

Notice of ecology works, Fleet Marston

March 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 www.hs2inbucksandox.co.uk

What are we doing?

In preparation for the main construction works 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. Ecological surveys have been completed in relation to species such as great crested newts, reptiles, badgers, owls and bats.

Following on from these surveys we will continue to carry out the seasonal mitigation works for species such as great crested newts and reptiles from the spring until the end of summer 2021. We will now be undertaking these works during 2021:

- ecology translocation
- ecology site maintenance
- fencing

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

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Duration of works

Ecological Mitigation

Spring 2021 – summer 2021

Ecology translocation

Late March 2021 – summer 2021

Vegetation Clearance

April 2021 – summer 2021

Maintenance of sites

Starting March 2021 – Ongoing

Fencing

Starting March 2021 – December 2021

What to expect

Some additional traffic on local roads.

Some noise from the equipment used for the works.

Sites operated with 24hr security and temporary lighting

What we will do

Manage any impacts, such as traffic and noise with the aim of reducing or removing them

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Ecology translocation

As great crested newts and reptiles are active during the summer season, we will be moving populations to the established habitat sites that have been prepared for them and is suitable to support the population of newts and reptiles. The translocation works will take place this summer.

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

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

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.

If it is found that the area is clear of ecology, then subsequent works will be allowed to take place.

A small workforce will use machinery and hand-held equipment to cut sections of grass and hedgerows. Hedges will only be removed if required for the access route around the site.

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Maintenance of sites

Areas that have been cleared will then 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 and reptiles will be hand searched and then strimmed / removed down to 15 centimetres. A second cut will be undertaken following a recheck of the area by the ecologist. 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 and reptiles from entering the area.

Fencing

The majority of our perimeter fencing works was completed in 2020. However, there are small areas that were not completed, and these will now be installed from March 2021 until the end of the year. For this work we will not be closing any of the four 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 safely suspend pedestrian access temporarily while the machinery passes through.

Access to work areas

Access to the work areas will utilise existing field entrances where possible. Temporary verge road signage will be erected to provide advance warning to motorists. We will control these access points to prevent mud being brought onto the road. The access points are shown on the below plan.

Notification



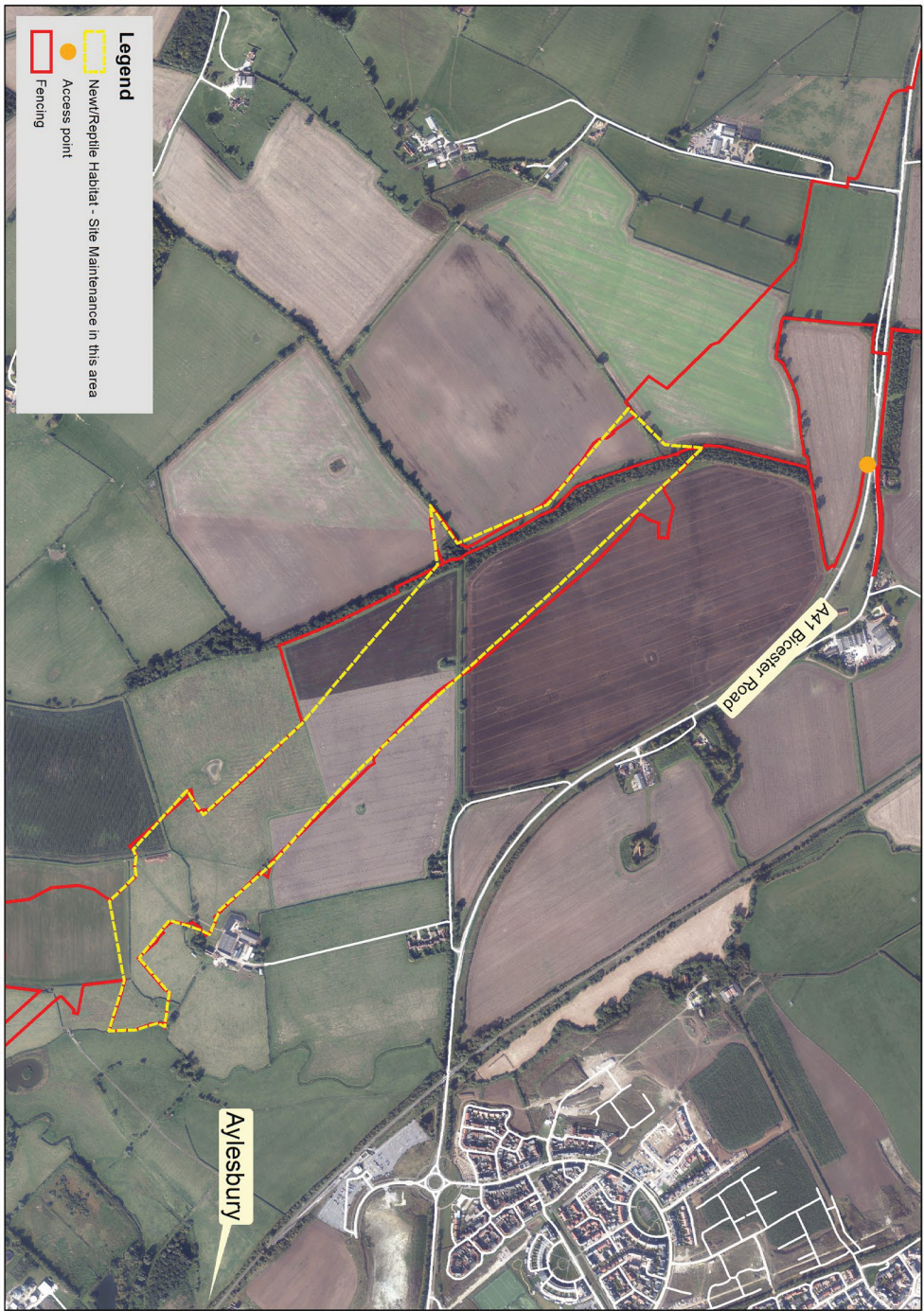
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www.hs2.org.uk

Location of ecology and fencing works



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

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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