

# New plans revealed by HS2 for wetland habitats around Birmingham and Fazeley Canal viaduct

June 6, 2022



HS2's designers have released updated designs for the land surrounding the section of the high-speed rail line that crosses the Birmingham and Fazeley Canal.

The Birmingham and Fazeley Canal viaduct is located north of HS2's Delta Junction, a triangle-shaped series of viaducts that allows HS2 trains to travel between London, the Midlands, and the North.

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- [HS2 announces start of construction on UK's longest railway bridge](#)
- [More courses added to HS2's fast track job training programme](#)

The latest plans, developed by HS2 main works contractor, Balfour Beatty VINCI (BBV), respond to community feedback and include a series of wetlands containing four new ecological ponds, expansive grass meadows and approximately 22,000 m<sup>2</sup> of newly established woodland alongside the embankment to the north of the viaduct that is part of the green corridor planting – the equivalent of three football

pitches.

A potential new public green space could be created to the south of the canal, with informal paths connecting the towpath to Seeney Lane. There will be two species-rich ponds, seating and information boards encouraging wetland exploration and education. The existing hedgerow running along the towpath will also be reinstated to maintain bat flight corridors along the canal; species-rich grasslands will provide homes for insects and bees; and new trees will screen views of the M42.

An ecological habitat to support biodiversity will also be created further north, including two ponds, planting zones and hedgerows to connect Cuttle Mill fishery and woodlands to the HS2 green corridor alongside the railway.

HS2's Senior Landscape Design Manager Steve Fancourt, said: "We aim to integrate HS2 into the landscape as much as possible, as well as transforming areas around the railway to provide community benefits, protect wildlife and enhance local biodiversity. The updated designs for the Birmingham and Fazeley Canal viaduct include exciting new wetland habitats which can be enjoyed by people and create diverse new connected areas for wildlife."

HS2 is planting up to 7 million trees as part of its extensive green corridor programme including species such as Silver Birch, Hazel, Hawthorne and Holly along the Phase One route between London and the West Midlands. Over 220,000 trees have already been planted and 40 new ponds created in the West Midlands.

Andy deBell, Head of Community Engagement for BBV, said: "Our detailed designs for the Birmingham and Fazeley viaduct have responded to feedback provided by the local community in 2021, and stem from how people wish to use and experience the canal.

"Our plans, which include public open spaces and environmental features for wildlife, will enhance the landscape, creating the potential for local people to have access to green spaces along the line of route while creating diverse habitats for local wildlife."

A series of measures will reduce the time and impact of the construction of the Birmingham and Fazeley Canal viaduct on canal users and walkers including creating haul roads within the construction area to cut down use of public roads; creating pre-assembled steel deck segments away from the structure to cut construction time and make best use of the space; and use of protective working environment measures (cofferdams) to ensure the stability of the canal during the works.

Balfour Beatty VINCI (BBV) is holding a series of public engagements this month to present the designs to the local community, including a drop-in session where people can explore key features. This will be followed by a presentation and Q&A.

- More information about the event on 8

June: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/hs2-design-update-event-birmingham-fazeley-canal-viaduct-tickets-345548955227?aff=ebdsoporgprofile>

- More information about the event on 9

June: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/hs2-design-update-event-birmingham-fazeley-canal-viaduct-tickets-345573960017?aff=ebdsoporgprofile>

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