

# HS2 update

## Leather Lane Bridge victory

Local residents have persuaded HS2 to change its plans for the bridge that will take Leather Lane over the railway tracks. It will now be a 25-metre wide green bridge (rather than a simple bridge or tunnel), planted to maintain essential wildlife corridors. This will be only green crossing of its kind planned for the Chilterns National Landscape.

This is a major success for the Leather Lane Conservation Group (LLCG), following what it describes as "four years of dedicated collaboration and advocacy." This will be a significant achievement in the preservation of Leather Lane's unique landscape and biodiversity, it says.

Carol-Anne O'Callaghan, who founded the group, says "In late 2023, Align took over as the principal HS2 contractor for Leather Lane, marking a new chapter in constructive engagement. Thanks to the sustained efforts of LLCG, a complete redesign of the original plans has now been secured, ensuring protection not only for the critical bat flightpath but for the wider ecosystem and local landscape."

In its Schedule 17 planning application to Buckinghamshire Council, Align wrote: "Working collaboratively with the local action group the LLCG, we set about meeting and reviewing the existing approved designs to ensure that local concerns regarding environmental mitigations, and potential loss of 'Ilona' an iconic lone oak."

## A Redesign Driven by Conservation

LLCG was able to demonstrate that the



CGI render of proposed Green Bridge at Leather Lane. Image: Align/HS2.

original plans would have been unlawful in light of the bat activity data. Due to LLCG's work, HS2 and Align accepted the need for a fundamental redesign of the Leather Lane overbridge crossing HS2's track.

The design now submitted for approval by Bucks Council now includes the 25m wide green bridge, with a lower road alignment to reduce visual and environmental impact on residents and the landscape.

In addition, a transformer power station will now be located at the trackside, avoiding the skyline placement originally proposed, which would have created long-term maintenance challenges and visual intrusion.

Improved landscaping at Hammonds Hall Farm, with sound barriers moved down to the track line, will also help to protect both the landscape and local tranquillity.

Design modifications and other measures will allow the preservation of Ilona, along with other mature oaks and the ancient hedgerow stretching from Ilona to Potter

Row. Root protection zones established for the remaining veteran oaks, were also directly secured through LLCG's advocacy. While the initial plans would have resulted in the loss of 100 trees (mostly oaks), only 16 oak trees will now be lost.

Mitigation put in place during construction will create an artificial bat flightpath.

## Commitment to long-term stewardship

Beyond influencing the construction phase, LLCG has taken steps to secure the long-term protection of Leather Lane's biodiversity.

LLCG is registered as a charity, with the mission of establishing a conservation area to encompass the new and old lanes, the remaining trees, hedgerows, ponds, and surrounding habitats.

Donations to the registered charity (1212850) can be made through [www.gofund.me/2f428a5f](http://www.gofund.me/2f428a5f).

For more information, contact LLCG at [leatherlanecg@gmail.com](mailto:leatherlanecg@gmail.com).



Photo: Murray Cooke.

## Wendover HS2 Mitigation Action Group

### Wendover Green Tunnel and the Chiltern aquifer

Significant progress has been made with installation of the concrete "McDonald's" twin arch shell for the middle section of the Green Tunnel during May. Excavation for the foundations of the southern section has now started at Bacombe Lane, and various preparations have been made for the deep cutting works through to Ellesborough Road.

HS2 is now proceeding to excavate the northern section down to ground water level and beyond, at which point the temporary pipeline in the Dobbins Lane fields will finally come into operation. This conveys water from the workings to Wendover Brook and is being watched by the Environment Agency who want to see that enough water still flows

to Wendover Brook and the Weston Turville Reservoir nature reserve as HS2 start digging into the aquifer. If anyone notices flooding or a sudden drop in the stream water flow around Cold Comfort Farm (as a result of the pipeline), please let us know.

Extensive computer modelling predicts that water will flow under the Green Tunnel to Wendover Brook and the Spring Chamber once the tunnel is built. The idea is that the depth of the chamber lowers the effective ground level at the point where the aquifer emerges as a spring near the Kings Farm Shop, which should result in more water flowing into Stoke Brook for more months of the year.

The chamber has an adjustable dam so that the amount of flow into Stoke Brook can be optimised in future. There will be permanent flow metering at the chamber and numerous other temporary monitoring points have already been established across the local area, so that the reality can be checked as the aquifer evolves over several years.





HS2 wants to make this track a permanent road.

## Dobbins Lane and the Spring Chamber

As we go to press there is no indication from HS2 about what it is going to do following Bucks Council refusing the "Spring Chamber" planning application (see *Wendover News* front cover story and inside, May 2025).

It could appeal the Council's decision to the Planning Inspectorate; or alternatively support the community's suggested alternative to redesign the scheme by removing the permanent track and to access the site from Nash Lee End.

This would stop the proposed use of South Street and Dobbins Lane with HGV trucks and other vehicles.

We think a redesign is in line with HS2's declared "Good Neighbour" policy and we are working with both parish and county councillors and our MP to influence HS2's next steps.

We will keep you informed with progress!

## Leather Lane Green Overbridge

There is a precedent of the impact of local community pressure on HS2, as the design of Leather Lane has been changed (see *previous page*, 27).

This had been called for by residents in the Missenden area for several years, but progress was made following HS2's decision to change the contractor for this section of the line from EKFB to the Align JV in 2023.

The new design (ref PL/25/1383/HS2) can be seen on the Chiltern and South Bucks planning portal ([www.pa-csb.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/online-applications](http://www.pa-csb.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/online-applications)).

## Small Dean Viaduct

In early May some motorists discovered that EKFB had decided to close the A413 at 8pm to enable concrete pouring works.

This is despite having trained local commuters using the A413 to expect weekday evening closures from 8:30 pm over recent months, and publishing the timing of the May works on both static yellow and dynamic electronic road signs.

EKFB's response was that "It was crucial for us to utilise as much time as possible to ensure the completion of works" and it "understands that the early closure may have caused some inconvenience and apologise for this." We don't think this is "good neighbourly" behaviour.

## Get in touch

If you need further help, want to join us, or have ideas and suggestions that would mitigate the community impact, please get in touch at [enquiries@whs2.org](mailto:enquiries@whs2.org).

We are always keen for new members. We are looking for volunteers to help us further with our public communications, challenging HS2 over noise issues and making sure we build up a decent case of returning land to its natural state and not being developed.

## Having issues with HS2?

If you're affected by construction activity, please contact the HS2 Helpdesk team on 08081 434 434 (which is available 24 hours a day) or email [hs2enquiries@hs2.org.uk](mailto:hs2enquiries@hs2.org.uk) to get your issues resolved.

It helps if you have photographic evidence and please get a complaint reference number so that we can follow up issues if needed.

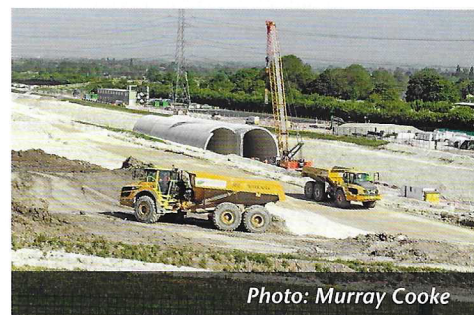


Photo: Murray Cooke



Looking for a helping hand? Our friendly team is here to make accounting as simple and stress-free as possible for you! We are here to help you with:

**numbers**  
chartered certified accountants

- Company accounts & corporation tax
- Self assessment tax returns (including Making Tax Digital for Income Tax)
- Book keeping, VAT (including Making Tax Digital), Payroll & CIS
- Company secretarial services

**Do please give us a call or pop in to see how we can help.**

Matt Ryan FCCA | Numbers Limited | 01296 620220 | [info@numbers-ltd.co.uk](mailto:info@numbers-ltd.co.uk)  
32 High Street, Wendover, Bucks, HP22 6EA | [www.numbers-ltd.co.uk](http://www.numbers-ltd.co.uk)

**BARRY LIPSCOMBE**  
Antique Restoration

**Need a furniture restorer?**

- All types of furniture repair
- Antique / mid-century
- French polishing / re-finishing

01296 487212      07831 235227  
[www.finerestorations.co.uk](http://www.finerestorations.co.uk)  
[therestorer@icloud.com](mailto:therestorer@icloud.com)

**Wendover Carpets & Flooring**

Local family business with 30 years experience  
Carpets and vinyls professionally supplied  
and fitted at competitive prices  
Samples brought to your home  
Call Mark for a friendly service

**07912485919**  
**01296 625716**

[Wendovercarpets@gmail.com](mailto:Wendovercarpets@gmail.com)



**RBL**  
LANDSCAPING & DRIVEWAYS  
*Transforming outdoor spaces*




**All landscape construction covered:**  
Bespoke Garden Rooms  
Pergolas/Decking  
Turf/Artificial turf  
Patios/Paving  
Driveways  
Brickwork  
Fencing

Call: 07501 785308  
01296 792558  
E: [rbl.landscaping.driveways@gmail.com](mailto:rbl.landscaping.driveways@gmail.com)