

HS2

HS2 Project Rescoping: Interim Policy Update

Payments Schedule for Land Access Licences

July 2025

Version 3.0

Introduction

The advice and guidance within the attached document have not yet been updated to reflect the decision not to proceed with Phase Two of HS2 published in [‘Network North: Transforming British Transport’](#) on 4 October 2023.

In January 2024, HS2 safeguarding was removed across the majority of the former Phase 2a route (West Midlands to Crewe). Safeguarding was retained close to Handsacre to allow Phase One of HS2 to connect to the West Coast Main Line so that HS2 trains can reach cities in the north of England and Scotland on the existing West Coast Main Line.

In July 2025, HS2 safeguarding was removed across the majority of the former Phase 2b Eastern Leg route (West Midlands to Leeds). A short section of safeguarding was retained in Central Leeds to allow for potential enhancements to the existing station. The Government will set out more detailed plans in due course, including further details of a disposal programme for land and property acquired for HS2 that is no longer required.

Any land acquired for Phase 2 that is no longer required will be sold in line with Treasury rules.

High Speed Two (HS2) Ltd is working with the Department for Transport and we will update our policies and procedures when further information is available.

Update on Payments Schedule for Land Access Licences

This guidance document sets out how HS2 Ltd pays for Land Access Licences.

No new environmental surveys or ground investigations will be carried out in areas that have been removed from safeguarding. We will communicate with landowners where decommissioning and/or remediation works still need to take place. Renewal licences and new licences or notices will be issued where necessary to allow these works to take place as well as to facilitate environmental surveys as required.

In line with previous guidance, we will consider reasonable and properly evidenced claims for advice and professional agents’ fees already incurred prior to the 4 October 2023 announcement. We are unable to accept new claims for professional advice in relation to land which is no longer expected to be affected by ground investigations or environmental surveys after the 4 October 2023 announcement.

If you have further queries, please contact your Case Manager if you have one, or for more information contact our HS2 Helpdesk on Freephone 08081 434 434 or on Minicom 08081 456 472.

When will this document be updated?

When changes are required, HS2 Ltd will update this guidance document as soon as possible.

Need more information?

We regularly update our ‘Frequently Asked Questions’ webpage.

It includes questions about our land and property programme and provides the most up to date information. These can be viewed here: <https://www.hs2.org.uk/in-your-area/assistance-for-property-owners/project-rescoping-phase-two-cancellation/>

If you have further queries, the easiest way to contact us is via the HS2 Helpdesk. The HS2 Helpdesk is open all day, every day on 08081 434 434 (freephone); Minicom: 08081 456 472; or email us at HS2enquiries@hs2.org.uk.

Payments schedule for land access licences

What is an access licence?

Access licences are issued to landowners to allow surveys to be taken which inform the Environmental Statement, construction and design of the High Speed Two (HS2) railway.

Access licences are voluntary agreements that allow HS2 Ltd and their specialist contractors access to privately-owned land or property to undertake intrusive and non-intrusive works.

Non-intrusive surveys observe, measure, photograph and note the environment or land.

Intrusive surveys study the soil, rocks and groundwater below the surface.



Types of access licences

Licensors are compensated for their co-operation with an access fee and subsequent survey fees (see rates below).

Where there are multiple interests in the property, HS2 proposes that the licence fee is split 25:75 between owner(s) and occupier(s), but some owners take a different view of the appropriate split.

The licences are valid for two years. Renewals can be issued when the original expires, granting access for a further two years.

The different types of licences are explained opposite.

Early access

Under the terms of the agreement, access is granted for environmental specialists to complete non-intrusive ecological surveys. The licence is valid for two years.

Sound and vibration monitoring licence

Under the terms of the agreement, access is granted for sound and vibration monitoring equipment to be placed and monitored unattended up to 14 days. It is valid for one year.

Ground Investigation (GI)

Under the terms of the agreement, access is granted for intrusive investigation works and surveys.

GI monitoring licence

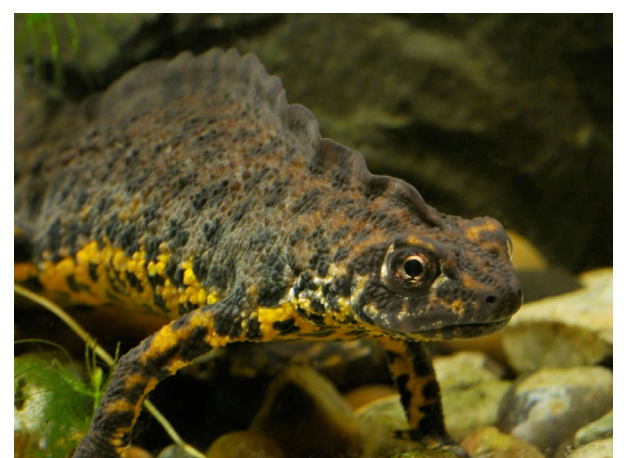
Allows access to place and review monitoring equipment on completed ground boreholes over a two-year period.

This licence is issued when additional monitoring (outside of the GI licence terms) is required.

Payments

Access licence fees are a one-off fee paid upon the return of a signed licence:

Access licence type	Amount (excluding VAT)
Early access agreement	£1,000
Early access agreement renewal	£250
Ground investigation	£1,000 - £2,000
Ground investigation renewal	£250
Ground investigation monitoring	£600 per borehole
Sound and vibration monitoring	£250



Environmental survey fees

- The first and second environmental surveys do not attract a fee as they are covered under the initial EAA signing fees;
- **£170** is paid for a 24-hour period and/or **£350** for a series. These are species specific and account for up to six return survey visits;
- Environmental survey payments are made to the occupier of the land or property;
- **To note:** surveys only attract a fee under a valid licence. Surveys completed under statutory notice served by HS2 Ltd before or after Royal Assent are not compensated.

Ground investigation survey payments

The GI licence fee allows for to 10-20 days’ work to be completed depending on the fee amount paid. Once the initial days are completed, each additional working day on the land is paid at a rate of **£170**.

Payment for surveys made to the occupier, leaseholder or tenant includes:

Borehole: One-off payment of **£600** per completed borehole.

Monitored borehole: One off payment of **£1,000** per completed borehole inclusive of 12 (monthly) monitoring visits.

Additional monitoring for 2 years under a separate GI monitoring licence: One-off payment of **£600** per monitored borehole.

Trial pit/ trial trench: One-off payment of **£300** per completed pit/trench.

Window sampling, cone penetration tests or similar: One-off payment of **£300** for up to five probes.

Crop loss claims: These will be paid on a proven loss basis.



Agent fees

One-off fixed fees are paid to professional land agents (see below) for their work involved in getting their client(s) to enter into a licence agreement, engagement meetings for GI works and negotiating crop loss.

Other fees

- Additional Land Request (ALR) fees are paid to the agent for arranging the addition of land to their client(s) existing signed licences. The licensor is not paid a fee. Fees are paid upon receiving signed and completed documentation. Agent professional fees under the GI licence are capped unless otherwise agreed in advance.
- Land Interest Questionnaires (LIQs) are used to gather land ownership data. Agents are paid to complete LIQs. Landowners are not compensated for this.
- Farm Impact Assessments (FIA) are meetings to assess the potential effects of the scheme on individual farms.



Access licence type	Agent fee (excluding VAT)
Early access agreement	£600
Early access agreement renewal	£150
Ground investigation	£750
Ground investigation renewal	£150
Additional land request	£250
Land interest questionnaire	£250
Farm impact assessments	Max three hours at agents’ rate
GI engagement and crop loss claim	Max 14 hours per licence