

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

HS2 Phase 2a Update

West Midlands to Crewe | July 2022

High Speed Two (HS2) is the new high speed railway for Britain. Phase 2a is the section of the new railway between the West Midlands and Crewe.

This newsletter provides you with an update on the preparatory work that is taking place on Phase 2a of HS2 and how you can find out more about the project in your local area. It also shares some of the work that we have been doing with schools along the Phase 2a route and explains the ways we gain access to or purchase the land that we need to build the new railway.

What work is happening?

We are continuing with the preparatory activity that needs to be completed before we start building the new railway.

Ground investigations

Our programme of ground investigations across Phase 2a has now finished with only a small number of sites still being monitored. The data collected is being used by our engineers to help inform the way we will build the railway.

Route-wide surveys

Kier is continuing to undertake ecological and engineering surveys across the route. Some of these surveys may need to be undertaken up to 500m

away from the new railway line to account for the movements of wildlife. The majority of these surveys are non-intrusive, such as walk-over studies.

All the information collected will be used to help us further develop the railway design and minimise environmental impacts.

Road modifications

Kier is also continuing to undertake surveys to inform the designs of 21 road improvement sites. Over the last few months non-intrusive surveys have been taking place – such as ecological, topographic and ground penetrating radar.



Key activity milestones

- Ground investigations are now complete.
- We are carrying out ecological and engineering surveys up to 500m from the new railway line.
- We have also started surveys for developing the road modification designs with traffic management needed at certain locations.
- We have secured new habitat sites and started work to create the new habitats.
- Our utility diversions work is progressing at several locations.



Towards the end of August, some more intrusive surveys will start to take place – such as pavement coring. To carry these out safely, we may need put some temporary traffic lights or short-term road closures in place and there may be some night-time work.



Balfour Beatty is progressing the designs for the new junction improvements at M6 Junction 15/A500 Hanchurch. We will share detailed designs with communities in spring 2023. To inform these designs, we have been carrying out surveys and these will continue for the next few months and will include ecological, utility and street lighting surveys.

At Wood End Lane near Lichfield, Balfour Beatty will be undertaking utility surveys to feed into the designs for widening the lane and improving the junction with the A515. We expect to share these designs in autumn 2022.

Environmental work

Balfour Beatty has also been progressing the creation of new habitats. Across the identified 81 environmental sites, we have taken possession of over half and fenced the areas, installing nearly 20km of fencing.

In some locations we may need to put some short-term traffic management in place to allow equipment to be taken on or off sites.

Currently, work on site includes archaeological trial trenching and ecological surveys.

Over the next few months, we will focus on pond creation ahead of planting aquatic plants in the autumn. Grasslands, hedgerows and woodland creation will also start to take place in the coming months, working with the seasons, and will continue into 2023.

There are two compounds supporting this work. The first is the established compound at Swynnerton. The second is a new compound at Hixon. We are currently setting up utility supplies and installing tarmac and access ramps at this new site.

Utility diversion

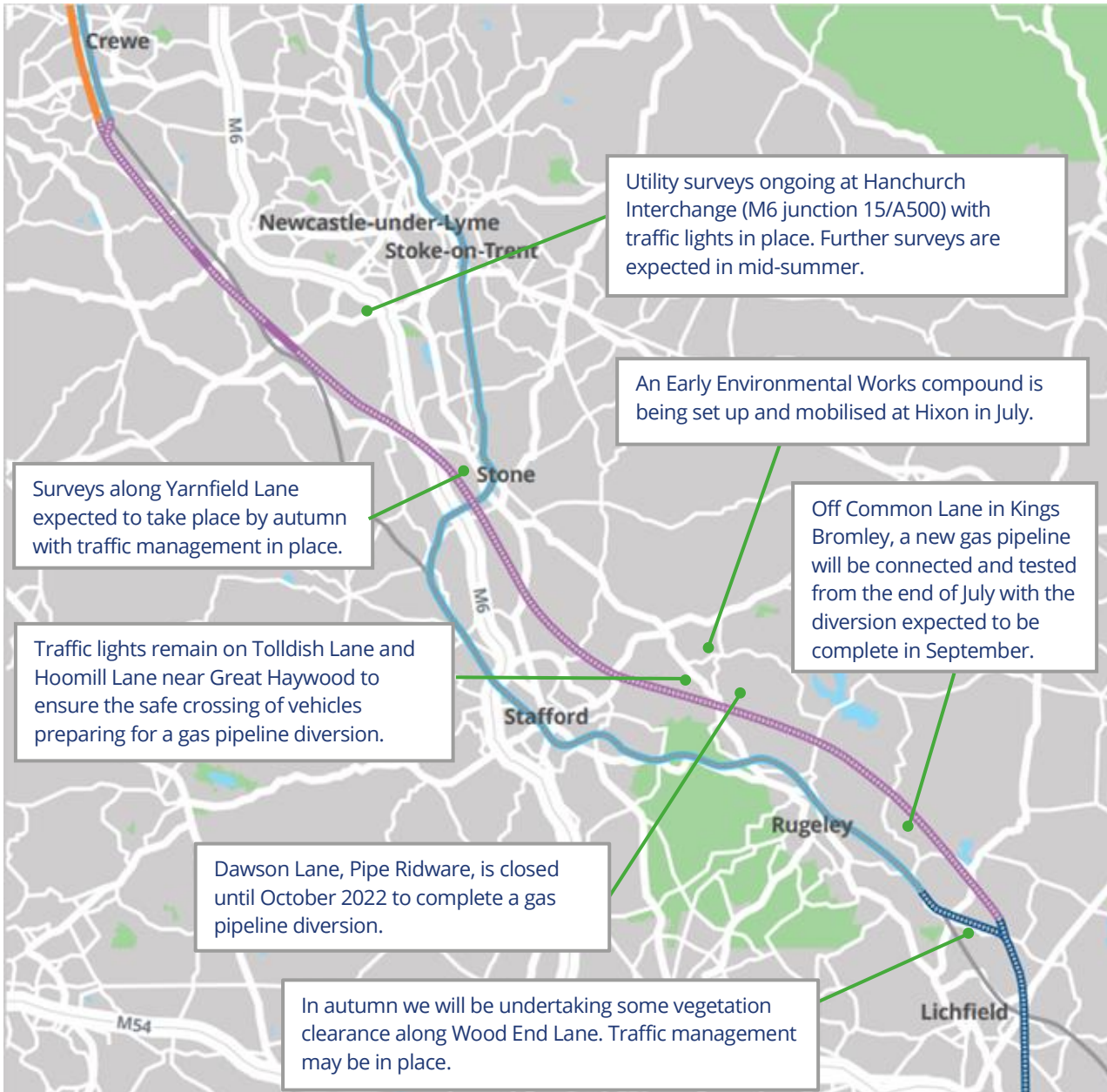
Utility companies are continuing to undertake work to prepare for and divert the utilities that are in the path of the railway.

Work is currently being undertaken across 14 locations with ecological and archaeological surveys underway. Work to divert utilities at several sites has now started with a number expected to be completed by autumn 2022.



Key activity in your local area

The map below highlights some of the key activity our contractors are undertaking in areas across the Phase 2a route over the next few months.



Key

- | | | |
|-------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Parkland | Existing train line | HS2 Phase 2a route overground |
| Water/river | HS2 services on existing line | HS2 Phase 2a route underground |
| | HS2 Phase One route overground | HS2 Phase 2b route underground |

To receive notifications of our upcoming work and events, sign up for email notifications:
<https://engagement.hs2.org.uk/join-mailing-list/>

To view more detail on what work is happening near you, visit our interactive map:
www.hs2.org.uk/in-your-area/map

Sharing information with the community

Community information events

Throughout May and June we held in-person one-to-one meetings for residents, with 130 appointments held at 14 locations. We will be holding further in-person meetings in the autumn.

Online one-to-one meetings are also still available from 10am to 7pm on the following dates:

- Thursday 28 July
- Thursday 25 August
- Wednesday 21 September
- Wednesday 27 October
- Wednesday 23 November
- Wednesday 14 December

You can register for an appointment at: www.hs2.org.uk/events

We continue to offer regular HS2inFocus webinars on topics that you have asked to know more about. The latest webinar focussed on how we manage and minimise the impacts of any HS2 construction vehicles on the local road network. Planning for future webinars is underway and we will share details shortly.

In July, as part of the national Festival of Archaeology, we also have a series of in-person and online events that cover HS2's archaeological work. These events are free to attend and will take you "behind the hoardings" of Phase One to find out about the project's archaeology and heritage work, giving you a flavour of the work starting to take place along Phase 2a.

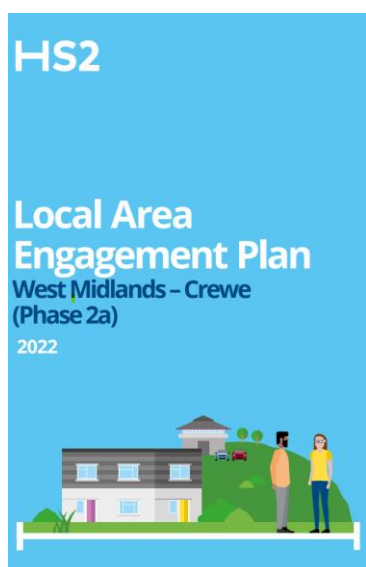
You can find a list of our activities for the festival by visiting www.hs2.org.uk/foa

Want to stay updated about upcoming events in your area?

Find out what events are coming up by visiting the HS2 website at: www.hs2.org.uk/events

Tell us what you want to know more about?

Let us know what you would like to hear about at our events by contacting us at HS2enquires@hs2.org.uk or **08081 434 434**



Local community webpages

We are continuing to update the information available on the Phase 2a local community pages. We have now launched a new feature allowing you to view the latest updates of work in the area. You can find your local community page at: www.HS2inyourarea.co.uk

You can also continue to search for the latest work in your area on our interactive map at: www.hs2.org.uk/in-your-area/map

Local Area Engagement Plan

We have released our latest Phase 2a Local Area Engagement Plan (LAEP). This plan sets out how we will engage with you, it provides an overview of the preparatory work taking place in 2022 and explains who is delivering this work on our behalf. You can access the LAEP at: www.hs2.org.uk/about-us/our-documents/phase-2a-local-area-engagement-plan-2022/

HS2 in the community

HS2 is working with schools across Phase 2a to keep them informed of our work and support in developing the skills of the next generation. Some of the work we are doing is highlighted below.

'Playing it Safer' Workshops

We are working with Arc Theatre to deliver 'Playing it Safer', an interactive safety workshop that teaches children about the importance of staying safe around construction sites and traffic.

The workshop is available to years five and six. It is completely free of charge and offered to schools closest to the HS2 route. Since the start of this year, we have visited nine schools across Phase 2a delivering eleven sessions to 387 children.

If you would like 'Playing it Safer' to visit your school, please contact Nita at: Nita@arctheatre.com or 020 8595 8509. For further information, visit www.arctheatre.com



EPIC STEM Workshops

HS2 has an Education Programme that aims to inspire young people to take an interest in STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths) subjects and careers.

As part of this programme, we have been delivering EPIC STEM workshops to year seven to nine students in secondary schools across Phase 2a. The workshops aim to inspire students to take an interest in STEM subjects and careers, so that they can become EPIC – Extraordinary People Initiating Change, through interactive challenges and projects.

This year we have already delivered workshops at eight schools reaching over 480 students across Phase 2a, with further workshops planned in the coming months.

You can find out more about the workshops and the educational resources available to support schools along the line of the new railway at: www.hs2.org.uk/education



HS2 in focus

This section looks at some of the ways we are building the new railway to ensure that we are respectful to local people and the local environment, and bring benefits where we can. In this edition, we focus on the how, when and why of HS2 land access and purchase.

To prepare for and build the new railway, we may need to gain access to or take possession of land along the line of route. The access to or purchase of land is undertaken under the Land Powers in the Phase 2a Act that was passed through Parliament in February 2021. We have specialist teams who work with the landowners and their land agents, supporting them through the statutory and legal processes.

Land access

We need to carry out surveys to help us build a detailed picture of the natural environment and ground conditions along the HS2 route. The data taken from these surveys informs the development of the railways design and will help us minimise HS2's environmental footprint. The types of survey that we carry out include ecology, heritage, water sampling, boring and excavating, building monitoring and sound and vibration, amongst others.

To access the land to undertake surveys, we will issue a Schedule 2 notice to landowners. This informs them of the need to access their land and indicates the surveys that we may need to undertake. We work to provide 28 days' notice, but at least 14 days is given. The contractors carrying out the surveys on behalf of HS2 will then contact the landowner to discuss in more detail the surveys that they need to carry out and agree a suitable date. Sometimes, once initial surveys are completed the findings may mean we need to carry out further surveys.

Temporary possession of land

We may need to temporarily take possession of an area of land to build the railway. This could be to enable us to divert some utilities, access the land where we are building the new railway or to provide a site for a construction compound to provide a base for workers, materials and machinery. This land will have been identified during the parliamentary process. Landowners are kept informed over its potential use and the timeframes for this as programmes are developed.

For temporary possessions we will issue a Schedule 15 notice. We aim to provide at least three months' notice to landowners ahead of the possession of the land, with a minimum notice period of 28 days.

We are required to leave temporarily possessed land within one year of the completion of the project works being carried out. We will restore the land as agreed with the landowner and the relevant planning authority.



Permanent acquisition of land

Where we need to permanently acquire land to build and operate the railway, we will follow a statutory process known as the General Vesting Declaration (GVD) procedure. We will engage with any landowners about the need for their land and this procedure before any legal notices are served.

We will send the landowner a preliminary notice before the Secretary of State for Transport makes the GVD, where they are asked to fill in a questionnaire to confirm ownership of the land or property. A second notice, called a notice of making, will tell the landowner that the Secretary of State has made the GVD. The notice will state that the ownership of the land/ property will automatically transfer to the Secretary of State within three months. A third and final notice will confirm the legal 'vesting' date once we are satisfied that all the notices of making have been issued correctly. On behalf of the Secretary of State, we will then register ownership at HM Land Registry.

Identifying landowners

To identify the landowners and occupiers of the land/property that we need, we carry out extensive land referencing enquiries. Where the owner of the land or property is known, we will contact them directly. Where ownership of land/property is not registered and we are unable to identify them through our enquiries, we may post notices on accessible boundaries of the land we need. To manage the visual impact to communities, we will ensure these are refreshed and managed accordingly to mitigate increased volumes being erected close to each other until the landowner is identified.

Compensating landowners

Where HS2 is accessing the land for surveys or temporarily taking possession, any damage or resulting loss of business earnings can be submitted as a claim to HS2 by the landowner. Where HS2 permanently acquires land or property, HS2 will pay the unblighted market value.

We always recommend that landowners appoint a professionally qualified agent to help them with this process and any claim submitted. As part of the successful claim, we cover reasonable professional fees.

Learning more about how we are building the railway

Get in touch to let us know what you would like to know more about in our next HS2 in Focus feature at HS2enquires@hs2.org.uk or **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 you.

The Residents' Commissioner

The independent Residents' Commissioner oversees and monitors our commitments to you.

The commissioner's reports and our responses can be found at www.gov.uk/government/collections/hs2-ltd-residents-commissioner

The Residents' Commissioner makes sure we fulfil the commitments in the HS2 Community Engagement Strategy (<https://bit.ly/3oOA25j>).

The Residents' Commissioner can be contacted on: residentscommissioner@hs2.org.uk

Construction Commissioner

The independent Construction Commissioner regularly meets our Chief Executive Officer to raise any concerns or emerging trends across HS2.

The Construction Commissioner's role has been developed to monitor the way we manage and respond to construction complaints.

The commissioner mediates on disputes about construction, involving individuals and organisations, that we can't resolve. The commissioner advises members of the public about how to make a complaint about construction.

The Construction Commissioner can be contacted on: complaints@hs2-cc.org.uk

Property and compensation

You can find out about HS2 and properties along the route by visiting:

www.gov.uk/government/collections/hs2-property

Find out if you can claim 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 the HS2 Helpdesk. For more details on our complaints process, please visit:

www.hs2.org.uk/in-your-area/contact-us/how-to-complain/

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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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