain, renew, replace or upgrade such cable, pipes, ducts or other services] or [access over the Property as required in connection with the construction, implementation, renewal, operation or maintenance of the work authorised by the Bill].

N.B.1 All these assurances assume that the economic criteria for exercising temporary rather than permanent powers has been satisfied. In cases where there is some concern about the amount of compensation that may be payable on temporary occupation of the land it may be necessary to add the following qualification to each of the assurances:

"This assurance is subject to agreement, in a form acceptable to the Secretary of State, as to the level of compensation payable in respect of the exercise of the temporary powers of the Bill in advance of the Nominated Undertaker taking temporary possession of the Property."
N.B.2 The description of the Property in assurances 13.1, 13.3, 13.4 and 13.5 should make clear that the precise area to which the assurance applies can only be determined following detailed design.

Assurance No.14 – Use of private roads

14.1. The Nominated Undertaker will engage with the owner and occupier of the land with respect to the particular purpose(s) he expects to exercise the powers under clause 14 of the Bill, the type of vehicle(s) to be used, the purpose of the use and the expected frequency and period of use.

Assurance No.15 – Drainage

15.1. The Nominated Undertaker will identify with the farmer existing drainage arrangements on the holding. This will include the carrying out, where reasonable, of inspections of the site and of any existing plans.

15.2. The location of drains cut or disturbed by the construction works will be recorded by the Nominated Undertaker.

15.3 The Nominated Undertaker will utilise appropriate drainage consultants to advise on drainage works and will engage with the farmer in respect of the pre and post drainage schemes that are required. The Nominated Undertaker will use reasonable endeavours to engage drainage consultants with working knowledge of the local conditions.

15.4. Prior to the commencement of significant construction works, land drains affected by the HS2 works will, where practicable, be intercepted in a manner which maintains their efficiency. Work will be carried out to an appropriate specification after discussion with the farmer which may include the design (e.g. layout, falls, pipe sizes and types, outfall arrangements) and timing of any land drainage works required.

15.5. As-built plans of modifications to existing land drainage and of any new drainage works will be provided to the farmer or the Landowner as appropriate by the Nominated Undertaker.

15.6. Where natural drainage patterns are adversely affected by the HS2 works, the provision of supplementary drainage or irrigation works will be considered having regard to an assessment of compensation and the commercial justification by the farmer.

Assurance No.16 – Detailed design

16.1. Prior to the completion of the detailed design of the works authorised by the High Speed Rail (West Midlands - Crewe) Bill ("the Bill"), the Secretary of State will require the Nominated Undertaker to consult an owner/tenant of an agricultural holding regarding the detailed design of works proposed to be constructed upon any part of that holding under the powers of the Bill and the use of land for the provision of ecological and any other mitigation that does not involve the construction of works.

16.2. The Nominated Undertaker shall have regard to the responses received to the consultation undertaken under paragraph 16.1 and in so far as reasonably practicable, after taking into account all other relevant factors, including other relevant Undertaking and Assurances, associated with the design, construction, maintenance and operation of those works and other ecological or other mitigation,

16.2.1 seek to minimise the loss of Grade 1, 2 and 3a agricultural land as described in the Agricultural Land Classification of England and Wales, published by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food in October 1988; and
16.2.2 seek to accommodate reasonable proposals from the relevant owner/tenant to modify the detailed design of the works or provision of other ecological mitigation for the purposes of facilitating the efficient management of the agricultural holding in question following the completion of construction of the works.

16.3. In this assurance, "works" means the construction within Bill limits of accommodation works, landscaping and other mitigation works, drainage works and the construction of balancing ponds, embankments, bunds and made-up ground required for Phase 2A purposes.

16.4. Nothing in this assurance shall require any modification to the works which gives rise to any significant impact on the environment which has not been addressed in the Environmental Statement for the HS2 Project but that does not preclude consideration being given to any proposals for such modifications.

Assurance No.17 – Agricultural soils

17.1. The Secretary of State will require the Nominated Undertaker to work with landowners and farmers whose productive agricultural soils are temporarily affected by the construction of the HS2 works and/or are affected temporarily as a result of land-raising, with the intention to bring agricultural soils back to enable their former use before construction of the HS2 works on the relevant land and shall prepare in consultation with the relevant landowner and relevant planning authority an agricultural soils plan in advance of construction that shall include:

- a pre-disturbance record of the soil physical characteristics;
- a target specification, set by the Nominated Undertaker and informed by a suitably qualified agricultural soils scientist or practitioner, for agricultural soils being restored to agriculture after temporary use;
- a method of assessing the suitability of handling soils based on plastic limit (i.e. to avoid moving soils when wet and plastic so that they would not compact when replaced);
- advice on stripping topsoil and subsoil to the correct depth;
- recommendations of the most suitable equipment for soil handling;
- advice on soil storage (e.g. heights and management of soil stores);
- advice on alleviating compaction after replacement;
- a schedule of aftercare maintenance, to include soil testing, appropriate to the target specification for a period of up to five years (subject to paragraph 17.2) following completion of the relevant construction work; and
- a final report to determine the final handover condition of the agricultural soil.

17.2. Should the target specification not be met by the expiry of the period of five years for aftercare maintenance mentioned in paragraph 17.1 ("the initial period"), then, if the landowner has fully complied with a schedule of aftercare, the Nominated Undertaker, informed by a suitably qualified agricultural soils scientist or practitioner, has reasonable grounds to believe that the target specification could be met within a further period (being no longer than a further period of five years), and the initial period shall be extended by that period.

17.3. The reasonable cost of compliance by the relevant landowner with the schedule of aftercare shall be borne by the Nominated Undertaker save where such cost has been compensated under the compensation code.

17.4. The agricultural soils plan will be incorporated in and prepared as part of the Code of Construction Practice to form part of the Environmental Minimum Requirements undertaking given by the Secretary of State before Parliament.