

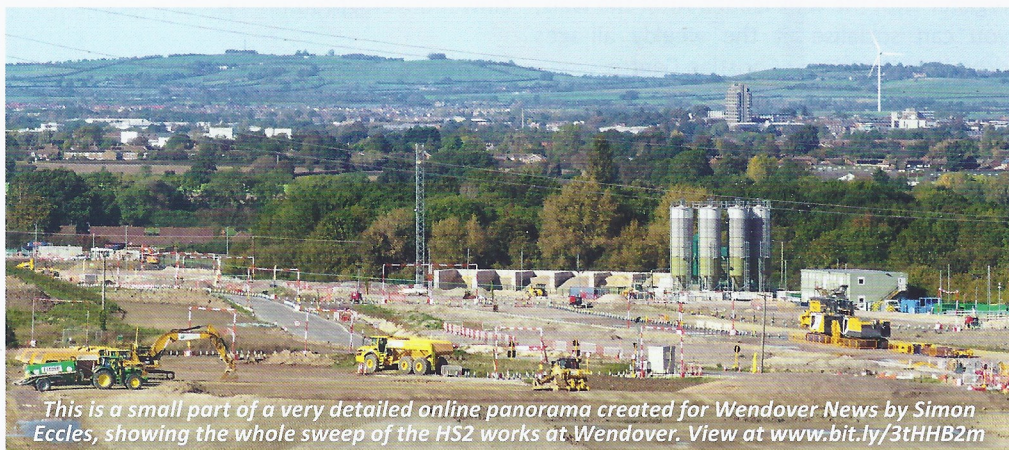
WENDOVER NEWS

November 2023

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HS2: WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?



This is a small part of a very detailed online panorama created for Wendover News by Simon Eccles, showing the whole sweep of the HS2 works at Wendover. View at www.bit.ly/3tHhB2m

On 4 October, Prime Minister Rishi Sunak announced that he was "stopping all phases of HS2 north of Birmingham." He also commented that HS2 "may not reach Euston without private investment."

Following the Prime Minister's announcement, Rob Butler, MP for Aylesbury wrote: "I've opposed HS2 for years, stating from the very beginning of my election campaign that we didn't need this railway. It made no sense economically and it made no sense environmentally. It's right that at last this project has been scrapped, but it is a bittersweet moment here in Bucks, because for us, the damage has already been done. The construction of the line between London

and Birmingham is unfortunately still going ahead, causing massive disruption to our day-to-day lives, and wreaking destruction across our landscape. Yet there's absolutely no benefit for local residents; there never has been, there never will be. I'll be calling on the Government to devote some of the savings from scrapping Phase 2 of HS2 into improving transport here in the Aylesbury area, because it's fundamentally wrong for local people to be forced to continue to suffer for a project they knew was a white elephant all along."

So how will these most recent changes affect us in Wendover? Most importantly, what will our area be like when the main construction

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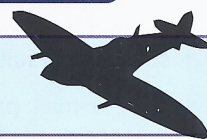
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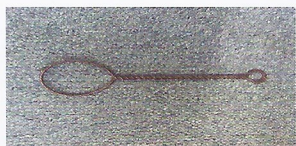
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Continued from Front Page...

phase is completed? Wendover News's Richard Byford asked Murray Cooke, spokesperson for the Wendover HS2 Mitigation Group. He pointed out that construction on HS2 in the area surrounding Wendover will continue unaffected by the recent news. However, the recent changes will affect the number of trains using the line – at least in the foreseeable future. He points out that the number of platforms available to HS2 at the London end under the revised arrangements will place further constraints on how many trains can run per hour (TPH). With platform space a constraint on the time it takes to load each train, he expects that initially HS2 may only be able to run six trains per hour, compared to the 18 TPH capability of the track design.

"In the short term, we anticipate an increase in construction work north of the Green Tunnel that will cover the railway past the bulk of Wendover, to emerge north of the Folly Bridge. HS2's constructor EKFB claims it will work to mitigate the risk of damage to the Coombe Hill aquifer (see Wendover News September). During the Green Tunnel construction, HS2 estimates that up to 636,000m³ of soil will need to be transferred from the Chilterns excavations on a conveyor line over the A413 to cover the tunnel and to make up ground to the north and Thame Valley plain," Murray said.

Wendover HS2 Mitigation Group is confident that it has had a profound positive effect on the effects of HS2 on our area, but still has a comprehensive list of future challenges to address, Murray feels.

"One of the most substantial issues emerging for Wendover regarding HS2 is the use of the land when construction is completed. Material presented by HS2 has consistently emphasised the effort that has been put into preserving the environment, natural habitats and archaeology. During this time, it has also conducted a comprehensive programme of compulsory purchases and

temporary acquisitions for construction. Yet it is by no means clear what has been acquired temporarily, what is permanent and what is for parts of the projects that have been deleted from plans. Now HS2 is under cost pressure, there is speculation that HS2 may be forced to fall short on some of its promises."

To understand how the land around Wendover and the surrounding villages will be reinstated, and to hear the thoughts of local people, Wendover Parish Council is holding a public meeting at the Memorial Hall in Wendover on Friday 24 November at 7pm when more information about the state of HS2 will be available and feedback from the community will be sought to get the best outcome for Wendover.

Wendover HS2 Mitigation Group was formed in at a meeting at the Memorial Hall in 2010. It currently has seven expert members, including engineers and scientists, who continue their work to mitigate the impact of HS2's construction and future operation on behalf of the local community. You can keep up with its work at: <https://www.whs2.org>

Footnote: Perhaps a small benefit...?

As with all major construction projects, HS2 was obliged to carry out archaeological surveys along the route of the track. For the most part, these were completed last year and finds recorded, catalogued, and put in safe storage. Archaeologists took extraordinary care to record every detail of their excavations, using the best technology available. As a result of this, we are now in a better position to understand the history of Wendover and its development over millennia.

Using published information revealed by the work of these archaeologists, Wendover News intends to develop a series of features in which experts speculate about what life looked like in Wendover in previous ages. Keep an eye out for them in future editions!

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