

Overview of the bill process

This note sets out in brief the process that the High Speed Rail (Crewe - Manchester) Bill will follow. It is intended as a summary overview; more in-depth guidance on particular topics can be found in other guidance:

- [Guide to hybrid bills](#)
- Guide to Committee stage
- Guidance on submitting a petition
- Guidance on the right to be heard

All guidance documents not linked to above can be found on the [Committee's website](#), as can the petition template to be used when drafting your petition.

Petitions against the Bill and any Additional Provisions can be submitted using the portals available by following [this link](#).

Introduction of the bill

On 24 January 2022, the Government (the 'promoter' of this bill) introduced the [High Speed Rail \(Crewe - Manchester\) Bill](#) in the House of Commons. It was re-introduced on 11 May 2022 for the new session of Parliament.

The High Speed Rail (Crewe - Manchester) Bill is a hybrid bill, because the changes to the law it proposes affect the general public but would also have a significant impact for specific individuals or groups. This means that the Bill will follow a different procedure to other Government bills as it progresses through the House; this is outlined below.

Alongside the Bill, the Government also published an [Explanatory Memorandum](#), explaining the background to and purpose of the Bill, and an [Environmental Statement](#), outlining the potential environmental impacts of the planned new railway. A [public consultation](#) was held between 25 January and 31 March 2022, allowing members of the public to comment on the Environmental Statement, and a [report on responses to the consultation](#) was published on 6 June 2022, prepared by an independent assessor appointed by Parliament.

Second Reading

A second reading debate is where Members of Parliament discuss the general principles of a bill and decide whether to allow it to progress.

Second reading of the High Speed Rail (Crewe - Manchester) Bill is expected to happen at the end of June 2022. The day after second reading, the petitioning period will begin; see more on this below.

After second reading, the House will also be invited to agree to a motion appointing and giving instructions to the select committee charged with overseeing and adjudicating on petitions against the Bill. The Committee will hear from petitioners against the bill and the promoters of the Bill, and will have the opportunity to amend the Bill before passing it, along with the Committee's views on the Bill, back to the House of Commons for further consideration. Further information about the role and work of the Committee can be found below.

Petitioning

The day after the Bill receives its second reading, a petitioning period of at least 25 days commences. During this time, any individuals, groups or organisations which are "directly and specially affected" by the Bill can submit petitions against it. These petitions outline how the petitioners are or would be adversely affected by the provisions in the Bill, and outline what they feel should be done to reduce or mitigate these consequences. Further information about petitions against a bill can be found in the guidance referenced above.

All received petitions will be published online and sent to HS2 Ltd – the body acting on behalf of the promoter of the Bill – who will contact petitioners on behalf of the promoter to try and resolve their objections.

Petitioners against a bill will usually be entitled to appear before the select committee on the bill to make their case. However, the promoter of a bill may challenge some petitioners' right to be heard. For more on the right to be heard, see the guidance referenced above.

Additional Provisions

After laying a bill before Parliament, the promoter may wish to make amendments to the original bill. Any amendments which extend the powers or scope of the bill are introduced as an Additional Provision. The introduction of an Additional Provision triggers a new petitioning period, as individuals or groups who were not previously affected by the bill, but who are now to be impacted by the newly introduced amendments, must be given the opportunity to petition against it.

The Additional Provision is accompanied by an Environmental Statement, setting out the expected environmental impacts of the amendments, which is subject to public consultation.

The Select Committee considers petitions against the Additional Provision(s) in the same way that it does those against the main bill.

Select Committee

Petitioners will be able to appear before the committee (either in person or through a representative) to make the case as outlined in their petition. They will appear alongside representatives of the promoter, who will respond to the issues raised by the petitioner. Both the petitioner and the promoter will have the opportunity to bring witnesses and present evidence to support their case.

The Committee will usually meet multiple times a week to hear from petitioners and, depending on the number of petitions received, this phase of the process can take a significant amount of time.

Once the Committee has heard from all petitioners it will report its views on the Bill to the House of Commons. The Committee can also make amendments to the Bill or require assurances on certain points from the promoter. The Committee may also publish reports on specific petitions or discrete issues before it finishes hearing from petitioners.

Subsequent progress through the House

Once the select committee has reported to the House, the Bill then undergoes the same stages as other bills do during their progress through Parliament. For more on the legislative stages involved in the passage of a bill through Parliament, see the guidance available [here](#).

The only change from the usual progression through Parliament is that there will be another petitioning period after the Bill has received its second reading in the House of Lords. A Lords select committee will be established to undertake the same role as that fulfilled by the Commons committee outlined above, with affected individuals and organisations again able to petition against the Bill as introduced in that House.