



Notice of works in Jones Hill Wood, Wendover

February 2021 | www.hs2.org.uk

High Speed Two (HS2) is the new high speed railway for Britain. We are continually reviewing the works on our construction sites in line with Government and Public Health England (PHE) advice on dealing with COVID-19. The Government's current strategy makes it clear that construction activity can continue as long as it complies with this guidance.

Please be assured that only sites that can operate within the guidelines are operational. All sites will remain under constant review. We have postponed all face-to-face engagement events and meetings and have put in place a number of channels to communicate with communities, such as letters and phone calls, as well as updates and alerts from each of the local community websites. You can sign up for regular updates in your local area at ww.hs2inbucksandoxfordshire.commonplace.is

Why are we doing this work now?

We have a number of preparatory activities taking place over the coming weeks ahead of the future construction of the railway. In December we wrote to you with information about the construction of a temporary internal access road between Great Missenden and Wendover Small Dean. The temporary access road will be used to transport excavated materials and construction equipment along the line of route.

This access road will help us keep HGVs (heavy good vehicles) within our working areas and it will reduce the need for transporting large loads on the local road network. Once our preparatory works are completed, and the internal haul road is built, we will start the construction of the railway.

If you have a question about HS2 or our works, please contact our HS2 Helpdesk team on 08081 434 434 or email hs2enquiries@hs2.org.uk

Duration of works

Work will begin in March 2021 and be completed by Summer 2021.

What to expect

To complete this work, we need to:

- set up site compounds
- complete ecology surveys
- undertake planting
- clear vegetation and move woodland soil

You may notice some extra traffic on the roads and noise from the machinery. Our normal working hours are between 8:00am and 6:00pm Monday – Friday and Saturday 8:00am – 1:00pm

What we will do

We will be working hard to ensure any impact on residents is kept to a minimum during these works.

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What will we be doing?

Before the construction of the railway can start, we need to undertake several activities, including:

- setting up site compounds
- ecology surveys
- tree planting
- woodland clearance
- ancient woodland soil movement

Site compound and lighting

To enable us to carry out this work we need to set up additional temporary compounds. To construct these compounds, we will initially use the facilities near Durham Farm. Once built, the compounds will include:

- Temporary trackway and hard standing to maintain highway cleanliness
- Office and welfare facilities alongside storage of machinery and materials
- Car parking and 24-hour security with temporary low-level lighting

There will be three site compounds to complete the work in this notification. They will be accessed using the A413 and Bowood Lane, please refer to the map enclosed for more details.

The compound will have a combination of stone and track matting leading to the work area. We will use wheel wash facilities for vehicles leaving the site.

Following local feedback, we have reduced levels of lighting at the site. This has included the use of ground level security lighting within the woodland and surrounding perimeter. When lighting our site, we will continue to consider the impacts upon wildlife, nearby properties and the safety of the site team.

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Ecology surveys

There have been ecological and tree surveys undertaken of the vegetation that we will need to remove.

Work will be conducted in compliance with all applicable Natural England licenses for protected species. Before any vegetation is cleared it will be thoroughly inspected by qualified ecologists. Any protected species found to be present will be recorded and no vegetation will be cleared until the species have left the site. The vegetation clearance will be undertaken in accordance with:

- HS2 Organisational European Protected Species Licence for Badger WML-024.
- Licencing applications to Natural England including bats.

Further details are available online.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hs2-phase-one-environmental-statement-volume-5-ecology>

The work on HS2 is guided by High-Speed Rail (LondonWestMidlands) Act 2017.

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2017/7/contents/enacted>

Site preparation

Ahead of the main construction works we need to prepare the line of route. This includes the partial clearance of Jones Hill Wood. Details of the clearance areas, new planting and areas of soils translocation can be found on the map in this notification. The vegetation and ancient woodland soils will be removed by a specialist team using machinery and handheld tools.

Work will be completed over two phases

Phase 1: March 2021

Through comprehensive ecological surveys, including tree climbing, an initial area of woodland clearance has been identified. This area has been identified through surveys to have low or negligible potential to support roosting bats. For the phase 1 area survey data has been provided and discussed with Natural England.

No further vegetation clearance in the woodland will take place until a licence with Natural England has been approved.

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Site preparation continued

Phase 2: Works to commence upon the approval of all licencing and consents in spring 2021

Through our detailed ecological surveys, we have identified areas of potential bat roosts within the remaining area of woodland required for the construction of the railway. A licence application is currently being prepared for submission to Natural England to undertake this work in accordance with the species ecological calendar. Subject to approval of the required licence the remaining part clearance required of Jones Hill Wood will be undertaken in spring 2021. Existing woodland, forming the woodland edge management zone, will be retained alongside the remaining non possessed woodland.

Tree planting

A significant programme of tree planting will take place in the Jones Hill Wood area from February 2021 and will be completed by Spring 2021. This planting is separate to the ancient woodland soils transfer area.

The site for the tree planting works is located between Bowood Lane and Kings Lane. Planting will consist of 22,000 trees and will include native species such as Rowan, Birch and Guelder-rose.

In preparation for the tree planting, the ground has been cultivated. Cultivation work consists of ploughing and turning the land that is intended for planting using cultivating machinery. This is to ensure that soil types are catered for effectively and produces the best conditions for the planting to be successful.

The location of the tree planting can be found on the map enclosed.

How will you ensure that you do not affect nesting birds and other ecology?

Phase one of our work is programmed to take place before the bird nesting season. Much of the ground level vegetation within the phase two area will also be cleared prior to the nesting season to reduce the likelihood of birds nesting in the area ahead of phase two tree clearance.

Prior to any vegetation removal an ecologist will survey the area to be cleared and record any findings. Any vegetation that cannot be removed, due to the presence of protected ecology, will be left undisturbed with the appropriate buffer until further surveys confirm that the ecology is no longer present.

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Ancient Woodland clearance

Where effects on ancient woodland cannot be reasonably avoided, we have committed to provide a range of compensation measures, in line with advice provided by Natural England and the Forestry Commission, including ancient woodland soil transfer and new planting. The compensatory planting in our plans aims to join up existing ancient woodlands to deliver a more joined environment that will support biodiversity. We will maintain, monitor and manage these sites for up to 50 years to ensure they are established correctly.

We have published an Ancient Woodland Strategy, outlining each directly impacted ancient woodland and the specific compensation measures to be taken in response to any losses at these woodlands. This is based on the impacts identified in the Environmental Statement and taking account of the Supplementary Environmental Statements and Additional Provisions. We have subsequently further developed the design for Jones Hill Wood based upon further surveys of the site: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hs2-phase-one-ancient-woodland-strategy>

Seasonality of ancient woodland soils translocation

Ancient woodlands are extremely important for the environment, typically, they are areas that have been continuously wooded since 1600 AD and provide complex and unique ecosystems. The aim of ancient woodland soils transfer is to create a woodland that replicates as much as possible the characteristics of ancient woodland, acknowledging that it will never be possible to directly compensate for ancient woodland loss. We will transfer the soil by excavating it from the area known as the donor site and moving it to a suitable new area known as the receptor site.

A suitable receptor site adjacent to Jones Hill Wood has been chosen to allow this.

Some of the soil transfer is scheduled outside the optimum part of the season and this may have a detrimental effect. We will look to identify ways to mitigate this.

The receptor site design has been informed by site surveys carried out by experienced surveyors. During this process the team has identified woodland items such as deadwood, coppice stools and saplings that are to be translocated to the new site. The site will now be cleared of trees and vegetation and the pre-identified key woodland items are to be translocated. Soil is then carefully excavated and transferred to the receptor site. The new site will then be monitored and managed to ensure that new vegetation can become established.

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We are working with a team of experienced habitat translocation contractors to ensure that protected species, deadwood habitats and the unique flora associated with these environments are transferred successfully.

How will this affect you?

We will be working hard to ensure any impact on residents is kept to a minimum during these and all works. You may notice some extra traffic on the roads immediately around the site with workers moving to and from the site. You may notice some noise from the machinery while our work is taking place. Our normal working hours are between 8:00am and 6:00pm Monday – Friday and 8:00am – 1:00pm Saturdays. The site will be open an hour either side of these times for the workforce to start up and shut down.

Update on the internal access road and other related works

Along the route, there will be specific points at which our HGVs are allowed to gain access to the haul road and points which we need to cross existing roads. In order to construct these crossing points, we will need to carry out localised vegetation clearance, drainage work and fencing where needed.

In the North Chilterns area, from Great Missenden to Small Dean, Wendover, there are three points across the local hilltop lanes where the road will cross during construction;

- **Bowood Lane**
- **Leather Lane**
- **Rocky Lane**

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Update on the internal access road and other related works continued

To complete these works, there will need to be temporary closures along these roads from March 2021 through to May 2021. Each road will be done in succession, so at no point will all three lanes be closed at the same time. These are intended to be 24-hour closures. There will be fully signposted diversion routes in place along with signage erected beforehand. There will be a separate notification issued which details these closures and the intended diversion routes.

Additional site clearance

In the Wendover area and along the A413 from early Spring 2021 there will be sections of clearance work which need to be undertaken.

When we undertake site clearance, a small team will use machinery and hand-held equipment to clear existing vegetation. Detailed surveys of local wildlife and habitats have been undertaken, and this information will ensure that wild birds, nests, bats and roosts are not disturbed during the works. Ecologists will be on site while these works are taking place.

Due to the proximity to the A413 in places, there will be a need for some traffic management to go alongside this work. You can expect to see traffic lights with lane closures as we progress through the area, so please allow a little extra time to any planned journeys.

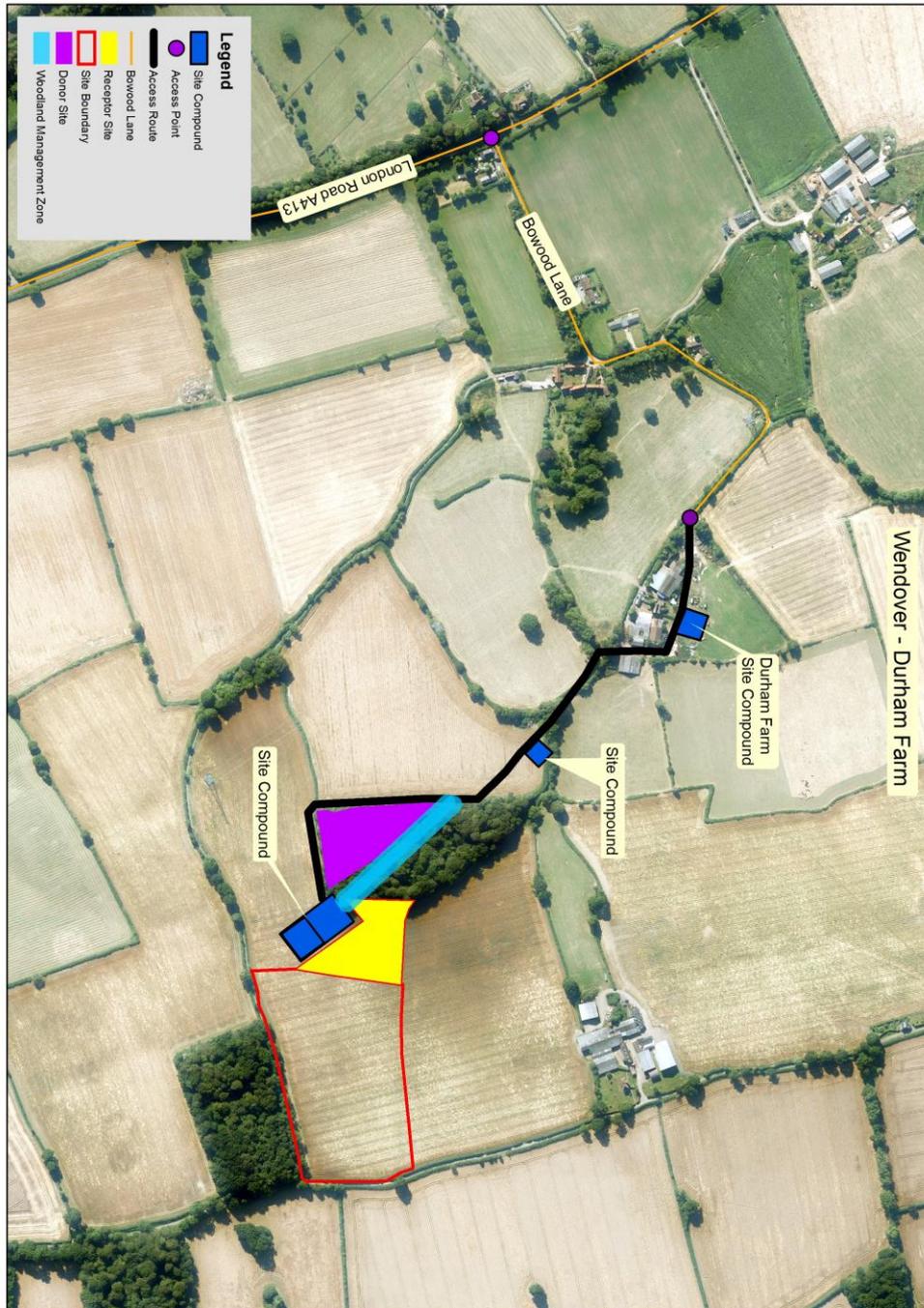
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Map of tree planting site with compound access points



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Additional Information – Questions and Answers

What is the benefit of transferring woodland soils?

We believe that translocating ancient woodland soils will provide a better outcome for these important soil resources which have developed over many hundreds of years compared to, for example, the disposal of this material to landfill. The area where the soil is moved from is known as a 'donor site' and the area where the soil will be moved to is known as a 'receptor site'. In terms of soils handling, it is also considered better in some cases to conduct this operation outside of the dormant season as the soils are less likely to be wet or frozen and the soil structure (and therefore potential soil structure) is easier to preserve. However, the impacts on plants of soil transfer in the growing season is difficult to predict.

Soil survey data has been used to design soil transfer by:

- designing and plan the work, including the selection of the most suitable transfer process;
- guiding the overseeing soil scientist and ecologist;
- providing a permanent record of the original woodland soil against which soil development in the receptor site can be compared; and,
- helping replicate the soil profile from donor to receptor site (along with other data such as hydrological conditions and topography).

Considerations such as low value and/or unsuitable soils for transfer are assessed by a soil scientist and ecologist. Reasons for low value may be compaction from pedestrian traffic caused by protester activity or due to the presence of invasive non-native species.

Once the soils have been transferred, daily soil checks are required during the translocation programme of both donor and receptor sites to check if soils can be transferred and whether any remedial measures are required, such as watering or shading due to seasonal changes in climate.

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Additional Information – Questions and Answers continued

How much of Jones Hill Wood will be retained?

Approximately 1.1ha of Jones Hill Wood will be retained and protected, along with the hedgerows and tree lines to the east of the woodland. In addition, other areas of woodland within the wider landscape will remain. There will also be an area of retained woodland edge in the form of the woodland management zone.

Can you tell me more about the landscaping and tree planting?

A landscaping strategy will be implemented, with the creation of a new woodland block and linkages between woodland areas provided to the south-west of Jones Hill Wood. The proposed landscaping scheme incorporates a new species-rich woodland planting area, to the east of the translocated woodland. This new parcel of woodland will create a link between the retained and translocated parts of Jones Hill Wood, and other areas of woodland within the local area. The mitigation works include the erection of bat boxes, which will be in place ahead of tree felling commencement to ensure there is continuous provision of roosting features available.

The new habitat will be created this planting season. Provision of habitat and creation of links at this landscape-scale will significantly increase the amount of foraging and commuting habitat available to the local bat population as well as providing benefits to a wide range of other wildlife.

Keeping you informed

We are committed to keeping you informed about work on HS2. This includes ensuring you know what to expect and when to expect it, as well as how we can help.

Residents' Charter and Commissioner

The Residents' Charter is our promise to communicate as clearly as we possibly can with people who live along or near the HS2 route. www.gov.uk/government/publications/hs2-residents-charter

We also have an independent Residents' Commissioner whose job is to make sure we keep to the promises we make in the Charter and to keep it under constant review. Find reports at: www.gov.uk/government/collections/hs2-ltd-residents-commissioner

You can contact the Commissioner at: residentscommissioner@hs2.org.uk

Construction Commissioner

The Construction Commissioner's role is to mediate and monitor the way in which HS2 Ltd manages and responds to construction complaints. You can contact the Construction Commissioner by emailing: complaints@hs2-cc.org.uk

Property and compensation

You can find out all about HS2 and properties along the line of route by visiting: www.gov.uk/government/collections/hs2-property
Find out if you're eligible for compensation at: www.gov.uk/claim-compensation-if-affected-by-hs2

Holding us to account

If you are unhappy for any reason you can make a complaint by contacting our HS2 Helpdesk team. For more details on our complaints process, please visit our website: www.hs2.org.uk/how-to-complain

Contact Us

Contact our HS2 Helpdesk team all day, every day of the year on:

 Freephone **08081 434 434**

 Minicom **08081 456 472**

 Email **hs2enquiries@hs2.org.uk**

Write to:

FREEPOST

HS2 Community Engagement

Website **www.hs2.org.uk**

To keep up to date with what is happening in your local area, visit: **www.hs2inyourarea.co.uk**

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