

Amersham Town Council

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Statement from Amersham Town Council on HS2 vent shaft headhouse design

The Town Council has recently been notified of two planning applications relating to the HS2 vent shaft headhouse, one relating to the design of the headhouse itself and the other to the surrounding landscaping. Town Councillors were frustrated and disappointed to learn that the notification was for information only and that no comments were being invited for the applications, as current legislation allows HS2 to proceed with the application without the consent of the planning authority (Buckinghamshire Council).

As locally elected Members, representing the people of Amersham, Town Councillors have been immensely frustrated by the lack of response by HS2 and their contractors to the views of local people about the design of the headhouse. During public engagement, the views of the public were clear, namely that the form and materials proposed are completely inappropriate for the historic market town of Amersham and Chilterns AONB. HS2 have largely ignored public representations and have only made some minor adjustments to the initial design announced in August 2020. The concept design remains largely unchanged, despite it being very unpopular with local residents, who feel that HS2 are imposing a design which seems to be indulging architectural design rather than listening to the views of the local residents.

The Town Council echoes the views of local residents that this lack of opportunity is in complete contrast with what was implied at the public meeting held in December 2019, when residents were told by HS2 that there would be full consultation on the headhouse design, with a meaningful opportunity for residents and stakeholders to have a real influence on the inherent design.

The Town Council would therefore like to put on record our frustration and disappointment that Councillors have not been given the chance to submit their comments on the proposals and perform their duty of representing the residents of Amersham, as they were elected to do.

Town Clerk – Finance & Policy
On behalf of Amersham Town Councillors

Circulation: Sir Mark Worthington MP – Independent HS2 Construction Commissioner
Cllr Peter Martin – Buckinghamshire Council Deputy Cabinet Member for HS2/EWR
Cllr Gareth Williams – Buckinghamshire Council Cabinet Member for Planning & Regeneration
Joel Sykes - HS2 Senior Engagement and Interface Manager
Emma Gaydon - Align