

LCBB4002

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

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Executive summary

The HS2 project has carefully considered its guiding principles and successfully matched them with its main goals. Through public discussions, surveys, and special engagement groups, it has actively engaged communities, fostering open and cooperative relationships with regional stakeholders. The project has progressed through several phases of planning and design, entailing a great deal of design development and constant interaction with stakeholders to integrate their perspectives. The project has complied with industry and environmental criteria by adhering to and openly communicating pertinent requirements. HS2 utilises a range of comprehensive methodologies, including as economic, social, and environmental impact assessments, to evaluate its effects and make informed decisions that promote accountability. HS2 emphasises its commitment to environmental responsibility, inclusiveness, and sustainable development throughout.

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Introduction

In this report, the project known as HS2 (High-Speed 2) will be evaluated. The project will examine four key areas that are essential to its efficacy and success: Planning and Design, Standards, Evaluation and Impact, and Community Engagement Principles. Its objectives will be examined the project's compliance with community involvement principles, the appropriateness of the planning and design phases, the extent to which pertinent criteria have been fulfilled and communicated, and the methods used to measure and analyse the project's impact. The remaining parts will offer a comprehensive analysis of each of these aspects to enhance comprehension of HS2's methodology and its conformity with its intended goals and result.

A brief discussion of the project

High Speed 2 is the project name for HS2. In the UK, a brand-new high-speed train line is being constructed. The project will be built in phases at an estimated cost of £98 billion. The first phase, which would link Birmingham and London, is anticipated to be finished in 2026. The UK economy is predicted to be significantly impacted by the HS2 project, which will generate over 20,000 jobs and increase GDP by £2.9 billion annually (HS2 Project, 2023).



Figure: HS2 Project

Source: (HS2 Project, 2023)

Additionally, shorter travel times between key UK cities are anticipated from the project, which will facilitate and expedite people's travel for business and pleasure. Since the HS2 project will be a significant enterprise, it is crucial that it be constructed with the least amount of disturbance to nearby communities. HS2 is dedicated to interacting with communities and cooperating with them to reduce obstacles and optimise advantages.

Community engagement principles

The following principles are followed by the HS2 project:

Sustainability and Accessibility: HS2 is dedicated to constructing an environmentally friendly, sustainable train. The project is utilising renewable energy and low-carbon building materials, among other cutting-edge technology, to lessen its carbon footprint.

Accessibility: HS2's steadfast dedication to accessibility is evidence of its inclusive philosophy (Lee *et al.*, 2022). The project understands how critical it is to guarantee that everyone can use the train. HS2 is working closely with disability organisations and implementing proactive measures to ensure that all stations and trains are built with complete accessibility in mind. This pledge demonstrates HS2's comprehension of the essential idea that social inclusiveness is predicated on fair access to transit.

Community Involvement: HS2 understands the value of being involved in the communities it serves. Large-scale infrastructure initiatives, such as HS2, have the potential to affect nearby communities in both positive and bad ways (Babaei *et al.*, 2023). In order to maximise advantages and minimise inconvenience, HS2 has implemented a number of community participation projects. These consist of the HS2 Community Fund, intended to help and improve nearby communities, and the HS2 Schools Programme, which encourages education and awareness.

Economic Growth: HS2 has a clear action plan in place to carry out its pledge to accelerate economic growth. The project is expected to have a significant economic impact, bringing in £2.9 billion a year to the UK economy and creating over 20,000 employments. HS2 exhibits its dedication to becoming a growth engine, positively impacting the national economy, and

offering a hopeful future for employment and financial success by investing directly in job creation and economic stimulation.

These ideas are in line with the goal of the HS2 project, which is to build a new high-speed rail network that will connect London to Leeds, Manchester, Birmingham, and other cities while cutting travel times between them by up to 50%.

Communication platforms

HS2 website: The primary information source for the project is the HS2 website. It contains details like the goal, path, schedule, and financial plan of the project. It also contains details on the project's accessible features, community involvement efforts, and sustainability measures (Psomas *et al.*, 2023).

Social media outlets for HS2: HS2 is active on several social media sites, such as Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter. HS2 uses social media to address public inquiries, promote its community participation initiatives, and provide project updates.

Community Liaison Groups (CLGs) for HS2: Along the route, HS2 has formed CLGs for Community Liaison. Members of CLGs are drawn from the local business and community. They have monthly meetings with HS2 to talk about the project and voice any issues.

Planning and design

The stages of the project

Preliminary Feasibility Study: This was the initial phase of the HS2 project and provided the framework. It carefully evaluated the high-speed rail project's potential from an economic and technological standpoint. This involved making sure the project was both technically feasible and fiscally viable by assessing the practical elements of building and running the railway and comparing these concerns against economic considerations.

Options Appraisal: A thorough investigation of all potential outcomes characterised the HS2 project's Options Appraisal phase. It took into account a variety of options, going beyond simple route planning and technological selections. A thorough analysis of several paths, technologies, and project configurations made it possible to choose the most advantageous and effective course of action (Sergeeva and Davies, 2021).

Environmental Impact Assessment: An environmental impact assessment was carried out in accordance with the project's dedication to sustainability. This thorough evaluation looked at the possible impacts on a number of environmental factors. It took into account effects on nearby species as well as the quality of the air and water. This stage was essential to ensuring that the project complied with ethical and legal requirements and reduced its negative environmental consequences.

Public Consultation: HS2 understood the value of interacting with the local populations along its path. The project aggressively solicited and took into consideration public and local community opinion through a series of public consultations. In order to resolve concerns, garner community support, and make sure the project catered to the needs and interests of the people it served, an inclusive approach was crucial.

Implementation

Phases of the HS2 project, overseen by HS2 Ltd, are being carried out with the participation of several contractors and subcontractors. Phase 2a is planned for completion in 2033, whereas Phase 1 is already under development with a completion date of 2029. Phase 2b is still in the early stages of development and should be finished in the 2040s. Despite its challenges, HS2 Ltd has made great strides, guaranteeing that the project stays below budget and on schedule—a noteworthy accomplishment in its execution.

Roles of community

Public Consultation: Through a number of public consultations, HS2 gives community participation top priority. Residents and stakeholders have the chance to share their thoughts, worries, and recommendations at these encounters (Miller, 2021). HS2 may improve openness and collaboration in the decision-making process by proactively soliciting and taking into account the input provided, therefore ensuring that the project is tailored to the unique requirements and expectations of the communities along its path.

Community Surveys: HS2 has conducted surveys inside the communities along the project's path in order to fully understand the requirements and concerns of the locals. These surveys go into detail on the particular needs and difficulties that residents encounter. HS2 can successfully meet community needs by customising its programmes through data-driven insights, therefore fostering a more tailored and responsive approach.

Community Engagement Groups: By creating community engagement groups, HS2 has taken things a step further. These forums provide continuous communication between the local people and the project. Through active engagement with community leaders, HS2

cultivates a collaborative environment and obtains vital ideas that guarantee the project's minimal interruption and maximum beneficial impact on the areas it serves.

Standards

BS, or British Standards: The British Standards Institution (BSI) creates standards known as BS. The national standards organisation BSI is in charge of creating and disseminating standards for a variety of goods and services. The safety, dependability, and efficiency of goods and services are guaranteed by BS standards. Enhancing the interoperability of goods and services from various producers is another use for BS standards.

EC Eurocodes: The European Committee for Standardisation (CEN) creates standards known as ECs. The European standards organisation CEN is in charge of creating and disseminating standards for a variety of goods and services (McNaughton and Banks, 2021). Additionally, inside the European Union, EC standards are used to enhance the interoperability of goods and services from various producers.

The ISO (International Organisation for Standardisation) codes: Standards created by the International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) are known as ISO standards. The International Standards Organisation (ISO) is in charge of creating and disseminating standards for a variety of goods and services. The safety, dependability, and efficiency of goods and services are guaranteed by the use of ISO standards. Additionally, the interoperability of goods and services from various producers is enhanced by the application of ISO standards.

Community engagement model

Determine stakeholders: The first stage is to determine who the project's stakeholders are who will be impacted. Members of the public, companies, governmental bodies, and other organisations are included in this.

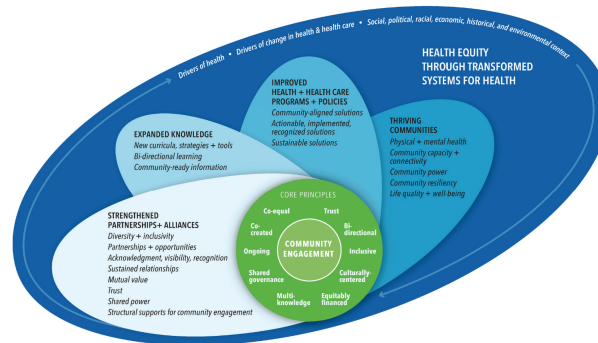


FIGURE 1 | A Dynamic Relationship: Achieving Health Equity and Systems Transformation through Meaningful Community Engagement

Figure: Community engagement model

Source: (Yao and Gillen, 2023)

Examine community needs and concerns: After identifying the relevant parties, it's critical to evaluate their requirements and worries. Surveys, focus groups, and other community involvement initiatives can be used to accomplish this.

Create a strategy for community involvement: Creating a plan for community engagement is the next stage. The objectives of the engagement process, the strategies for including stakeholders, and the engagement schedule should all be outlined in this strategy (Tetlow and Shearer, 2021).

Execute the community engagement strategy: After the plan has been created, it is critical to carry it out successfully. This entails keeping stakeholders informed, giving them a chance to contribute to the planning process, and taking their opinions into account when making decisions (Benitz and Yang, 2020).

Evaluation and Impact

There are several methods used to quantify the HS2 project's impact, including:

Economic impact: The creation of employment, the amount of investment drawn in, and the growth in GDP are the key indicators of the HS2 project's economic impact. Over 20,000 new employment and an annual £2.9 billion benefit to the UK economy are anticipated from the HS2 project.

Social impact: The HS2 project's improved air quality, shorter travel times, and increased accessibility are all indicators of its social impact. It is anticipated that the HS2 project would shorten travel times between major UK cities by up to 50% and improve accessibility for individuals with impairments while using trains.

Environmental effect: The amount of wildlife preserved, the amount of noise pollution decreased, and the amount of carbon emissions avoided are used to calculate the HS2 project's environmental impact. It is anticipated that the HS2 project would produce new habitats for animals and avoid 1.2 million tonnes of carbon emissions annually (Aizlewood and Wellings, 2021).

Evaluation tools

Economic Impact Assessment (EIA): Conducted by KPMG and PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC), the EIA for the HS2 project is a thorough technique for estimating the financial implications. It carefully assesses how the initiative affects general financial well-being, job creation, and economic growth. The economic advantages of the project are optimised and quantified with the aid of this evaluation.

Environmental Impact Assessment (EnIA): Conducted by a group of environmental specialists for HS2, the EnIA is essential to assessing the ecological effects of the project. It includes things like sustainability, protecting animals, and the quality of the air and water (Chai, 2021). By minimising environmental impact and ensuring that the project complies with ethical and legal requirements, this evaluation promotes environmental responsibility.

Conclusion

The HS2 project has shown an unwavering dedication to its guiding principles, ensuring that they are in harmony with its overall goals. The project's approach has been characterised by a strong emphasis on community engagement, which is achieved through various means such as public consultations, community surveys, and engagement groups. This approach has fostered a transparent and cooperative relationship with local stakeholders and guarantees that the project stays sensitive to the unique needs and concerns of the communities it serves. The project has progressed through several phases in the field of planning and design, carefully creating designs and carrying out in-depth analyses of community requirements, regularly interacting with stakeholders to take into account local viewpoints. The project has complied with applicable regulations, guaranteeing adherence to industrial and environmental norms, and these regulations are openly stated.

The initiative has used a variety of thorough methodologies for assessment and effect measurement, including economic, social, and environmental impact assessments, to encourage responsible and well-informed decision-making. All things have considered, the HS2 project's inclusive and comprehensive strategy highlights its commitment to environmental stewardship, social inclusion, and sustainable development.

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