

HS2 Ltd Corporate Procurement

Land Referencing Services

Market Sounding Briefing and Questionnaire

October 2026

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1 Overview of Market Sounding Briefing and Questionnaire

1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 HS2 Ltd is conducting this preliminary market engagement exercise, in the form of a Market Sounding Briefing and Questionnaire, to better understand supplier interest, capacity and capabilities in relation to the Land Referencing Services procurement.
- 1.1.2 To view the Preliminary Market Engagement Notice for this exercise, please visit: <https://www.find-tender.service.gov.uk/Notice/099417-2026>.
- 1.1.3 Whilst HS2 Ltd is currently considering GCA's Estate Management Services 2 Framework (RM6343) - Lot 4 Surveying and Strategic Advice as a potential procurement route, this preliminary market engagement is open to all interested organisations and is intended to gather feedback from the wider market to help inform the future procurement approach.
- 1.1.4 For your feedback to be considered please complete the Market Sounding Questionnaire at the following link, <https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/IO2K2T/>, by **5pm on Wednesday 11th November 2026**.
- 1.1.5 If you have any questions, please contact Gesh Tharmarajah, Procurement Category Manager, via Gesh.Tharmarajah@hs2.org.uk.

1.2 Background to HS2

- 1.2.1 HS2 is Britain's new high-speed railway connecting London and Birmingham. Our British-built trains will create capacity, or space, on the congested network, providing faster, zero carbon journeys between our two largest cities. Services will continue to Manchester, the North West and Scotland using the conventional railway network, cutting journey times.
- 1.2.2 By better connecting our biggest economic centres and kickstarting plans for inner-city regeneration, HS2 will open opportunities to create thousands of new jobs and homes as well as driving huge economic growth.
- 1.2.3 HS2 is the first new intercity railway to be built north of London in more than a century. Construction of the line is well underway, with over 30,000 jobs supported by the project and more than 3,500 UK-based businesses helping to

build it.

- 1.2.4** Comprising 140-miles of track, four new stations, two depots, over 32 miles of tunnel and 169 bridges, HS2 will leave a legacy of environmentally responsible travel, economic regeneration, and technological innovation for generations to come.

1.3 HS2 values

- 1.3.1** Working with HS2 Ltd means contributing to the delivery of one of the largest, most advanced infrastructure projects in Europe. The way we work together is part of who we are and how we make HS2 a success.

Safety.

As we build HS2, our first consideration is safety. We place safety and health at the heart of our decisions. If we see something unsafe, we will speak up and intervene, taking responsibility for our own and each other's health, safety, and wellbeing.

Respect.

Respect doesn't just happen – it takes time and effort to build. It's about listening to the views of our colleagues and the communities we affect as we build HS2.

Leadership.

Leadership isn't just for our executive leadership team or senior leadership team. At HS2, we all have a leadership role to play; whether it's inspiring others, making tough decisions, or role modelling the right behaviours.

Integrity.

Integrity is a choice between what is convenient and what is right. For us to deliver value for money as well as a first-class public transport system, integrity must be at the forefront of everything we do at HS2.

1.4 Health, safety, and wellbeing

- 1.4.1** Safety is our number one value and the starting point for everything we do. If people aren't safe, or don't feel safe, we cannot fulfil the complex task of building HS2, meeting our strategic goals and delivering the transformational benefits of the railway.
- 1.4.2** It's for this reason that the health, safety, and wellbeing of our people underpins everything we do, including our approach to procurement. Our overarching commitment to health and safety is brought together in our project-wide philosophy of Safe at Heart. We launched Safe at Heart in 2016 as a framework

of risk focus areas and commitments. For more information, please visit: [Safe at Heart Strategy Approach - HS2](#)

1.5 Background to the Land and Property 'Land Referencing Services' Procurement

1.5.1 The following approach is in draft form for the purposes of this preliminary market engagement exercise. This approach may not represent HS2 Ltd's entire strategy at this stage nor will it bind HS2 Ltd to adopt this approach in any subsequent procurement processes. This approach may be subject to change or refinement as HS2 Ltd develops its procurement strategy and requirements.

1.5.2 Land and Property Directorate

The strategic purpose of HS2 Ltd's Land and Property (L&P) Directorate is to acquire and manage the right land and property, at the right time, in the right way at the right price, ensuring HS2 Ltd are delivering value for money for tax payers and are being a good neighbour to the people and communities the HS2 project impacts.

The L&P Directorate continues to deliver one of the UK's largest land referencing and acquisition programmes, managing tens of thousands of land and property records, thousands of land parcels and hundreds of stakeholder groups. This work is a key enabler to the successful construction of the HS2 project. It is therefore of high importance that HS2 Ltd provide the best possible customer experience to all stakeholders, ensuring that affected parties:

- are identified at the earliest opportunity;
- are engaged early; and
- receive clear information through notices to assist them through the referencing process.

1.5.3 Background to the Requirement

Land Referencing is the process by which legal interests in land, whether they be ownership, tenancy, occupation, licence or rights, are researched and validated to ensure full and proper service of legal forms of notice.

HS2 Ltd has a requirement for the provision of land referencing services, whereby appropriate notices are served at the appropriate time to affected parties on behalf of the Secretary of State (SoS), to support with land acquisition, possession and access.

On 25 November 2013, the government deposited a hybrid Bill with Parliament titled 'High Speed Rail (London - West Midlands) Bill'.

As part of the preparation of the Phase One Hybrid Bill, in the region of 17,000 parties were identified as being directly affected by the Phase One route and thus forming part of the Book of Reference. On 23 February 2017 Royal Assent was granted for Phase One of HS2.

Since then, a range of activities have progressed, including engaging parties whom are affected by the Phase One route and serving notices to the appropriate parties. We continue to engage with communities affected by the construction of the railway.

The Act grants the powers to construct Phase One of the HS2 network, but also grants powers to:

- build and maintain HS2 and its associated works;
- compulsorily acquire interests in the land required;
- affect or change rights of way, including the stopping-up or diversion of highways and waterways (permanently or temporarily);
- modify infrastructure belonging to statutory undertakers (e.g. utility companies);
- carry out work on listed buildings and demolish buildings in conservation areas; and
- carry out protective works to buildings and third-party infrastructure.

It also grants the necessary changes to existing legislation to facilitate construction and operation of Phase One of HS2.

Compulsory purchase order (CPO) powers expired on 23 February 2022, five years after the Royal Assent.

On 17 July 2017, the High Speed Rail (West Midlands - Crewe) Bill was introduced to Parliament to seek powers for Phase 2a of HS2. The Bill subsequently received Royal Assent in February 2021 through the High Speed Rail (West Midlands - Crewe) Act 2021. However, following changes to the HS2 programme announced by the Government in October 2023, Phase 2a was cancelled and construction of this section will not proceed.

Proposals for Phase 2b, including the route between Crewe and Manchester and the eastern leg from the West Midlands towards Leeds, were not taken forward. The eastern leg to Leeds was removed from the programme in 2021 and in October 2023, the Government announced the cancellation of the

Birmingham to Manchester section. As a result, the currently authorised HS2 network is focused on the railway between London and the West Midlands and associated infrastructure works.

1.5.4 Requirement Scope

HS2 Ltd is seeking to procure land referencing services to replace agreements that are due to expire and to consolidate the delivery of activities across the programme.

The prime aim of the suppliers will be to ensure that appropriate legal notices are served at the right time to affected parties on behalf of the SoS, in order to support land acquisition, possession and access for the HS2 programme. Suppliers will be required to exchange data in a variety of formats aligned with HS2 project standards including, but not limited to pdf, xlsx, xml, Primavera P6, file geodatabases and web services.

Services to be procured may include a number of the services listed in Tables 1 and 2 below:

Table 1: Core Services

Index	Core Services
1	Completion of referencing enquiries in advance of service of notice
2	Completion of the acquisition of land and/or rights over land by compulsory means
3	Completion of service of notice for temporary possession of land and notification of the hand back of temporarily possessed land
4	Completion of land referencing to support Utility Land Rights requirements
5	Completion of service of notice for entry to land for surveys and investigations
6	Undertaking land referencing to update Safeguarding and zoned discretionary schemes mailing lists
7	Provision of GIS services

Table 2: Non-Core (Supplementary) Services

Index	Non-Core (Supplementary) Services
8	Registration of title to land
9	Recording of possession of land
10	Recording of disposals

11	Recording of land acquired under blight and discretionary schemes
12	Recording of properties in receipt of home owner protection zone and cash offer payments
13	Data assurance and re-engineering
14	Resource augmentation
15	Compulsory purchase and support activities as instructed

The appointed Suppliers will be required to interact directly with HS2 Ltd's L&P Directorate for instruction, management and reporting, whilst also operating as part of an integrated team. In particular, the Suppliers will need to closely assimilate with HS2 Ltd's L&P, Legal and Community Engagement teams, as well as with the DfT's Independent Land Advisor, and HS2 Ltd's Delivery Construction and Works Contractors.

The resource provided by the Suppliers will need to be flexible in terms of location, with some work activities being best delivered from the Suppliers' own offices, or at other times, working across multiple HS2 Ltd locations including, but not limited to Birmingham and London. Resource types include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Senior Professional Lead (GIS/ Database / Programme)
- Senior Contract/Project Manager
- Junior Management / Professional Support
- Senior or Lead Technician
- Technician
- Junior Technician
- Clerical Support (i.e. admin)

1.5.5 Estimated Volumes and Metrics

The number of affected parties to be referenced over the 4 years is estimated to be in the range of 7,000 – 10,000. This forecast is not based on unique party counts and includes the same party being referenced more than once (for different requirements for example).

Please note that numbers are indicative and may be subject to change and also do not cover non-quantifiable activities such as mailing lists or support on GIS

deliverables. Further clarity around these metrics will be provided during the procurement process.

1.5.6 Contracting Approach

HS2 Ltd intend to run this procurement as a further competition via GCA's Estate Management Services 2 (RM6343) – Lot 4 Surveying and Strategic Advice. However, HS2 Ltd are also seeking feedback on the possibility of procuring its Land Referencing Service requirements via alternative routes, including other relevant GCA or public sector frameworks such as ESPO and YPO.

Following completion of the proposed procurement, HS2 Ltd currently intends to award the contract to a single supplier. Alternatively, HS2 Ltd is open to awarding the contract to two suppliers to ensure sufficient access to the capacity, capability and resilience required to support the ongoing needs of the programme. HS2 Ltd is seeking market feedback on the advantages and disadvantages of these delivery models and the extent to which either approach is likely to support the successful delivery of the services.

Should the contract be awarded to two suppliers, the scope of services will be delivered through individual work packages. Each work package will comprise the applicable core services set out in Table 1 (Items 1-7). Where required, supplementary services from Table 2 (Items 8-15) may also be included.

Work packages will be allocated to suppliers in accordance with a pre-defined allocation criteria set out within the contract. Such criteria may include, but are not limited to, overall price of the work package, the supplier's ability to resource and mobilise the requirement within the required timescales, and any other factors deemed relevant to the successful delivery of the services.

To ensure sufficient capacity throughout the duration of the contract and to minimise risk, HS2 Ltd's proposed approach is that no single supplier will be allocated more than two consecutive work packages. Exceptions may apply where the other supplier is unable to resource or deliver the requirement within the required timescales, or where there is another demonstrable benefit to HS2 Ltd.

HS2 Ltd is currently considering an initial contract term of up to 3 years and 6 months, including a 6-month mobilisation period, with the option to extend for a further term of up to 1 year. However, HS2 Ltd is seeking market feedback on the most appropriate contract duration, mobilisation period and extension structure for the proposed services.

The contractual relationship with the appointed suppliers is proposed to be based on GCA's Estates Management Services 2 Lot 4 Framework terms. Work packages will be instructed on a capped time and materials pricing approach, with incentivisation mechanisms applied as appropriate.

The procurement will be managed via JAGGAER Advantage (formerly known as Bravo), which is HS2 Ltd's e-procurement system.

1.6 Instructions and terms of participation

- 1.6.1** For the avoidance of doubt, this preliminary market engagement exercise is not a call for competition.
- 1.6.2** Any comments, indications of interest, participation, or non-participation in this exercise by an organisation prior to the commencement of any formal procurement process will not influence the selection and/or award decision forming part of any future procurement process, nor will it be taken as an organisation's committed position in relation to any of the subject areas explored in the Market Sounding Questionnaire.
- 1.6.3** All responses will be carefully considered by HS2 Ltd when finalising the procurement strategy but will not bind HS2 Ltd to any approach. HS2 Ltd reserves the right to amend the procurement approach at any time and will not be responsible for the costs or expenses in relation to any matter referred to in this document howsoever incurred.
- 1.6.4** The information in this Market Sounding Briefing is confidential and should not be circulated more widely without HS2 Ltd's express written consent. All information provided in this Market Sounding Briefing is the property of HS2 Ltd and may only be used by other organisations for the purpose of responding to the Market Sounding Questionnaire.
- 1.6.5** All responses received to the Market Sounding Questionnaire will be treated in confidence but will be the property of HS2 Ltd and will be used to compile a report on the outcome of the preliminary market engagement exercise. This report will contain non-attributable and aggregated data that, notwithstanding the stated confidentiality of responses, may be disclosed to third parties including as part of this preliminary market engagement and any future procurements.
- 1.6.6** HS2 Ltd reserves the right to engage further with some or all of those organisations who respond to the Market Sounding Questionnaire in order to discuss or clarify any of the responses provided. HS2 Ltd may also undertake

further market engagement exercises with organisations responding to the Market Sounding Questionnaire or other organisations either in writing or in face-to-face meetings as HS2 Ltd reasonably considers appropriate.

1.7 Feedback request and how to respond

1.7.1 Feedback is requested in relation to HS2 Ltd's proposals described in this Market Sounding Briefing. Your feedback is important as it allows views from the market to inform the finalisation of the procurement plans for these elements within HS2 Ltd.

Please use the link below to complete the Market Sounding Questionnaire by no later than 5pm on Wednesday 11th November 2026:

<https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/IO2K2T/>.

By agreeing to complete the Market Sounding Questionnaire, you and your organisation also agree to:

- refer any communications received from third parties regarding the content or participation in this market sounding exercise to Gesh.Tharmarajah@hs2.org.uk; and
- not make any public statement in relation to the preliminary market engagement exercise without the prior written approval of HS2 Ltd.

1.7.2 If you have any queries in relation to this preliminary market engagement exercise, please contact us via Gesh.Tharmarajah@hs2.org.uk. Alternatively, if you do not wish to be involved further in this preliminary market engagement exercise, then please advise us accordingly.

1.8 Timescales

HS2 Ltd intends to run the procurement to the indicative timetable set out in Table 3 below, which may at HS2 Ltd's sole discretion, be subject to change or alteration at any time.

Table 3 – Indicative Procurement Timetable

Milestone	Indicative Timescales
Market Sounding	November 2026
Publish ITT	January 2027
Award Contract	April 2027
Contract Mobilisation	May 2027 onwards

2 Questions for Response

2.1 Organisation Details

Q1 Please provide your company's contact details (HS2 Ltd will use these to issue communications regarding this opportunity):

Key information	Response
Contact Name	
Contact Role	
Contact email address	
Full organisation name	
Company House Number (if applicable)	

2.2 Appetite and Bidding Model

Q2 Based on the information included within the Market Briefing, does your organisation have an appetite to bid for this opportunity?

Please choose the relevant option below:

Yes – Appetite to bid directly (as a sole Tier 1 Supplier) ☐

Yes – Appetite to bid directly (as a Tier 1 Supplier using subcontractors) ☐

Yes – Appetite to bid directly (as part of Joint Venture, Consortium or any Other Model) ☐

Yes – Indirect (Tier 2 or below) as part of the Supply Chain ☐

No appetite to bid ☐

If you have indicated 'No appetite to bid', please provide your reasons, including any suggested changes which would likely change your appetite to 'Yes'

- Q3 If you indicated an interest in participating as a JV, Tier 2 supplier, or Tier 1 supplier utilising Tier 2 subcontractors, please explain why your organisation would not bid as a Tier 1 single contractor.

Please provide your response here:

- Q4 If your organisation expects to bid as part of a Joint Venture (JV) or other delivery arrangement, please indicate the type of arrangement (e.g. consortium, Joint Venture, or other) and, where known, the names of any proposed partner organisations.

Please provide your response here:

2.3 Capacity and Capability

- Q5 If HS2 Ltd maintains its proposed approach of awarding the contract to a single supplier, does your organisation have the in-house capability and capacity to deliver the requirements, including all relevant subject matter expertise, over the maximum possible contract duration (4 years and 6 months)?

Please set out below the percentage for each service line you anticipate undertaking in-house and/or via subcontractors as applicable. (Guidance: If your selection is "No" for a service line, please select 100% under the No column, where a selection doesn't apply, please select 0%).

Services	Yes – in-house	Yes – utilising a subcontractor(s)	No
Completion of referencing enquiries in advance of service of notice			
Completion of the acquisition of land and/or rights over land by compulsory means			
Completion of service of notice for temporary possession of land and			

notification of the hand back of temporarily possessed land			
Completion of land referencing to support Utility Land Rights requirements			
Completion of service of notice for entry to land for surveys and investigations			
Undertaking land referencing to update Safeguarding and zoned discretionary schemes mailing lists			
Registration of title to land			
Recording of possession of land			
Recording of disposals			
Recording of land acquired under blight and discretionary schemes			
Recording of properties in receipt of home owner protection zone and cash offer payments			
Provision of GIS services			
Data assurance and re-engineering			
Resource augmentation			
Compulsory purchase and support activities as instructed			

Q6 Please provide further details in support of your response to the previous question, including:

- Your ability to provide suitably qualified personnel to the HS2 Birmingham office, should secondments be required.
- Your organisation's ability to accommodate increases in workload, including whether sufficient skilled capacity exists to support a significant ramp-up in volumes during the contract term.
- Any anticipated challenges in recruiting, retaining or deploying suitably qualified resources to deliver the services, including any proposed mitigation measures. The extent to which the proposed scope aligns with your organisation's people strategy, resourcing model, resource mix and organisational structure.

Please provide your response here:

Q7 Are there any geographical, contractual or resource-related constraints that could affect your organisation's ability to provide services across the required locations or deploy resources as required throughout the contract term?

Yes

☐

No

☐

Please provide further details in support of your response, including any restrictions relating to the deployment of specialist resources or the geographic areas in which services can be provided.

2.4 Alternative Delivery Model

- Q8 If HS2 Ltd were to award the contract to two suppliers, would your organisation have an appetite to bid for this opportunity? If your answer is "No", please proceed to Question 11.

Yes

☐

No

☐

Please provide further details in support of your response, including

Whether the split award would change your organisation's response to any of the previous questions relating to appetite to bid, delivery model, capability and capacity, or subcontracting arrangements? If so, please briefly describe the changes; and

State any objective criteria that you consider most appropriate for inclusion within a pre-defined work package allocation methodology

- Q9 HS2 Ltd's proposed approach to work package allocation where there is more than one supplier is that no supplier would be allocated more than two consecutive work packages, except where the alternative supplier is unable to deliver the requirement or where there is another demonstrable benefit to HS2 Ltd. Do you support this approach?

Yes

☐

No

☐

Please provide further details in support of your response here:

Q10 Please provide any further considerations regarding the one-supplier or two supplier delivery models:

Please provide your response here:

2.5 Procurement Strategy

Q11 HS2 Ltd are considering running a further competition under via GCA's Estate Management Services 2 (RM6343) – Lot 4 Surveying and Strategic Advice Framework. Do you agree this approach and the framework terms are appropriate?

Yes

☐

No

☐

Please provide further details in support of your response here, including, where applicable, details of any alternative frameworks that you consider suitable:

Q12 Do you agree that the Capped Time & Materials pricing approach is appropriate for this service, where the capped price is calculated based on the price quoted for each work package?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Please provide further details in support of your response here, including, any alternative pricing approaches that you consider may be more suitable.

Q13 HS2 Ltd is considering a contract duration of 3 years and 6 months, including an initial 6-month mobilisation period, with the option to extend for a further year. Does HS2 Ltd.'s proposed contract duration allow your organisation to deliver the services to optimum time, cost, and quality?

Yes ☐

No ☐

If you answered "No", please state what your organisation considers the optimum contract term and why below. Please also detail any potential risks or limitations you foresee.

- Q14 Drawing on your experience of delivering land referencing services for HS2 Ltd, other public sector organisations, or comparable infrastructure programmes, please identify any lessons learned, good practice, or areas for improvement that HS2 Ltd should consider incorporating into the procurement, contracting and/or service delivery approach.

Please provide your response here:

2.6 Industry Trends, Technology and Innovation

- Q15 Do you consider the proposed scope of services reflects the current position of the land referencing industry and anticipated future market trends?

To further support your response, please provide the following details in the comments box below:

- Emerging trends in the land referencing market and supplier business models.
- Technological developments, tools or innovations that have been implemented by your organisation in recent years.
- Technological developments, tools or innovations that you expect to implement or utilise during the next 3-5 years.
- Any opportunities for HS2 Ltd to improve service delivery, efficiency, data quality or stakeholder outcomes through the adoption of new technologies, delivery models or ways of working.

Where applicable, please provide a brief description of each example and the benefits realised or anticipated.

Yes

☐

No

☐

Please provide further details in support of your response here:

- Q16 Drawing on your experience of delivering similar services, how could HS2 Ltd best incentivise high performance, continuous improvement and collaborative behaviours throughout the term of the contract? Please consider your response in the context of industry best practice and approaches adopted by other clients.

Please provide your response here:

2.7 Performance Management

Q17 What performance measures and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) do you consider most appropriate for monitoring the delivery of the services

Please propose details of three suitable KPIs that, in your organisation's view, would be most material to performance of the contract and could be adopted.

	KPI	Measure	SLA Targets
1			
2			
3			

Q18 What performance management measures or corrective actions would you consider most effective in the event of underperformance?

Please provide your response here:

Q19 What quality assurance measures and controls do you consider most appropriate for ensuring consistent delivery of services across the scope of work?

Please provide your response here:

Q20 Please suggest the top three risks and issues related to this contract, including specific actions to mitigate them. These could be procurement risks or service delivery risks.

	Stage (Procurement / Mobilisation / Service / Delivery)	Risk	Mitigation
1			
2			
3			

2.8 Other Information

Q21 Is there anything else, not already covered, that you would like to make HS2 Ltd aware of regarding this potential opportunity, or anything that would deter or prevent your organisation from bidding?

Yes

☐

No

☐

If yes, please provide details:

Q22 Do you consent to your organisation's responses to this Market Sounding Questionnaire being shared with authorised third parties for the purposes of supporting the procurement, evaluation and market analysis process?

Yes

☐

No

☐

Q23 Are you aware at this stage of any perceived, potential or actual conflicts of interest associated with your organisation or personnel in relation to this opportunity?

Yes

☐

No

☐

If "Yes", please provide details of any actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest:

HS2 Ltd's Procurement Team would like to take this opportunity to thank you for taking the time to respond to this questionnaire.