fusion Working on behalf of HS2

Contact our HS2 Helpdesk team on **08081 434 434**

HS2 Update

Aylesbury Golf Course | July 2020

High Speed Two (HS2) is the new high speed railway for Britain. In response to the Covid-19 virus we have worked hard to ensure that our working practices are fully aligned with the Site Operating Procedures produced by the Construction Leadership Council. These have been endorsed by Public Health England.

What is coming up in your area?

In preparation of our main works starting, we will be undertaking the following works during 2020

- boundary fencing
- ecology surveys
- species translocation
- ecology site maintenance
- vegetation clearance
- archaeology
- planting
- main work surveys

We have taken a brief pause in places to assess how to work as safely as possible during the Covid-19 pandemic. Following this, we are now planning a programme of activity over summer 2020 which will include archaeological investigations and ecological works in your local area.

What are we doing?

Temporary crossing points

To complete our works, we will need to provide six temporary crossing points across existing ditches in July/August 2020. The areas will have pipes installed to maintain drainage and then covered in stone. The temporary crossing points will be removed once works have been completed.

Fencing

Our fencing works will continue in August 2020 and will be completed by the end of the year. For this stage of works we will not be closing any Public Rights of Way, but we will need to occasionally cross over them with machinery to access working areas. To ensure this happens safely we will have marshals in place who will suspend pedestrian access temporarily while the machinery passes through.

Key Dates

Temporary crossing points July/August 2020

Phase 2 fencing

August - December 2020

Ecology Mitigation

August – October 2020

Archaeology including Paleo surveys

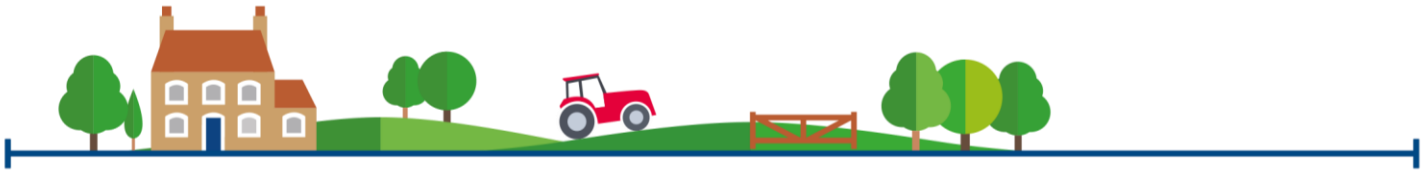
Autumn 2020 – Spring 2021

Planting

Winter 2020 – Spring 2021

Main work surveys

Winter 2020 - Spring 2021



Aylesbury Golf Course

Ecology surveys and mitigation

We are carrying on with our ecology surveys looking for great crested newts, reptiles, bats, badgers and owls.

Based on the result from these surveys we will then begin our mitigation works. This will involve translocating any bat roosts, owl roosts or badger setts to one of the habitat mitigation sites later in the year. These habitat sites have been carefully constructed and maintained to ensure they are suitable for the wildlife which will be moved there.

It is during the summer months where newt and reptile species are active. This includes the great created newt and this is when we will be moving populations to their new habitat sites. This will take place between August and October 2020

Installing newt fencing

Newt fencing consists mainly of plastic membrane which is buried into the ground and supported by stakes. This is to prevent newts entering the work area, and to collect the newts.

Collected newts are then taken to an ecology approved mitigation site that has been prepared for them and is suitable to support the population of newts (i.e. suitable aquatic vegetation and bankside vegetation). We will move the newts from an area scheduled for future works to a new habitat site. Ecologists use pit fall traps and mats which are set along the line of the fencing (please see images below).

When the newts move from the breeding pond, they move towards the line of the fence until they either fall into the trap or hide under a mat. All traps are checked daily by experienced ecologists who are accredited under the HS2 Great Crested Newt Licence.

Example of newt fencing and the trap which will help us collect the newts and move them to their new habitat.

Aylesbury Golf Course

Grass and shrub maintenance

Grass and hedgerow cutting works are undertaken under the instructions of the ecologist on site. who decides the appropriate methods based on the vegetation present. This involves a detailed hand search to determine if any ecology is present. If it is found that the area is clear, then the works will be allowed to take place. A small workforce will use machinery and hand-held equipment to cut sections of grass and hedgerows. Grass will be cut down to 15 centimetres above ground. Hedges will only be removed if required for the access route around the site.

Maintenance of sites

Areas that have been cleared will be maintained in a condition that makes it unsuitable for newts. The area will be checked by an ecologist and any suitable hibernation or vegetation that may provide habitat for newts will be hand searched and then strimmed down to 15 centimetres. A second cut will be undertaken on the following day, after a further check of the area by the ecologist, who will move any newts found to the new habitat site. The second cut should take the vegetation down to 5 centimetres above ground level, the vegetation will then be maintained at this height to discourage newts from entering the area.

Archaeological works

As part of HS2's works, we need to undertake some non-intrusive survey works in the area. If any significant finds are identified trial trenching work will be completed during autumn 2020 and spring 2021. Our archaeology will involve the following methods:

Desk top study

Before work commences, archaeologists will research to first establish what may be contained within the site area. A desktop study is conducted, which is a search of the archives to uncover records of any historic settlements or activity which will uncover clues that may help when carrying out work onsite.

Excavation works

If any archaeology of significance has been identified, larger areas will be stripped to open the archaeology initially through shallow trail trenches being dug and then, depending upon the results, further mitigation work will be undertaken. This will allow the archaeological teams to create a more complete picture of the findings. All trial trenches are back filled and returned to their previous condition once our works are complete.

Example of trial trenching

Aylesbury Golf Course

Geophysical surveys

Geophysical surveys have taken place during June 2020. This involved our specialists walking the site with scanning equipment to produce a detailed map of the area. This mapping shows features below the earth's surface that can be used to show us where there may be archaeology. This method is neither invasive nor destructive which means we can get useful information on a large area without affecting the environment.

Paleo environmental surveys

These surveys enable us to understand the site formation and to identify changes in the physical landscape through time. This will be completed using a borehole driller.

Historic landscape surveys

The landscape surveys are completed using a range of activities that will include site walkovers and topographical/earthwork surveys. There will be use of drones for some elements, they will only focus on Aylesbury Golf Course. This will take before any trial trenching.

Planting

Planting will be undertaken during winter 2020 until spring 2021. We will update you on this work closer to the time.

Main work contractor surveys

Ahead of the main construction work starting for the railway we will need to undertake ground investigation surveys. These will help develop our understanding of the ground conditions and will feed into the main design of the railway.

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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