

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

HS2 Update

Northamptonshire | Spring 2021

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 for our main works we are undertaking the following works throughout spring / summer 2021:

- archaeology
- ecological site maintenance and clearances
- species translocation
- ecological surveys
- boundary fencing

We have completed the evaluation stages of our archaeological process and are now undertaking wider archaeological excavations to record and mitigate any significant archaeology along the line of route in Northamptonshire.

As part of our ecology mitigation work we will also be undertaking vegetation clearance and maintenance along the line of route. We will continue to remove vegetation including trees, shrubs and grass. This

will additionally ensure that newts and reptiles do not re-inhabit the land where they have already been relocated from.

We shall be continuing the newt translocation in new areas starting in the spring when the newts are out of hibernation. We shall be installing plastic fencing around the populations to capture them and move them to established habitats away from the route.

Ecological surveys will be ongoing throughout the preparatory works which include bat, reptile and water vole surveys.

As we continue to take possession of our final pieces of land, boundary fencing will still be ongoing in some areas.

We will continue to post work updates on our web page www.hs2innorthants.co.uk



These works will continue throughout 2021.

Working hours:
Monday to Friday
8.00am – 6.00pm, Saturday
& Sunday 8am to 1pm

Our contractors may be on site for one hour's start-up and shutdown either side of these times

Temporary traffic lights may be in place to facilitate the safe operation of these works. We will update you as this work progresses.

Sites may be operated with 24-hour security, temporary lighting, site storage and welfare vehicles.

We will mitigate impacts such as traffic and noise as far as possible.



We're boarding onto a journey through time...

Archaeological works

As part of our enabling works, archaeologists will be exploring and recording sites between Brackley and Southam.

This work is part of the largest archaeological dig in Europe. Archaeologists are currently undertaking work to confirm the evidence of Roman and Iron Age settlements in the area.

What are we looking for?

Excavation works are beginning to identify archaeological landscapes likely to date from 3000BC or even older. The results will provide archaeologists extensive information on how the landscape looked during these times. Current results indicate that the area was extensively populated due to its agricultural land.

Recent discoveries

We have several excavations currently in progress with our first near Boddington complete.

Dating back to the late Bronze Age/early Iron Age, image on the top right shows an agricultural stock enclosure known as a 'Banjo Enclosure'. This would have contained livestock and may have had a dwelling(s) with people residing within it.

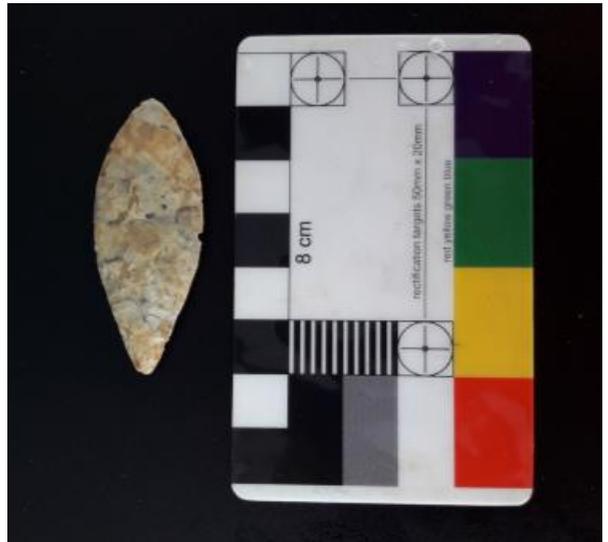
The 40-metre diameter enclosure boundary comprised of a wall and ditch to keep animals contained. A funnelled entrance made herding livestock into the enclosure easier, whilst maintaining a smaller access point to secure the livestock.

Just south of this site, roughly 4000 years old, this rare Bronze Age arrow/spear head was recently discovered. Exciting evidence that humans have been active in this area for many millennia.

We will be hosting a series of a webinars to illustrate what life would have been like in the area over 1000 years ago. This is an exciting opportunity for discovery and learning and we will be sharing our finds with you as they emerge.



Banjo enclosure



Bronze Age arrow/spear head

Our environmental management includes...

Habitat creation

We have built a number of new habitat sites along the HS2 route that will be populated not just by protected species, but also by a naturally diverse range of plants and animals. Some of the key features that have been put in place include:

- wildlife ponds with aquatic planting,
- hibernacula's – places where reptiles can go in the winter,
- bat boxes,
- reptile basking banks,
- planting of wetland and dry grassland

Newt and reptile capture

We are moving newts and reptiles from an area scheduled for future works to established habitat sites. Ecologists use pit fall traps and mats which are set along the line of the fencing.

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. We will be completing the rest of this work this year.



Ecologists checking for newts

Grass, shrub and tree clearance

Grass, shrub and trees clearance is undertaken under the instruction 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 grass of hedgerows. Vegetation such as hedges will be cut down to 150 millimetres above ground. Where necessary, roots will also be removed.

Maintenance of sites

Areas that have been cleared will be maintained in a condition that makes it unsuitable for newts and reptiles to return. 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 150 millimetres. A second cut will be undertaken on the following day, after a recheck of the area by the ecologist. The second cut should take the vegetation down to 50 millimetres above ground level, the vegetation will then be maintained at this height to discourage newts from entering the area.

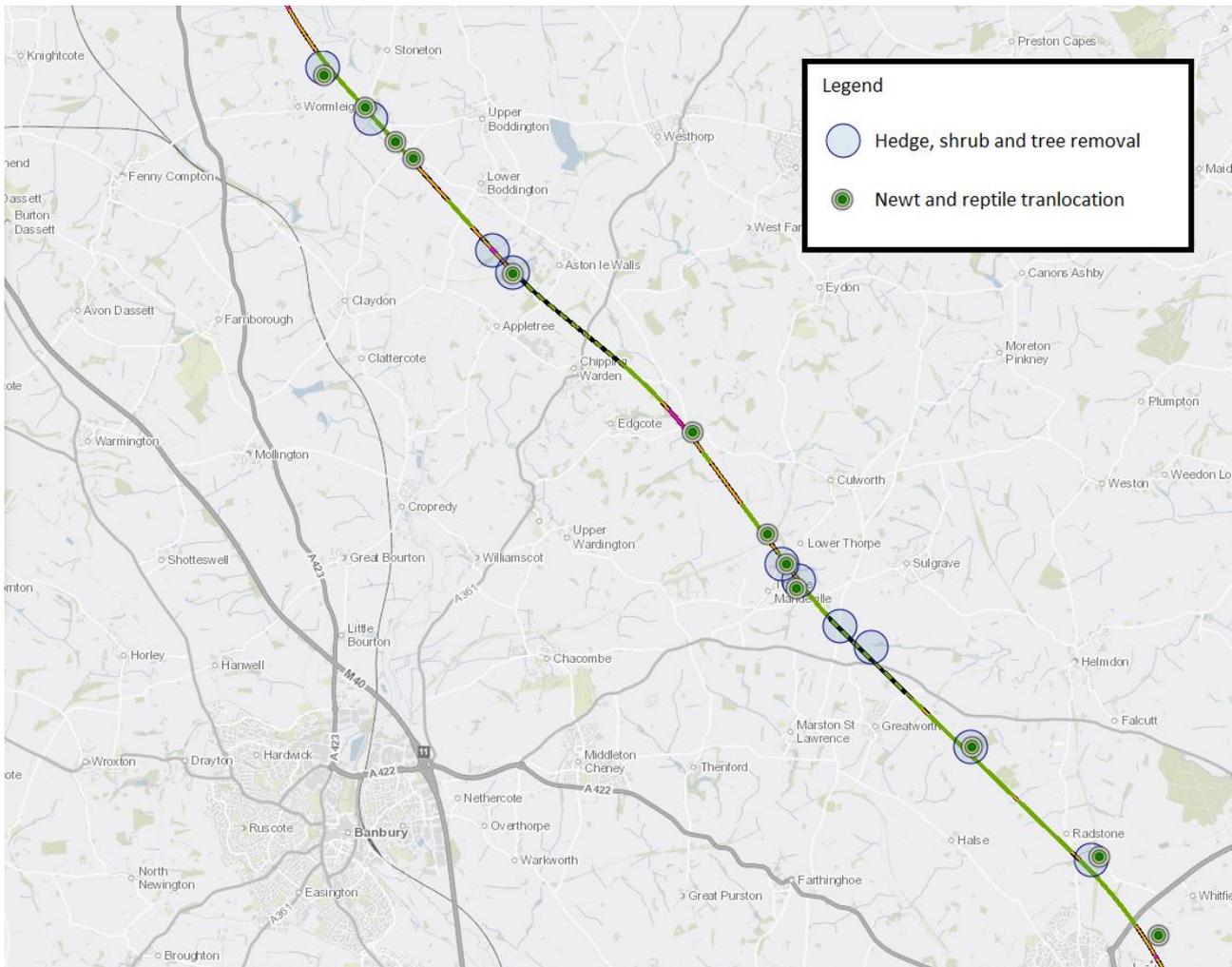
Existing pond removal

Once newts have been moved to their new established habitat, all vegetation will be removed from the existing pond before any clearance works start. The pond will be drained using a pump with suitable filters to prevent any newts being drained with the water. This work will all be carried out under the supervision of an ecologist. A fingertip search for newts will be undertaken and once it is confirmed that there are no newts present, the pond will then be filled in.

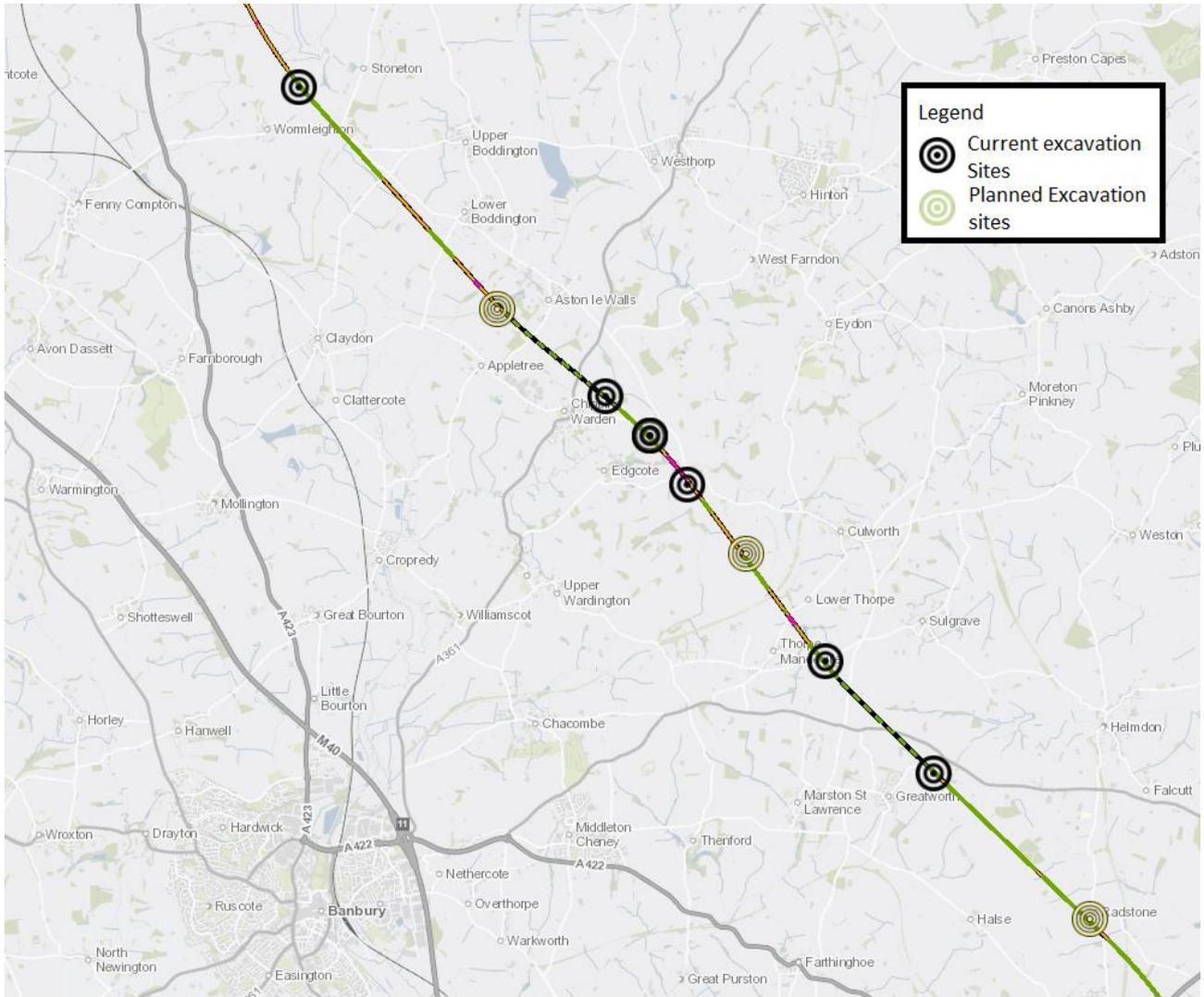
Traffic management

Whilst we are carrying out any works that is near to the public highway, we will complete the works using temporary traffic lights. This is to manage the traffic for the safety of road users and personnel involved in the works. We will provide updates to the locations and duration of any traffic management to the local Parish Council and on www.hs2northants.co.uk.

Location of ecological works in Northamptonshire, spring 2021



Location of archaeological works in Northamptonshire, spring 2021



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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High Speed Two (HS2) Limited, registered in England and Wales.

Registered office: Two Snowhill, Snow Hill Queensway, Birmingham B4 6GA.

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