Handbook

HS2 INDEPENDENT DESIGN PANEL

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Foreword

Designing an infrastructure project of the scale and significance of HS2 involves everything from large scale civil engineering projects to the experience of the passenger boarding a train at the start of a new journey.

Every aspect of HS2 needs to excel through outstanding design.

HS2 Ltd has shown its commitment to the HS2 Design Vision by setting up and working with the HS2 Independent Design Panel. The panel brings the fresh critical thinking, support and encouragement needed to push boundaries and forge something new – delivering on the ambition for HS2 to be a railway the nation can be proud of. There have already been significant strides forward in design ambition and quality, with examples including Curzon Street Station, and the Colne Valley Viaduct.

Phase One enabling work is now under way, and Phase Two – which will take HS2 trains beyond Birmingham to Crewe, Manchester, Leeds and Scotland – is at a strategic design stage. We now have the opportunity to learn lessons from Phase One and improve the design process for Phase Two.

This handbook will contribute, I hope, to a clear understanding of how the HS2 Independent Design Panel works. It sets out the design panel process and the contribution made by its members. It also provides advice on important issues such as conflicts and declarations of interest, confidentiality and conduct – all essential to ensure the design panel's independence, credibility and impact – as well as practical information on issues such as recruitment, fees and expenses.

We hope that you will find the handbook a useful and informative guide.

Professor Sadie Morgan

Chair HS2 Independent Design Panel January 2020



Professor Sadie Morgan Chair of the HS2 Independent Design Panel

2 Aspirations for HS2

Britain's most ambitious infrastructure project in more than a century is now well under way. HS2 Phase One main works civils contracts have been awarded; designs are coming through; construction partners for Phase One stations have been appointed; train specifications have been released for tender; and designs for Phase Two are taking shape.

Britain's new high speed railway promises great social, economic and environmental benefits – both locally and nationally. Travel around the country will be more efficient; new jobs and skills will be supported; town and city centres will enjoy renewed vitality.

We expect HS2 to create an extraordinary legacy – one that Britain can be proud of. With a wealth of talent from across many disciplines, the HS2 Independent Design Panel is helping to build that legacy. We have set ourselves the challenge of achieving the highest standards in civil engineering, station architecture, landscape design and innovative technology in railway operations. Every design task is critical.

We already see examples of high quality design by HS2 Ltd and those it is working with – for example, the designs for Curzon Street and Leeds stations and the Wendover Dean and Manchester Ship Canal viaducts; the blueprint for rolling stock interiors; and a transformation of the experience of travelling by rail.

I wholeheartedly encourage and support the HS2 Independent Design Panel's continuing involvement as a 'critical friend' to HS2 Ltd as we move ahead towards Phase One completion in 2026 – and ensure that the successes of Phase One inspire similar, and even greater, design quality for Phase Two.

Allan Cook

Chairman HS2 Ltd January 2020



Allan Cook, Chairman of HS2 Ltd

3 Implementing the HS2 Design Vision

Why an HS2 Independent Design Panel?

HS2 Ltd is committed to driving design excellence in every aspect of its work and the Independent Design Panel has been set up to support that ambition.

The HS2 Design Vision sets out nine principles grouped around three themes: People, Place, and Time. The design panel is using that framework to help the HS2 Ltd leadership, project teams and other partners to make the right design choices – and also to hold them to account.

Independence

The HS2 Independent Design Panel was set up in 2015, at the request of the Department for Transport, to provide professional expertise and advice to HS2 Ltd. The panel helps ensure that, through great design, HS2 delivers real economic, social and environmental benefits for the whole country.

The design panel must be – and perceived to be – fully independent if it is to be seen as credible by stakeholders and communities and trusted to act in the public interest. Design panel members must be able to say what they think – impartially and independently. Although the panel is funded by and works closely with HS2 Ltd, it is independent. It has its own terms of reference and a governance structure that supports its independence and establishes its accountability.

A Governance Advisory Panel has been established, meeting quarterly to keep the operation and effectiveness of the panel under review. This also helps inform reporting of key issues to HS2 Ltd senior management and the Department for Transport (DfT). Its current members are:

Prof. Sadie Morgan Tony Burton Annie Coombs Martin Stockley Chair Vice chair Deputy chair Deputy chair

The panel is managed by an independent secretariat – Frame Projects. The secretariat is responsible for facilitating the panel's work, by co-ordinating a programme of reviews agreed with HS2 Ltd, recording the advice given at panel meetings, and reporting on strategic issues.

A diagram providing details of the governance meetings that are in place to ensure good communication with HS2 Ltd, panel members, and the DfT is provided at Appendix A.



4 Principles of design review

HS2 INDEPENDENT DESIGN PANEL

Advice given by the HS2 Independent Design Panel and its members will adhere to the following principles (based on widely accepted industry best practice 'Design Review Principles and Practice' by Design Council Cabe, Landscape Institute, Royal Town Planning Institute and the Royal Institute of British Architects)

Impartial

The advice is informed by independent experts, people who are unconnected with the scheme's promoters and decision makers, and it ensures that any potential conflicts of interest are managed in an open and transparent way.

Timely

The advice is conveyed as early as possible in the design process, because this can avoid a great deal of wasted time. It also costs less to make changes at an early stage.

Open

The advice from panel members is conveyed in confidence to HS2 Ltd, and HS2 Ltd will share the advice with external stakeholders, partners or more widely in the public domain. There will be a presumption in HS2 Ltd to openly share the Independent Design Panel's advice and the panel will also provide a safe environment for early stage design discussions to take place in confidence.

Expert

The advice is delivered by suitably trained people who are experienced in design, who know how to criticise constructively, and whose standing and expertise is widely acknowledged.

Advisory

The advice will inform / influence the people who make decisions. This includes HS2 Ltd and their design teams, and also local planning authorities and other stakeholders who are invited to attend meetings to discuss HS2 projects.

Accountable

The advice must be clearly seen to work for the benefit of the programme, with a view to enabling the project team to deliver against the sponsor requirements and adhere to the principles set out in the HS2 Design Vision. The advice will also fully take account of the budget restrictions and affordability limits set for the whole project.

Multidisciplinary

The advice combines the different perspectives of design and other specialist experts to provide a complete, rounded assessment.

Objective

The advice will be based on reasoned and objective criteria rather than the stylistic tastes of individual panel members.

Accessible

The advice and findings are clearly expressed in terms that design teams, decision makers and clients can all understand and make use of.

5 Panel remit

Range of expertise

The Independent Design Panel acts as an advisor and a critical friend to HS2 Ltd. It brings together a comprehensive range of design disciplines – extending beyond the more usual focus of design review panels on architecture and the built environment.

Issues that the panel may be invited to advise on include:

- procurement
- urban design and integration
- architecture
- engineering
- landscape and public realm
- operational design
- service design / customer experience
- community engagement
- communications and branding
- inclusive design
- art and culture
- sustainability

Design panel members are working at the highest level in a broad range of fields. Many design panel members have expertise in more than one area. The composition of the design panel for each review is chosen as far as possible to suit the topic or scheme to be reviewed. A number of criteria – within five categories – for determining where a contribution from the design panel will be appropriate and beneficial have been identified

Scale and use

- Large structures with great visual impact
- Public realm or landscape design schemes
 over a large area
- Projects above agreed capital expenditure threshold

Site

- Schemes in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs)
- Extraordinary impact on local surroundings
- Major impact on listed structures or sensitive landscapes

Potential

- Development of a unique technique or product
- Presents a design opportunity

Precedence

- Long-term usage, requiring flexibility over the life of the project
- Setting a precedent for HS2 or other projects
- Family of solutions, for example, surface treatment and fences

Public benefit

- Schemes particularly relevant to quality of everyday life
- Significant impact on passenger / people experience
- The project conflicts with the HS2 Design Vision
- Contribution needed as an arbitrator on conflicting priorities
- Involvement required to manage reputation and / or controversy

6 Panel programme

HS2 is divided into three sections, with different programmes for completion. The map on the right shows the geographic extent of each phase, and the target dates for completion of each phase are below (these are in accordance with HS2 Chairman's Stocktake, August 2019).

HS2 Phase		Completion			
•	Phase One Phase 2a Phase 2b	2028-31 2028-31 2035-40			
HS2 Ltd has also defined the following design stages for the purposes of managing the					

programme of design work for each phase.

1. Parliamentary design - for the Hybrid Bill / to achieve Royal Assent

2. Specification design - for design and construction contracts

3. Employer requirements design - scope for construction contracts

4. Scheme design - to obtain approvals and permissions to construct

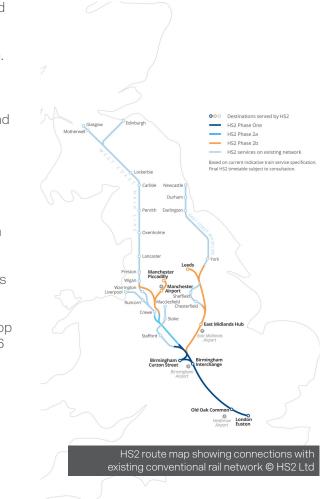
5. Detailed design - for manufacture and construction

Since its inception, the scope of projects and topics considered has been diverse, from stations, bridges and tunnels, to protecting the environment, and passenger experience.

A series of route briefings, tours and workshop meetings were initially held in 2015/2016, attended by both HS2 Ltd staff and selected panel members - this process was repeated for each HS2 phase.

The purpose of this process was to identify projects and topics that would benefit from input from the panel. This included agreeing the design stages (see above) at which each project or topic should be reviewed. Based on this, HS2 Ltd design managers work with project leads to establish a schedule of dates for panel meetings.

Additional route briefings, tours and workshop meetings, have taken place since the 2015/16 where changes to the HS2 programme have necessitated revisions to the programme of projects and topics to be seen by the panel.



7 Panel membership

Recruitment of the design panel

Professor Sadie Morgan, chair of the HS2 Independent Design Panel, was appointed by the Board of HS2 Ltd in early 2015. She subsequently oversaw the appointment design panel members, through a process managed by the secretariat of the panel, Frame Projects. Panel member contracts are with HS2 Ltd, but their participation in review meetings is managed by the secretariat to maintain the independence of the panel. A pool of around 40 design panel members have been appointed, representing a wide range of relevant professional expertise, and with experience of working in different locations within the UK and internationally.

Design panel members are appointed on the basis of their expert knowledge, professional credibility, critical and analytical skills – and also the ability to articulate comments clearly and sensitively.

To broaden the design panel's insights and understanding, there is an aim to achieve diversity - in terms of gender, ethnic background and age – in the design panel's membership.



8 Role of panel members

The role of a design panel member

At each review meeting, design panel members should:

- read the agenda and supporting information thoroughly before the meeting (panel members should assume they are not expected to spend more than half a day preparing for each meeting)
- attend site visits arranged for reviews
- bear in mind always that the first review of a scheme is vital – fundamental concerns must be flagged up at that stage, otherwise it will be difficult to raise them at a subsequent review
- feel comfortable commenting beyond their own particular specialism
- focus comments on the subject under review – during the review meeting, so that HS2 Ltd has an opportunity to respond, and ensure that there are no misconceptions

A review by the design panel offers the benefits of objectivity and an opportunity to raise issues that those involved with the project may not be aware of or able to recognise. Some criticism may be unwelcome to those who have committed time, effort and money to a project. Design panel members and the chair should be mindful of the standpoint of the project team. For meetings to be effective, however, when necessary, the design panel must be able to voice fundamental criticism in front of those who have presented the scheme under review, as opposed to expressing them in private later.

For the design panel to work effectively, the highest levels of professionalism and conscientiousness are crucial.

Design panel members are expected to:

- abide by the seven Nolan principles of public life: selflessness; integrity; objectivity; accountability; openness; honesty; and leadership
- treat the design panel's discussions and advice as confidential, whether or not the advice has been made public
- refrain from expressing individual, personal opinions publicly if they differ from those agreed by the design panel
- respond as appropriate to any request for declarations of interest.

Conduct outside panel meetings

It is important that design panel members provide their advice in the context of design panel meetings – and not through any other channel. It is at design panel meetings that HS2 Ltd and its design teams present information about the project, participate in the design panel's discussions, and hear its conclusions and recommendations. This allows for an open dialogue with HS2 Ltd and ensures that there are no misconceptions around the advice provided by panel members. Ensuring that the panel's recommendations are made during meetings also allows for a consensus view to be formed by those panel members attending. The discussion during each meeting and recommendations made by the panel are recorded by the secretariat in a report, which is signed off by the chair of the meeting.

Design panel members are therefore specifically requested not to make additional comments outside panel meetings.

Discussion between panel members – where HS2 Ltd has no opportunity to contribute or respond – is not best practice. Equally, design panel members should not contact HS2 Ltd staff directly to convey their individual views on the project under discussion. If a design panel member wishes to make any additional comments to those made at the meeting, these should be directed to the secretariat, Frame Projects, and / or the design panel chair.

9 Panel process

Role of the secretariat

The HS2 Independent Design Panel is supported by an independent secretariat – Frame Projects. The secretariat is responsible for: setting up the design panel; the day-today running of the design panel's activities; and relaying the design panel's advice to relevant HS2 Ltd staff.

Process map

A clear and transparent process has been put into place to ensure that design panel meetings are organised efficiently and effectively – so that everyone knows what is required and at what stage. This is described in more detail through a process map (right) provided in full at Appendix B.

The process map sets out the way in which projects that would benefit from input from the panel are identified. It describes the work that is done in the run up to design panel meetings, by HS2 Ltd, their design teams, and the secretariat.

The panel session is the element of the process that panel members are most involved with, and the report of this is drafted by the secretariat and signed off by the chair, before being sent to all attendees.



Importantly, the process map sets out how HS2 Ltd responds to panel recommendations: through debrief meetings, at which actions to be taken are agreed, and recorded in response forms - circulated to panel members in advance of any subsequent sessions. Ultimately, the impact of the meeting may be not only on the specific project or topic under review - but also on the wider programme of HS2 design work. This is particularly important to ensure that lessons learnt from Phase One are applied to Phase Two.

10 Types of meeting

There are five different types of HS2 Independent Design Panel meeting :

- **a full design panel** for the most significant and/or complex schemes
- **a workshop design panel** for significant schemes or HS2 strategies / documents
- **a chairs review** for feedback on HS2 Ltd response to panel recommendations
- **a mentoring session** for smaller schemes or a specific issue or topic
- a Schedule 17 stage design panel for schemes due to be submitted for Schedule 17 approval

Full design panel

A full design panel meeting is suitable for larger projects such as stations, and those civil engineering projects that have a significant impact on landscape and communities. Other schemes may also warrant a full design panel, for example, where they may have a major impact on a historic context, or where complex issues require a broad range of expertise. The chair and three design panel members would normally attend.

Where relevant, planning authorities and stakeholders, for example, Historic England and Transport for West Midlands, may be invited to attend and asked to give their views. Full design panel meetings generally take place when the scheme's fundamental principles are established, and there are sufficient drawings, models and other information to inform a comprehensive discussion. A site visit will take place before the first full design panel meeting for each scheme, to ensure that the design panel has a solid understanding of the context.

The scheme will be presented by a member of the design team, normally the lead engineer or architect, following a brief introduction by HS2 Ltd. Presentations may be made with drawings and / or pdf or PowerPoint and models, as appropriate. A full design panel meeting typically lasts for 2 hours:

- 15 minutes introductions and briefing on context
- 55 minutes presentations and panel questions / clarifications
- 50 minutes discussion and summing up by the chair

Larger projects may be split into smaller elements, to ensure that each component receives adequate time for discussion, for example, station design, public realm and over site development proposals.



Workshop design panel

Workshop design panel meetings may be arranged for thematic topics such as HS2 Ltd design approach documents, procurement strategies, or significant engineering and architectural projects. The chair and two design panel members would normally attend.

Where relevant, planning authorities and stakeholders, for example, Historic England and Transport for West Midlands, may be invited to attend and asked to give their views.

Workshop design panel meetings may take place when draft design approach documents or strategies are available for comments, and there is sufficient information to inform a comprehensive discussion.

Site visits are not usually required for workshop design panel meetings – although, where relevant, design panel members who have attended route tours and are familiar with the site will be invited.

The scheme may be presented by the HS2 Ltd project lead or a member of the design team. Presentations may be made with drawings and / or pdf or PowerPoint and models, as appropriate.

A workshop design panel typically lasts for 90 minutes:

- 15 minutes introductions and briefing on context
- 30 minutes presentations and panel questions / clarifications
- 45 minutes workshop discussion and summing up by the chair

Larger projects may be split into smaller elements, to ensure that each component receives adequate time for discussion.

For example, a civil engineering contract that includes several viaducts may require a discussion of general principles, followed by site specific comments.



Chair's review

Chair's review meetings may be arranged to provide an opportunity to discuss HS2 Ltd responses to HS2 Independent Design Panel recommendations.

These design panel meetings allow design panel chairs to provide advice on how successfully previous panel comments have been addressed, and how any outstanding issues can be resolved to achieve high quality design.

Where relevant, HS2 Ltd will brief the design panel on its discussions with planning authorities, and other key stakeholders – including any public consultation.

A chair's review typically lasts for 90 minutes:

- 15 minutes introductions and briefing on context
- 30 minutes presentations and panel questions / clarifications
- 45 minutes workshop discussion and summing up by the chair

The scheme or topic may be presented by the HS2 Ltd project lead or a member of the design team. Presentations may be made with drawings and / or pdf or PowerPoint and models, as appropriate. The project lead will highlight key issues arising from previous design panel recommendations.

Mentoring session

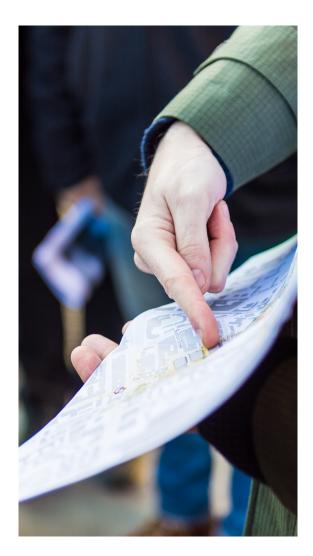
Where HS2 Ltd requires advice focussing on a specific issue, or comments on smaller projects, a mentoring panel session can be arranged.

Often just one design panel member attends, or the chair together with another design panel member. Attendance by HS2 Ltd and their design teams should also be kept to a maximum of 8 people.

Where relevant, HS2 Ltd will brief the design panel on its discussions with planning authorities, and other key stakeholders – including public consultation.

Presentations may not be required – but documents should be circulated in advance to allow design panel members to prepare before the meeting.

A typical mentoring session lasts 60 minutes, with the format / timing tailored to the subject of the meeting. Generally, presentations are kept short to maximise the time for contributions from the design panel.



Schedule 17 stage design panel

Schedule 17 marks a different stage of the HS2 project and requires a tailored approach to the design panel's involvement. Schedule 17 submissions are 'fixed' propositions, and as such the panels comments will focus on whether it feels that high quality design, that meets the aspirations of the HS2 Design Vision has been achieved.

Schedule 17 stage design panel meetings will take place approximately 8 weeks in advance of planning submissions. This is to allow design teams and HS2 Ltd to respond to the panel's comments in its Design and Access Statements.

The chair and two design panel members would normally attend. Complex schemes, for example stations, may require further panel members to attend.

An HS2 Ltd project lead will introduce the project, and confirm the extent to which the information presented is the 'final' scheme to be submitted for Schedule 17 approval, and target date for submission.

The scheme will be presented by a member of the design team - normally the architect or lead engineer. Presentations should be based on the information to be submitted for Schedule 17 approval, including drawings and models, as appropriate.

Representatives of the local planning authorities will be invited to provide a briefing on local context, including specific design issues relating to the site and proposals.

A typical Schedule 17 stage design panel lasts 90 minutes:

- 15 minutes introductions and briefing on context
- 30 minutes presentations and panel questions / clarifications
- 45 minutes workshop discussion and summing up by the chair

Once Schedule 17 applications are submitted, the panel's advice may inform the local planning authority's decision-making process.



Site visits

Wherever possible, site visits are arranged for full design panel meetings (except for returning schemes). All design panel members attending the meeting are required to attend site visits.

Route tours have also taken place to inform workshop discussions between the HS2 Independent Design Panel and HS2 Ltd about the topics of future panel meetings. A small group of panel members, including the chair or vice chair, attended tours for Phase One, Phase 2a and Phase 2b.

For location specific projects, when design development is at an appropriate stage, local authority officers may be invited to attend the site visit, to allow them to brief the panel on the planning context, and share their local knowledge.



12 Agendas and reports

Design panel agendas

Agendas for design panel meetings are issued to panel members in advance of each review.

A typical agenda and supporting information will include:

- notes on the planning context and feedback from any community engagement
- details of the schemes to be considered, including consultant teams
- a scheme description setting out factual information
- key plans and images
- any other documents relevant to the design approach

Design panel reports

During the design panel meeting, a member of the secretariat, Frame Projects, takes notes of the discussion – and these form the basis of design panel reports. Reports are drafted, circulated to the design panel chair for comments and agreement, and issued within 10 working days.

Reports are shared with the design panel members who participated in the meeting, and all those who were present at the review - as well as and any other relevant HS2 Ltd staff and stakeholders who were not able to attend.

The report summarises the comments and advice provided by the design panel and clearly sets out specific recommendations for implementation by HS2 Ltd. However, it is for HS2 Ltd to decide whether to implement the panel's advice, and to monitor progress in doing so.

The relevant lead within HS2 Ltd then returns completed responses to the design panel's recommendations within four weeks of the report being issued to the design team. The secretariat circulates HS2 Ltd responses to the chair and design panel members as part of the briefing materials for any follow-up session.

Reports of Schedule 17 stage design panel meetings will not include recommendations and will be clear about whether the panel feels that high quality design, that meets the aspirations of the HS2 Design Vision, has been achieved.

Publication of reports

Design panel reports are generally confidential, until the project or topic which is the subject of the meeting becomes public. This may be when a strategy or guidance document is published by HS2 Ltd, or when a Schedule 17 submission is made to a local planning authority. Once a Schedule 17 submission is formally made, the panel's advice may inform the local planning authority's decision-making process.

Public Schedule 17 stage design panel reports are shared with HS2 Ltd, who have responsibility for including a copy of the report with the schedule 17 submission and incorporating responses to the report within Design and Access Statements, which may be uploaded to the Planning Portal by local planning authorities. The panel also encourages HS2 Ltd publish these reports on GOV.UK

See Appendix D for full details on confidentiality.

13 Communications

Keeping panel members informed

The HS2 Independent Design Panel will be undertaking much work over the coming years. It is important that its members, as well as contributing to individual reviews, know what is going on more widely and feel part of the HS2 project as a whole.

Design panel members will be kept informed of the activities of the design panel by:

- e-mails from the chair and secretariat
- design panel newsletters (at least nine per year)
- design panel case studies (at least nine per year)
- annual panel update meeting

Newsletters

Newsletters will include information on the design panel's activities, recent developments, and also an insight into some of the people involved in championing design quality on HS2. For example, newsletters are used to announce new appointments to the HS2 Independent Design Panel, along with HS2 Ltd staff and key stakeholders. Newsletters will be drafted by the secretariat in collaboration with the panel and HS2 Ltd.

Case studies

Case studies will focus on a specific aspect of the design panel's work – for example, reviews undertaken by the design panel; its advice and recommendations; and the impact of its contribution. Case studies will be drafted by the secretariat in collaboration with the panel and HS2 Ltd.

Quarterly chair's reports

A public report will provide an overview of the design panel's activities. It will provide analysis of key issues raised at meetings during previous quarter, highlighting both successes and opportunities for improvement. Chair's reports will be drafted by the secretariat in collaboration with the chair of the panel.

Web page on GOV.UK

As a further measure to provide information about the design panel's activities to the public, a web page has been set up on GOV.UK including the following items:

- terms of reference (panel handbook)
- biographies of panel members
- newsletters
- case studies
- quarterly chair's reports



14 Keeping in touch

Panel member questions or comments

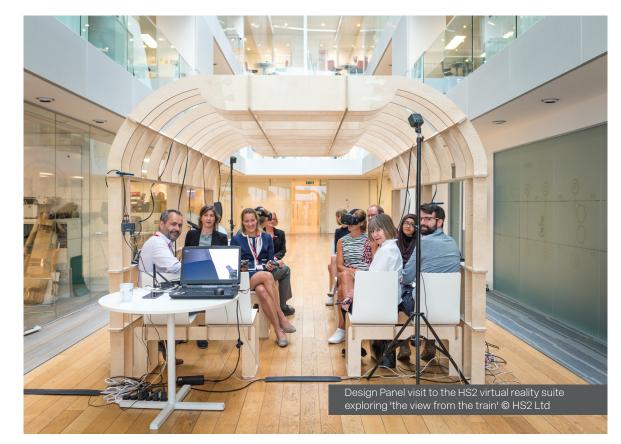
If design panel members have any questions about their role as a design panel member – or encounter any problem or difficulty in relation to their work – they should in the first instance contact the secretariat, Frame Projects, which will be able to advise, if necessary in consultation with HS2 Ltd colleagues, on the best way forward.

Frame Projects contacts

office 020 3971 6168 website www.frame-projects.co.uk

Deborah Denner Director deborah@frame-projects.co.uk

Edward Bailey Panel manager edward@frame-projects.co.uk







Frame Projects Secretariat to the HS2 Independent Design Pane HS2@frame-projects.co.uk 020 3971 6168 **HS2** INDEPENDENT DESIGN PANEL