

NEWS RELEASE

10 January 2012
For immediate use

High speed rail will destroy nature reserve

The proposed high speed rail route between London and Birmingham which has been given the go ahead by Transport Secretary Justine Greening today will devastate habitats and wildlife in the Denham/Harefield area, warn Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust.

High Speed 2 (HS2) will run through the Colne Valley, ripping through the Trust's [Broadwater Lake Nature Reserve](#).

The area is home to nationally important numbers of waterbirds, which will suffer significant habitat loss. In addition, Daubenton's and pipistrelle bats, which are European Protected Species, could be threatened. Broadwater Lake is one of the most important sites in the UK for Daubenton's bats.

Tim Hill, Conservation Manager for Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust, said: "The HS2 route was decided without an adequate assessment of the environmental impacts. In our response to the consultation we pointed out that a Strategic Environmental Assessment should have been carried out. Broadwater Lake is part of the Mid-Colne Valley Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) - but this designation has not helped to protect it in the face of the government's plans. Important wildlife will be lost from the local area as a result of this decision."

Tom Day, Head of Living Landscapes for Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust, said: "The Trust's vision is of a living landscape, where we work with others to improve our towns and countryside for wildlife. We recognise the need for an efficient and sustainable transport system and support moves to a low carbon economy - but nature has great value, both to the economy and the wellbeing of society. It must not be overlooked in major infrastructure projects. To do so would contradict the government's own Natural Environment White Paper* and the UK National Ecosystem Assessment**."



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Nationally, 50 ancient woodlands sit alongside the HS2 route. They are irreplaceable habitats which stand to be lost under the current plans. A total of around 160 wildlife sites are potentially at risk, along with rare and protected species like the Bechstein's bat in Buckinghamshire.

The Trust is urging local people to sign an e-petition to stop HS2. The petition needs at least 100,000 signatures to force a parliamentary debate on the issue: <http://epetitions.direct.gov.uk/petitions/353>

Ends/

Notes for Editors

***The Natural Environment White Paper**

The Government's White Paper, published in June 2011, emphasises the intrinsic, economic and social value of the natural environment. It also endorses the need for a landscape-scale approach to securing nature's recovery.

****The UK National Ecosystem Assessment** states: *"The natural world, its biodiversity and its constituent ecosystems are critically important to our well-being and economic prosperity, but are consistently undervalued in conventional economic analyses and decision-making."*

Stop HS2

E-petition: <http://epetitions.direct.gov.uk/petitions/353>

More about HS2 on Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust website:
[http://www.hertswildlifetrust.org.uk/Wildlife/High + Speed + 2](http://www.hertswildlifetrust.org.uk/Wildlife/High+Speed+2)

Colne Valley Park

[Broadwater Lake Nature Reserve](#) forms part of the Colne Valley Park, stretching for 43 miles from Rickmansworth in the north through Harefield, Uxbridge and Heathrow to Staines in the south. The park encompasses 200 miles of river and canal, 60 lakes and 13 Sites of Special Scientific Interest, as well as numerous nature reserves.

A national threat

In total, seven Wildlife Trusts are affected by the proposed route for phase one of HS2:

- London Wildlife Trust
- Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust
- Berks, Bucks & Oxon Wildlife Trust
- The Wildlife Trust for Beds, Cambs, Northants & Peterborough
- Warwickshire Wildlife Trust
- Birmingham & Black Country Wildlife Trust
- Staffordshire Wildlife Trust

The national picture:

<http://www.wildlifetrusts.org/HS2>

Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust

We are a local charity supported by people who care about protecting wildlife, including over 22,000 members.

With volunteers, we manage a network of more than 40 nature reserves, covering nearly 2,000 acres. Beyond this our vision is of a living landscape, where we work with others to improve our towns and countryside for wildlife.

The Wildlife Trusts

There are 47 Wildlife Trusts across the UK: we are the only charities working to protect the full range of UK wildlife and habitats at a local level.

Contact for further information and high res images:

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