

High Speed 2's Impact on the Chilterns – Facts and Figures

The Government's preferred route for the High Speed 2 line between London and Birmingham will cut through the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty for 12 miles. This will lead to huge disruption and damage to this nationally-protected landscape both during the years of construction and for ever after.



Trees, hedgerows and ancient woodland

- 149 mature trees (outside woodland areas) will be destroyed within the construction corridor of HS2 through the Chilterns, and many smaller ones.
- 24 areas of woodland will be affected by HS2, including 9 ancient woodland sites. The latter are sites which have been continuously wooded for at least 400 years and their loss can not be mitigated by planting new trees.
- The total area of woodland destroyed will be around 17.75ha.
- 13,700m of hedgerow will be destroyed.

Aquifer and rivers

- HS2 will pass in tunnel under the River Misbourne at two points: Bury End and Misbourne Farm. At both points the twin tunnels would be less than 30m underground, passing through the saturated zone of rock beneath the river. Construction in these sensitive areas may lead to increased loss of water from the river and/or a change in groundwater flow in the saturated zone that may affect flows further downstream.
- Construction of route will involve closure of some groundwater supply sources (Amersham and Chalfont St. Giles included) by water companies, who will need to compensate for supply loss by bringing in water from outside the affected area. This will most likely come from supplies within the Chess and Colne catchments. Both river catchments are listed as 'over-abstracted' by the Environment Agency. This will increase stress on these rivers and their associated wildlife.

Wildlife

- The HS2 line will sever valuable wildlife habitats, including ancient hedgerows and woodlands. The corridor of the line, bounded by high security fencing, will create a barrier for the movement of many animal species.
- The fragmentation of habitats into smaller areas will reduce populations of plants and animals and cause those smaller populations to be more vulnerable to extinction.
- The total area of woodland affected by fragmentation is 62.77ha, of which 50.16ha is ancient woodland.

Rights of way

- The HS2 line will drive through the dense rights of way network in the Chilterns, severing 25 routes (and in some cases destroying substantial sections of them).
- Several nationally- and regionally-important routes will be affected, including the Ridgeway National Trail, the Icknield Way (1km of this ancient bridleway destroyed) and the Chiltern Way.
- Noise and visual intrusion from the HS2 line will substantially degrade the tranquil, rural experience that thousands of walkers, cyclists and horse-riders currently enjoy in this part of the Chilterns.

Removal of spoil

- HS2 Ltd claims that 680,000 cubic metres of spoil will be excavated during the building of HS2 through the Chilterns. Research has revealed that this figure will actually be **12 million cubic metres**. The discrepancy arises from errors in HS2 Ltd's calculations including: basing their figure on a single 9.6km tunnel between the Colne Valley and Amersham when in fact it is a twin-bored tunnel and failing to include the spoil excavated from cuttings.
- At least 10 million cubic metres of this spoil will have to be moved by road: that means a lorry movement on local roads every 33 seconds every working day for 5 years.



For more detail on the impact of HS2 on the Chilterns, including maps highlighting specific features, habitats and routes which will be affected, visit www.chilternsaonb.org/hs2