

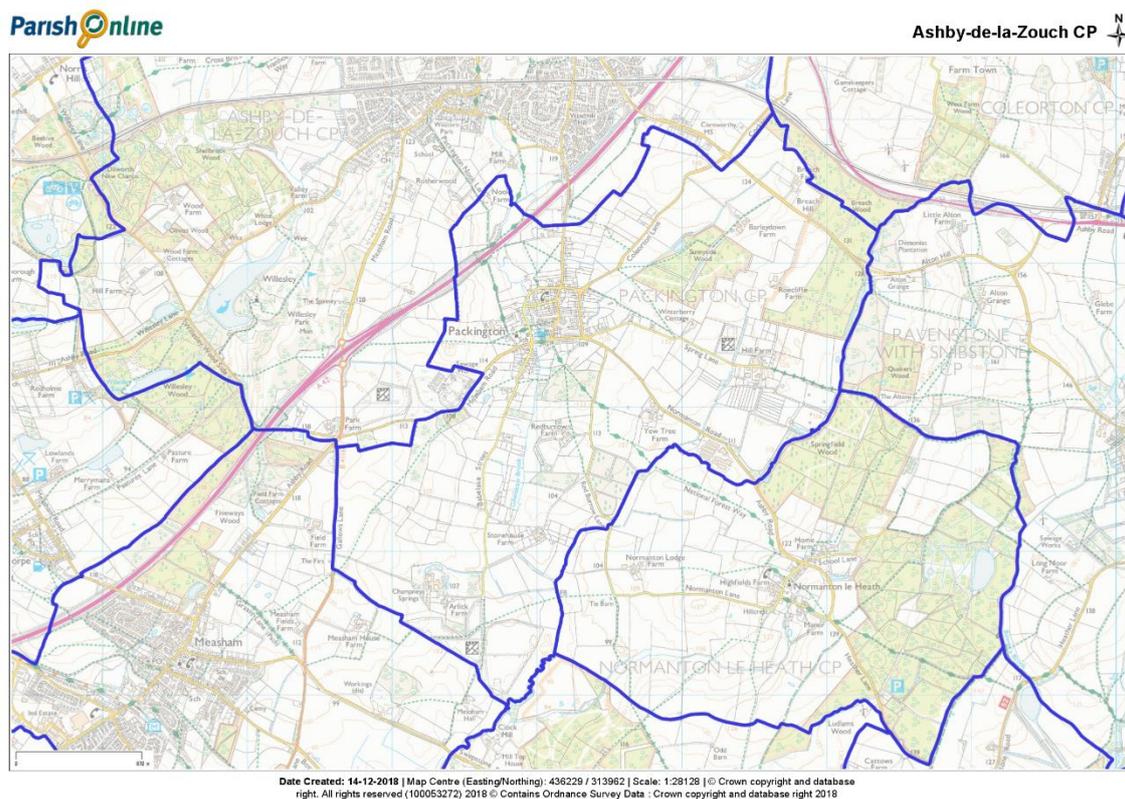
# Packington Parish Council – response to HS2 Working Draft Equality Impact Assessment Area LA03

## 1. Introduction

Packington Parish Council have considered the impacts of HS2 and the information in the Working Draft Equality Impact Assessment Report and wish to put forward this response. The current route passes through the parish. The Council notes that the parish will be subject to some significant impacts. The Parish Council's priorities are:

- To ensure that HS2 does not create social isolation for the residents of Packington.
- To limit the impact on the children and elderly in our population.

The Parish Council has compiled the following using its local community knowledge and the information that has already been provided about the HS2 project.



## Packington Parish Council Boundaries

## 2. Traffic and Transport

### Impact on roads

The closure of the key route between Packington and Ashby will cause significant problems for residents. Ashby de la Zouch is the main shopping and service centre for the area and many residents travel to Ashby for schools, doctors, leisure facilities and other services. It is essential that the village

does not become cut off from the town. This will increase social isolation for the village and impacts on children who attend the local schools in Ashby and further afield e.g. Loughborough.

The proposed diversion routes will be manageable for drivers, but this is dependent on levels of congestion. Many users of the Ashby Road are children, who walk to secondary schools in Ashby, and non-driving older people, who are dependent on public transport to access medical care and the services in Ashby. The closure will prevent children accessing leisure facilities in Ashby e.g. swimming classes, football, rugby, cricket and tennis clubs. All of these are used by children from the village. A number of youth organisations meet in Packington and in Ashby e.g. brownies, rainbows, scouts, guides, army cadets and again access will be affected by road closures. Packington has Rainbow, Brownie and Guide Units which are, in part, dependent on children from Ashby travelling to the village to attend the groups.

### **Impacts on public rights of way and recreational routes**

The closure of Ashby Road and the numerous Public Rights of Way in the parish will reduce opportunities for the population to exercise, for example rights of way between Packington and Ashby.

### **Pedestrian accessibility**

Ashby is the location of the two secondary schools, Ivanhoe College and Ashby School whose catchment areas include the surrounding villages. Some pupils from these villages can use the school buses, others, for example in Packington cannot use that service. This is because they are within walking distance of the schools. Pupils in Packington use Ashby Road to walk to school and this route is proposed for closure. It is essential that arrangements are made to keep these pedestrian routes open to enable children to reach their schools.

### **Public transport**

Bus routes are crucial in keeping the elderly population connected with key services in Ashby. A number of bus routes will be affected by the Scheme and alternative services must be put in place. Diversions should include the villages affected.

## **3. Isolation effects on communities**

Packington has a disproportionate proportion of residents, 31% (2017 population estimates) who are elderly. This compares with 20% of the population in Leicestershire and North West Leicestershire and 13% across the route as a whole. If Packington is cut off from Ashby this risks socially isolating this elderly population.

## **4. Other Equality Impacts**

The Parish Council is concerned at the potential lack of access to services in Ashby as a result of the influx of extra workers e.g. medical and dental services. There is only one hotel in the area, the Premier Inn which is alongside the main compound at junction 13. There are concerns that this will not be available due to block booking for the construction workforce. There could also be a shortage in rented accommodation within the area.

The access of residents in villages to GPs surgeries during the construction period, because of the number of major roads in the area which will be affected.