

Summary

This objection follows assessment of application 25/00406/APP by the Wendover HS2 Mitigation Action Group. We believe the overall application is flawed, incomplete and contrary in places to planning regulations and HS2 Construction Code of practice (CoCP) and should be rejected and re-submitted addressing the points made in this objection. Commentary is included about the deficiencies in the design, the Implementation and Traffic Management Plan (CPTMP), and the Ecological Impact Assessment. These are summarised in a set of Material Grounds for Objection to the application; and a set of requested Planning Conditions that should be incorporated should the Council determine nevertheless (against our wishes) to accept the proposals.

1.0 Objection

- i. Wendover HS2 Mitigation Action Group objects to the determination of application of 25/00406/APP on the grounds that the whole scheme as presented:
 - poses a risk to highway safety on a permitted cycle route and busy pedestrian lane
 - has a visual impact in a designated National Landscape (AONB)
 - has an unacceptable impact on amenity and access
 - has an unacceptable environmental and ecological impact

The proposed scheme does not appear to have considered reasonable rationalisation of the design; including alternative access for construction to a sufficient level of detail to comply with the principles of HS2's Code of Construction Practice [CoCP]; nor to a level sufficient for the Planning Authority to uphold its duties under Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, Section 85.

- ii. The element of the scheme **we are not objecting to**:

'Installation of underground spring chamber and associated flow monitoring chamber; interconnecting pipework;

- iii. The elements of the scheme **we are objecting to**:

"Power box with roof-mounted solar panel; vegetated headwall outflow structure; re-profiling an existing drainage ditch, stock proof fencing; upgraded and extended access track and temporary laydown area.'

2.0 Design Issues

- i. The planning section drawings do not reveal the full extent of the works proposed (including outer gravel ring, track, and approach tracks);
- ii. The design of the access track is grossly disproportionate to both the construction and operational needs of the Spring Chamber. The track appears to be a permanent structure, not a temporary structure, on the grounds of need for maintenance. This appears to be neither rational nor what we understand from the Environment Agency is needed. The level of access required for chamber construction, operation and maintenance should be justified as well as the means of accessing the chamber, either by foot or by vehicle, bearing in mind the chamber is located in an area of National Landscape (AONB).
- iii. It is this over-engineering of the track that is directly contributing to the number of construction vehicles needed to transport the construction materials; and this is causing significant concern within the local community.

- iv. The design of the fence line will cause an obstruction that will prevent the farmer accessing and enabling livestock to the western section of the field. Refer to Figure 1.
- v. The fence also obstructs
 - a. UK Power Networks' access to key infrastructure, including the Overhead High Voltage Cabling (notably poles 810601/2 and isolator switch at 810603); and
 - b. Network Rail from maintaining its culvert MCJ2 145. Refer to Figures 1 to 4.
- vi. The current location of the chamber and surrounding backfill is such that to construct the chamber it will be necessary to remove a section of existing hedgerow, contrary to the statement made in para 5.3.3. of the Ecological Impact Assessment. Refer to Figure 2.
- vii. The vegetated head wall could be moved 25m northwards down the stream with an extension to the 225 mm outgoing pipe. This negates the need to remove the tree T26 and the fence and thus providing a place for backfill of excavations arising, and facilitating access to the western area of the field. Refer to Figure 1.
- viii. The planning section drawings do not reveal the full extent of the works (including outer gravel ring, track and approach tracks, extent of hedge removal) and should be updated accordingly.
- ix. Removal of the power cabinet would also remove the need for fencing and eliminate the risk of vandalism to the solar panels, and reduce the visual impact in the Chilterns National Landscape. Alternative power options could be:
 - a. By battery [as in the other groundwater monitoring sites in the same field]; or
 - b. By mains powering [such as a "street lighting" circuit from a transformer mounted on the adjacent power poles]
- x. The level of track reinforcement over the water pipelines (Sections 1 and 2) is necessary for a 30 tonne (HGV) truck. It is understood that this is to protect critical national infrastructure. However, we question why use of 30 tonne trucks is necessary – off-road tracked vehicles (already in use by HS2) could be used instead, without the need for construction of a robust cover. Fundamentally we question
 - a. what equipment is necessary to construct the chamber?
 - b. what maximum axle loads are envisaged as a result?
 - c. whether this has been backed up by necessary calculation with approval from Thames Water.
- xi. If construction access via King's Farm at Nash Lee End was considered, this would entirely remove for construction traffic to pass through residential streets in Wendover.

3.0 Implementation plans and Construction Phase Traffic Management Plan (CPTMP) 1MC12-EKF-TP-REP-C000-000033

- i. It appears that the majority of non-HGV traffic is related to transporting the workforce. We question what size of the workforce will be necessary to undertake:
 - a. the track construction;
 - b. the chamber construction.
- ii. Likewise, we question what the actual equipment and volume of materials will be necessary to undertake the works.
- iii. The CPTMP states working hours 08:00 – 18:00 Monday to Friday and between the hours of 08:00 – 19:00 Saturday. This is contrary to HS2 CoCP Para 5.2.2. which defines core working hours as from 08:00 to 18:00 on weekdays (excluding bank holidays) and from 08:00 to 13:00

- on Saturdays. This may be a typographical error in CPTMP as we can see no justification for Saturday afternoon working.
- iv. It should be noted that the impact of noise and disturbance should be considered by the Planning Authority in giving consent to the working hours under Section 61 of the Control of Pollution Act 1974.
 - v. Section 2.4 tables contain basic arithmetic errors which appear to understate the proposed vehicular movements and this needs to be corrected by the Applicant.
 - vi. The CPTMP has not recognised that part of Dobbins Lane is a defined and marked cycle route, which is an extension of the Amber Way to Wendover railway station. Refer to Figure 8.
 - vii. The consideration of alternative access routes has not been considered to an adequate level of detail and dismissal of options has not been based on credible reasons. In essence there is a reasonably well-defined access route through King's Farm fields, using agricultural and/or tracked vehicles, of half the proposed track distance, avoiding the need to cross most if not all protected water infrastructure pipelines;
 - viii. In addition to limiting movements of HGV lorries on Dobbins Lane there should be no other construction traffic before 09:30 due to congestion on the road;
 - ix. It is not clear how the speed limits stated are to be enforced. Section 2.7 refers to variable speed limits. Moreover, our view is that the speed should be limited to 15mph along Dobbins Lane and 20mph along South Street for all construction traffic (not just HGVs);
 - x. Consideration should be made of residents' parking by the South Street traffic island, which will make HGV access difficult (two cars cannot pass along certain parts). Refer to Figure 9.
 - xi. There is no mention of provision of a qualified escort for HGVs as featured in EKFB FAQ, dated 19/2/25, and the associated limitation of only one truck visiting the site at a time. Similarly, no mention of the "allowance of no more than 6 HGVs (round trips) in one day".
 - xii. It is not clear how the entrance to the Spring Chamber access track site will be created during weeks 1-5 whilst the access track is under construction, and so it is not clear where construction vehicles can be parked during this period. This requires clarification as there is no place where they can park without creating obstructions.
 - xiii. Construction of the first stages of the access track will necessitate trucks reversing into the site, but the CPTMP does not consider where such turning will take place and how this will be supervised (ie by a qualified banksman/traffic marshal).
 - xiv. Given the safety sensitivities there should be a full-time traffic marshal present at the Dobbins Lane site access point for the residents to contact.
 - xv. The CPTMP does not indicate how mud is to be cleaned off vehicles exiting the site and entering onto Dobbins Lane. If this does not occur the road may become dangerous to drive on.
 - xvi. Whilst the plans presented do not show any temporary parking, turning circle and laydown area at the chamber construction site, the descriptions imply this (section 2.5). The extent of this area should be challenged, together with whether it will be matted or a gravelled area, (more HGVs would be required to construct a gravelled area), and whether this area will be temporary.
 - xvii. The CPTMP states that no welfare facilities will be provided (section 2.4) which is contrary to the HS2 CoCP. The lack of welfare facilities will result in multiple trips will need to be made by the workforce offsite during the working day. Provision of temporary welfare would significantly reduce construction traffic.

- xviii. There is no indication that the construction site will be secured with a temporary perimeter fence. This requires clarification, but the concern is to ensure that this is not obtrusive.
- xix. The Ecological Impact Statement requires that there is to be no site lighting and this should be confirmed in the CPTMP, along with confirmation that no working should take place in the hours of darkness.
- xx. Access to PRoW WEN/10/1 and WEN/9/6 will be affected but it is unclear whether these paths will be open when the construction work is not ongoing. Section 2.6 is unclear as how this will be managed.
- xxi. The CPTMP does not contain provisions that will apply if an emergency occurs during construction given the close interaction with the public highways; and given that once in place the chamber itself will become a confined space.
- xxii. Section 2.3 refers to operational access and vehicular movement which are not included in the expected traffic figures.

4.0 Spring Chamber Ecological Impact Assessment – 1MC12-EKF-EV-REP-CS03-000138

- i. Sections 3.4.8/ 5.4.1 Ecological Impact Assessment are redacted and both are potentially important points that should be re-instated.
- ii. The Ecological Impact Assessment (and the Arboricultural Impact Assessment) has made no assessment of the trees that line Dobbins Lane, which will obstruct and have previously been damaged by HGV traffic. The Applicant should be challenged as to the extent of preventative tree work that is necessary to prevent hinderance and safety issues due to passing HGVs.
- iii. With reference to Section 2 vii) above, the removal of field maple T26 is unnecessary and could be avoided by simple amendment of the design. Contrary to previous statements the tree is not dead and is a potential nesting and roosting area. Recently kestrels have been observed in the area scouting for nesting sites;

5.0 Material Grounds for Objection:

5.1 Risk to Highway Safety

- i. The plans for the construction of the chamber have not been sufficiently defined to enable an appropriate level of definition of the construction traffic (notably HGVs) required to access the site. They have not considered appropriate temporary welfare facilities. Furthermore, the plans have not been sufficiently rationalised to reduce the number of necessary construction vehicle movements (both HGV and non-HGV) as far as reasonably practicable. This is contrary to HS2's statutory Code of Construction Practice [CoCP];
- ii. The plans do not account for parking necessary in weeks 1-5 when no access to the site will be ready. All previous experience has resulted in construction vehicles blocking access to Bridleways, from which there is no existing footpath except in the roadway. This access is needed for Bridleways residents including disabled wheelchair users. Refer to Figures 5 and 6;
- iii. The CPTMP does not consider that an appropriate route for workers access by foot from the Wendover Green Tunnel North Portal compound using PRoW WEN/55/1 over Folly Bridge already exists, which would reduce the need for small vehicle movements on Dobbins Lane;
- iv. Dobbins Lane is a defined cycle route linking the end of the Amber Way cycleway along Aylesbury Road to the railway station, as well as the Chiltern Link cycleway. Furthermore it is a principal access route for school children and commuters to access to and from the railway

- station during peak hours, 08:00 to 09:30 and 14:45 to 17:30, during which hours any additional traffic will increase the risk to safety;
- v. Both Dobbins Lane and South Street are insufficiently wide to accommodate HGVs and oncoming cars travelling in the opposite direction. Neither are suitable for large vehicles travelling at speed with particular dangerous pinch points in South Street and at junctions to both South Street and Dobbins Lane;
 - vi. No consideration is undertaken of the assumed need to turn vehicles at the junction with Dobbins Lane and Thornton Crescent before entering the site and what public parking restrictions may be necessary;
 - vii. Access to PRoW WEN/10/1 and WEN/9/6 will be affected but there are no practical means to fence off the access near to or onto the construction track, nor are there any clear plans for the marshalling that is mentioned;
 - viii. Contrary to HS2's statutory Code of Construction Practice [CoCP] the CPTMP does not consider or mitigate ii) to vii) these Health and Safety issues;
 - ix. In summary the current CPTMP poses significant highway safety issues contrary to the Sustainable National Planning Framework 9. "Promoting sustainable transport" Para 115, This requires that: *"transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of development proposals. On assessing proposals, it must be ensured that any significant impacts on the transport network or on highway safety can be mitigated to an acceptable degree"*.

5.2 Impact on Amenity and Access

- i. Access to the section of the field beyond the proposed chamber will be prevented by the current proposed fencing layout for the farmer and livestock, as well as UK Power Networks and Network Rail to maintain their assets¹;

5.3 Visual Impact in a Designated National Landscape (AONB)

- i. The track is a permanent construction with a Type 1 covering. Contrary to the Applicant's view, unless the type 1 capping is removed from the design re-seeding will not occur and the track will not blend in with the surrounding landscape in the long term;
- ii. The proposed stock fence and solar powering cabinet will have permanent visual impact;
- iii. Removal of Field Maple T26 with no plans for replanting will have visual impact and change the character of the surroundings, and its removal would not be necessary with a small change in the plans proposed;
- iv. Points i) to iii) are contrary to the Chilterns National Landscape's "Environmental Guidelines for Management of Highways in the Chilterns" and the statutory obligations to protect the National Landscape (AONB);

5.4 Environmental and Ecological

- i. The location of the chamber is such that removal of a section of hedgerow will be necessary and no mitigation replanting of this section is presented;
- ii. Efforts have not been made in the design to mitigate ecological damage from the loss of the Field Maple T26, which could be avoided by simply moving the headwall and extending the discharge pipe. See Figure 2;

¹ We refer to email 25/2/25 Diane Clarke, Network Rail, Town Planning NW&C. We have made Network Rail aware of this potential issue of obstruction subsequent to this email response.

Objection to Application 25/00406/APP

- iii. No consideration has been given to the prevention of damage to trees along Dobbins Lane. See Figure 7;
- iv. Points i) to iii) are in potential contravention of Section 85 of the “Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000” in that “*relevant authority shall have regard to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area of outstanding natural beauty*”.

6.0 Recourse and Compensation

Should the Planning Authority consider grounds to accept the application, then there are conditions we would wish to see imposed:

- i. That the design is only accepted on the basis that the headwall is moved to negate the need for both a stock fence and the removal of field maple T26;
- ii. That the working hours are restricted to 09:30 to 18:00 Mondays to Fridays and in any case not during the hours of darkness;
- iii. That the Applicant must provide suitable portable welfare on site;
- iv. That prior to acceptance of the application that the CPTMP be corrected and resubmitted to include:
 - That HGVs be permitted between 9:30 am and 14:45 pm weekdays only;
 - That no construction traffic be allowed before 9:30 each working day, for core working hours or start-up activities;
 - That each HGV is escorted by a qualified traffic marshal who shall supervise travelling from the A413, down South Street and Dobbins Lane and all turning activities etc before entry into the site;
 - That the speed limit for all vehicles be no more than 15mph on Dobbins Lane and 20 mph on South Street and that the Applicant provide a suitable monitoring system to enforce this;
 - That open access to Bridleways be maintained at all times;
 - That clearly marked plans for access and turning are shown for Thornton Crescent and Bridleways;
 - That a plan for access and essential parking be re-submitted for weeks 1-5 (track construction);
 - That construction workers only access the site on foot via Folly Bridge and not by mini-bus or pick-up trucks;
 - That a full-time qualified traffic marshal must be present on site for the full duration of the works and who shall have the express authority to remove anyone off site acting in contravention of or failing to act in accordance with the agreed CPTMP;
 - That no passenger vehicle shall have engines running whilst stationary at any time;
 - That public access be maintained between Dobbins Lane/Lionel Avenue and Kings Farm during working hours, with:
 - notification of a diversion using WEN/8/2 and WEN/9/5 while WEN/10/1 is under construction
 - Safe access is provided on WEN/9/6 by control of construction traffic
 - That public access to PRow WEN/10/1 and WEN/9/6 be maintained open out of working hours and all provisions are made to ensure this is achieved at the end of each day;
 - That future maintenance activities shall not rely on vehicular access without the express permission of the farmer;

- v. That existing Heras fencing erected behind Bridleways and Lionel Avenue be removed promptly and that only the site construction works area and not the track be enclosed by temporary Heras fencing;
- vi. That there shall be no security lighting during hours of darkness;
- vii. That there shall be no security dogs at any time or other excessive security presence outside working hours;
- viii. That the Applicant must undertake an arboricultural tree survey of all of the trees lining Dobbins Lane and agree with a Buckinghamshire Council arborist the extent of pollarding and removal of dead wood required, and complete the agreed tree work before construction of the track starts. Under no circumstances should any tree be felled;
- ix. That replanting of removed hedgerow is included in a re-instatement landscape plan;
- x. That the Applicant contributes, in full, to re-surfacing of the full extent of Dobbins Lane and the approaches from South Street;
- xi. That the Applicant pay for any tree damage remedial works (whether directly or indirectly) as a result of the construction activities;

Appendix A - Figures

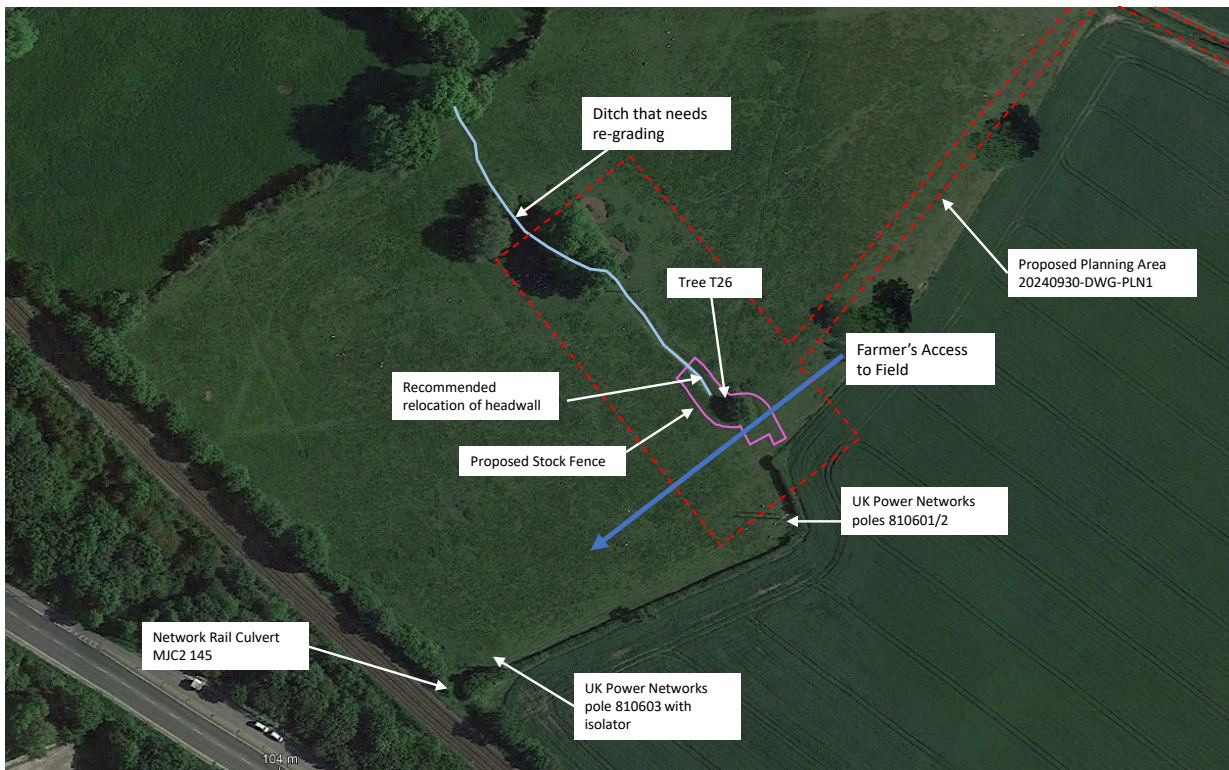


Figure 1 Proposed Planning Area and Fenceline in Relation to Existing Trees, Hedgerows and Infrastructure

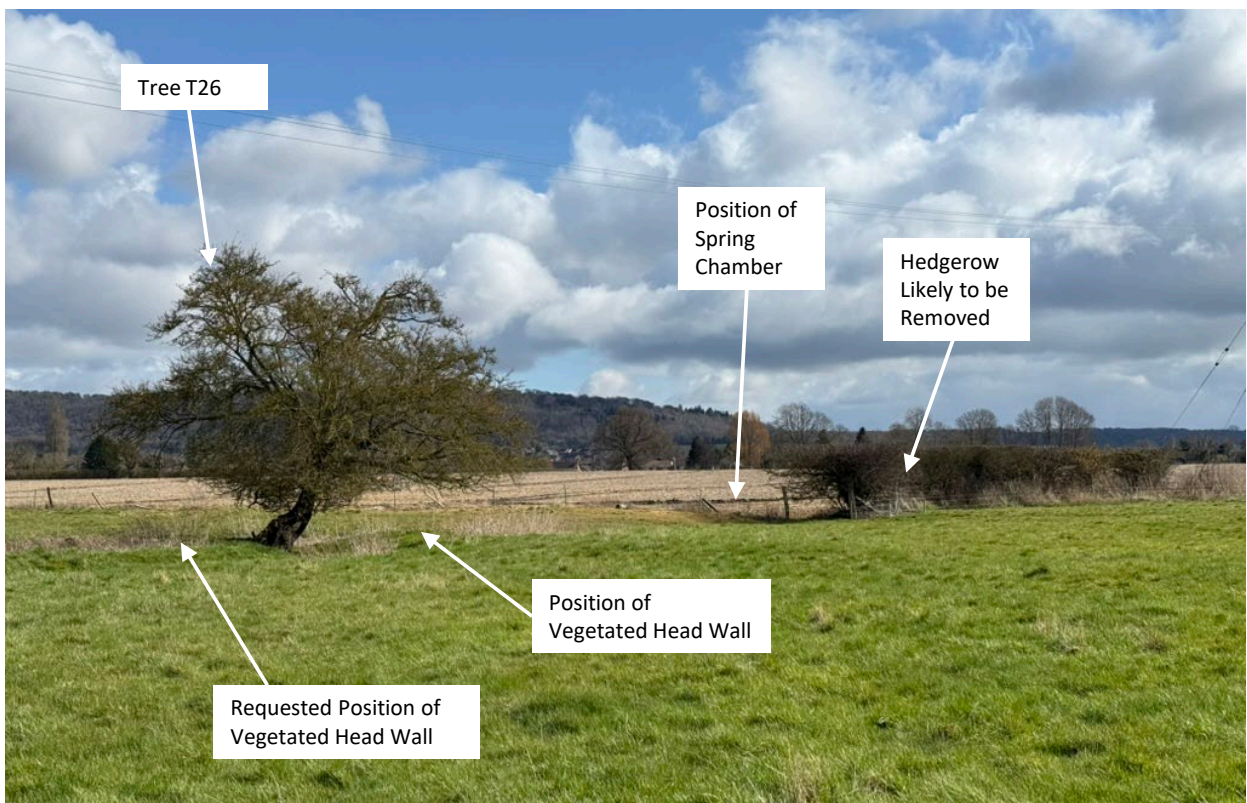


Figure 2 Spring Chamber site between Tree 26 and hedgerow (both affected by the construction)



Figure 2 UKPN Pole 810603 with isolator switching



Figure 4 Network Rail Culvert MCJ2 145



Figure 5 Contractors on Behalf of Thames Water Constructing HS2 Water supply Connection Blocking Bridleways, Feb 25



Figure 3 Contractors' Parking Blocking Bridleways, Feb 25 (note resident's wheelchair in foreground)



Figure 7 Dobbins Lane Overhanging Trees



Figure 8 Defined Cycle Route Signage , Dobbins Lane



Figure 9 South Street (note limited space at the traffic island)

- End -