

The Chilterns Long Tunnel

Avoiding harm to the heritage of the
AONB



This presentation is by

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The request:

HS2 to proceed in tunnel to protect the Cultural Heritage of the AONB



Some heritage assets badly harmed by the surface route



Why should harm to heritage assets be avoided?

Because Parliament requires:

**special regard to the desirability of preserving the
(listed) building or its setting**

*Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990
Section 66 (1)*



National Planning Policy Framework

Chapter 12:

Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

The historic environment:

“All aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and landscaped and planted or managed flora.”

Buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes



Why preserve?

Because heritage is

- Important – it matters to people
- Rare - “an irreplaceable resource”
- Under threat – neglect, decay, alteration, development, erosion



In order to preserve

Local Planning Authority

has constrained past proposals for the listed buildings in the public interest, in order to minimise harm

- Limited extension
- Limited scope for alteration
- Expensive specialist materials and craftsmanship

Select Committee

Please ensure that HS2 proposals are given the same consideration!

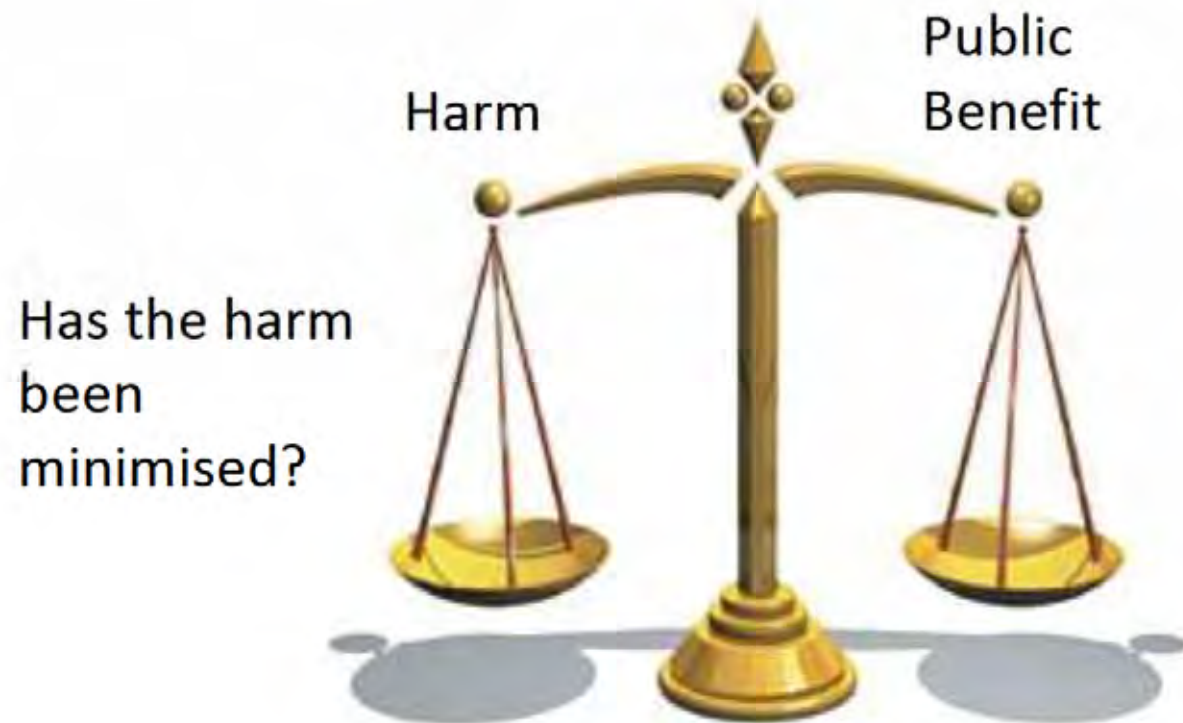


Heritage tests:

- Are the proposals for HS2 based on a real understanding as to why the heritage assets are significant/valuable?
- Will HS2 sustain and enhance the heritage?
- Is the harm caused by HS2 justified?



Justification:



A sound understanding of cultural heritage??

The promoters have made a stand-alone study of heritage without any links to the landscape, agriculture or anything else

They have given a general overview of heritage, but have assessed all sites and buildings individually, without importance as part of a special area

They say that all Grade II listed buildings are only of moderate importance



Whereas:

- Heritage is inextricable from the landscape and the agricultural character of the affected area
- Heritage is important to the character of the AONB
- Heritage is better preserved because of the constraints of the AONB
- Heritage in the AONB should carry a lot of weight

If that weight is given:

How can the harm be justified if it can be avoided by means of a longer tunnel ?



Why is the preservation of cultural heritage particularly important for the AONB?

Heritage enriches the visual beauty and amenity of the AONB

Chapel Farm, Hyde End



Heritage shows how people have lived with the landscape – the human imprint

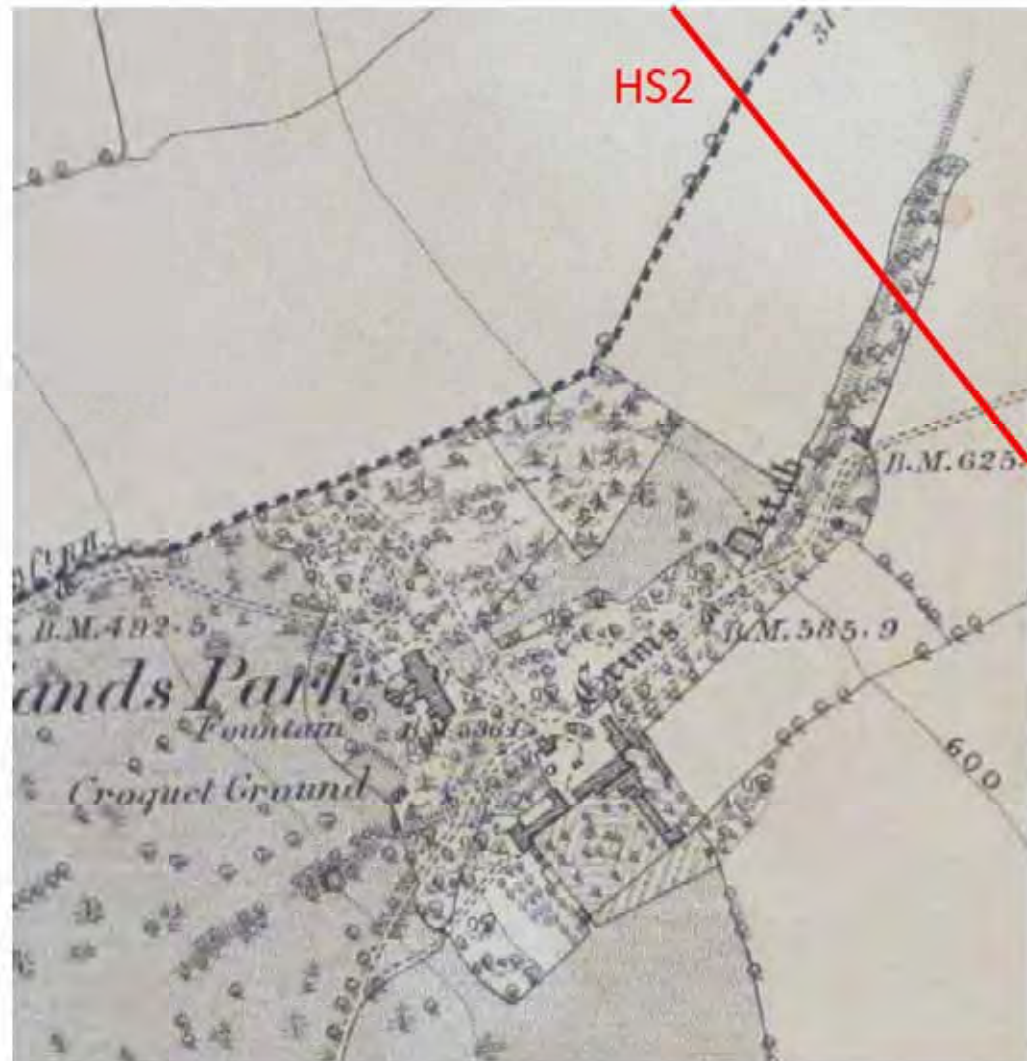
Grim's Ditch –
an Iron Age
Boundary

2000 years of
farming

Ordnance Survey 1883

Severed by HS2

Loss of 150 out of 350
metres



How the land has
been used for
agriculture –
ancient fields still
there

The Henry Lily Map of 1620

Key

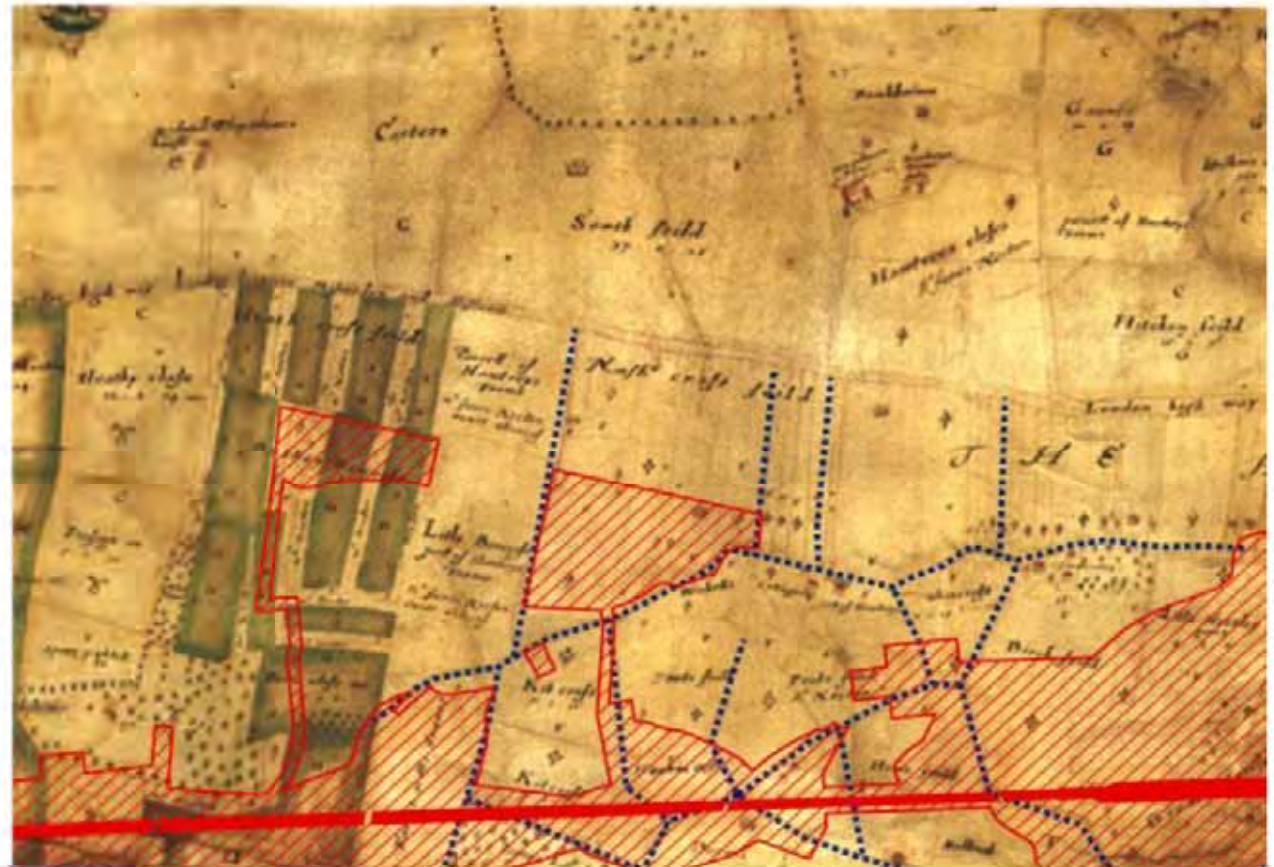


HS2 Surface route



HS2 Construction land take

..... Extant field boundaries from 1620



Ancient Woodlands - How the woods have been used for:

- Fuel
- Timber for building
- Wood wares
- Pigs

Jenkins Wood



Settlement

- Valley villages
- Ridge-line farmsteads
- Workers' cottages

86 King's Road - A woodman's cottage next to Sibley's Coppice

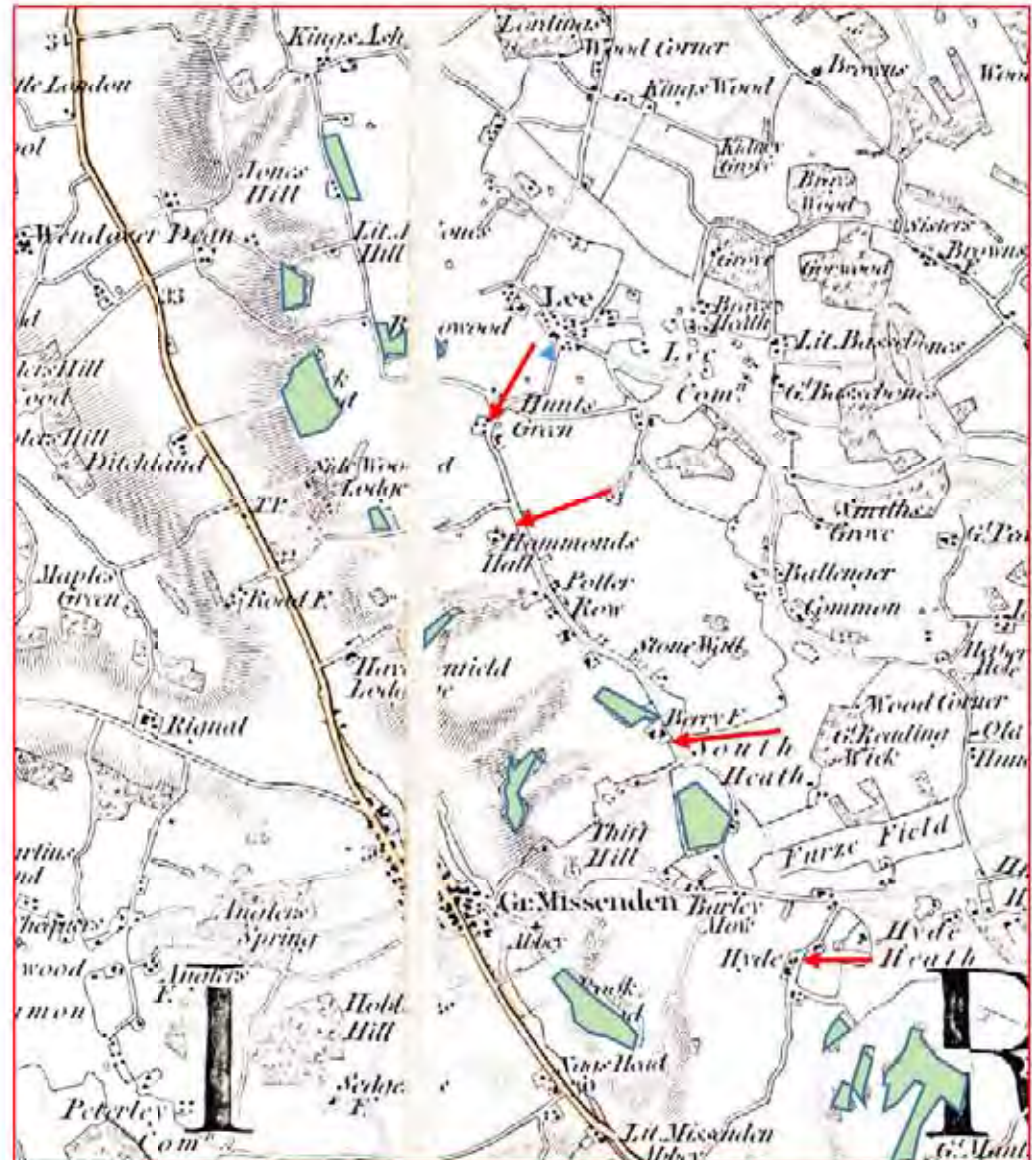
18 metres from HS2 Green Tunnel
Surrounded by land take



How it all links together

O.S Map of 1812

- Kings Lane and Potter Row - a "high" route parallel to the main road along the Misbourne valley (avoiding the winter bogs) – HS2 will run parallel just below
- Steep lanes connect with valley bottom
- Woodlands
- Line of farmsteads along the edge of the ridge
- Plateau commons (clay and flint)



Ancient Routes



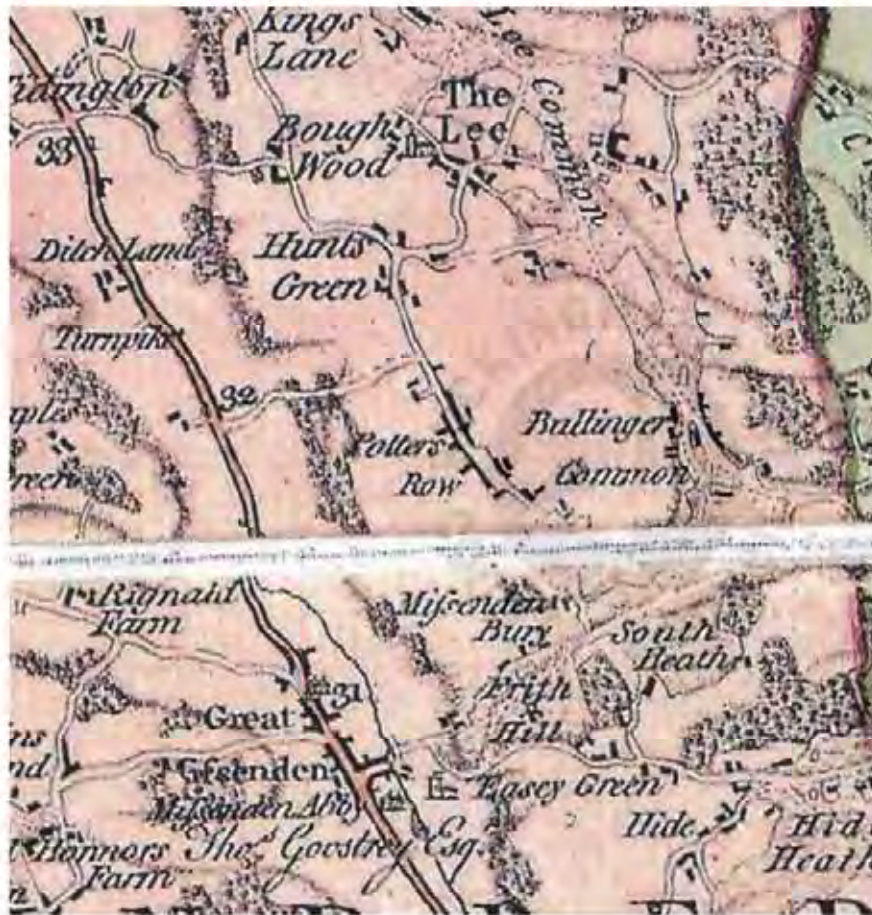
Leather Lane – an overbridge and a satellite compound



Potter Row – an HS2 construction Route

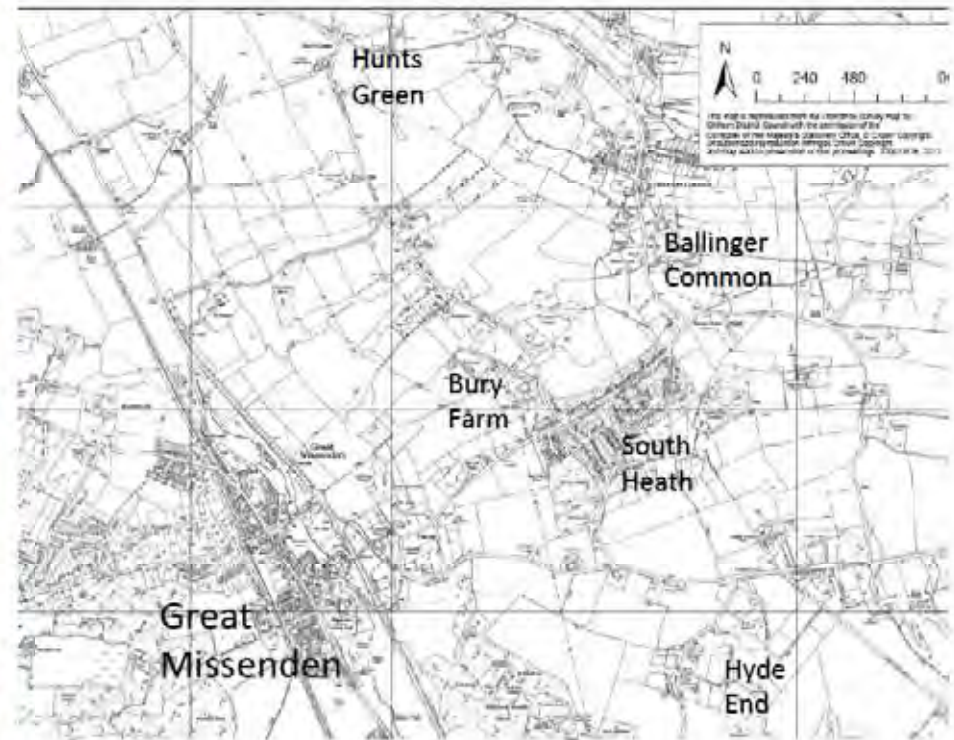
Slow rate of change

Jefferys's Map of c.1760



Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies

Today



Heritage in the landscape today

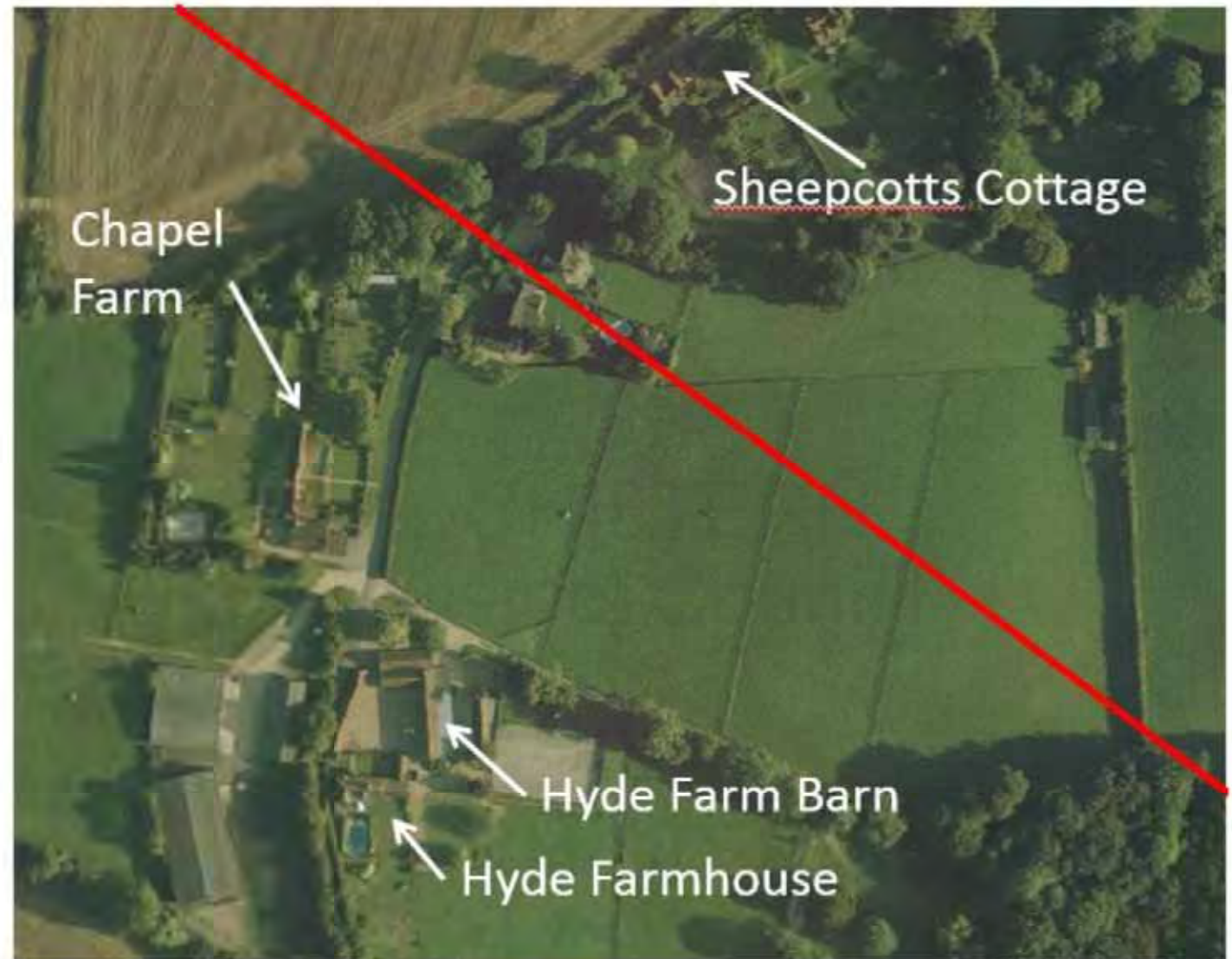
- Narrow lanes
- Survival of Ancient woodland
- Open farmland with historic fields
- Heritage farmsteads still in rural setting
- Undeveloped, green, peaceful

Aerial photography by UK Perspectives



Heritage at Hyde End

- Linear settlement along narrow lane
- Historic farmsteads in tranquil rural setting
- Very attractive location at head of dry valley.
- Fields and paddocks
- Footpath leads to ancient woodland
HS2 runs through
- Buildings include.....



Hyde Farm

- Listed Grade II
- Early 16th century hall house with timber framing inside and 17th century chimney
- Yard with listed farm buildings - 18th century timber barn, 19th century former cart shed and stables.
- Equestrian use.

110 metres from railway
80 metres from cutting



Inside Hyde Farmhouse - 16th century timber frame



Chapel Farm

- Unlisted
- 17th century timber-framed cottage core
- Picturesque 1900 extensions by George Herbert Kitchen

Overlooks the railway
55 metres from cutting

“made larger, more picturesque and more comfortable for the first wave of London weekenders and commuters”
(Pevsner)



Sheepcotts Cottage

- Listed Grade II
- Later 17th century
- Tile hanging over timber frame
- Chequer brick
- Flint gable with massive chimney

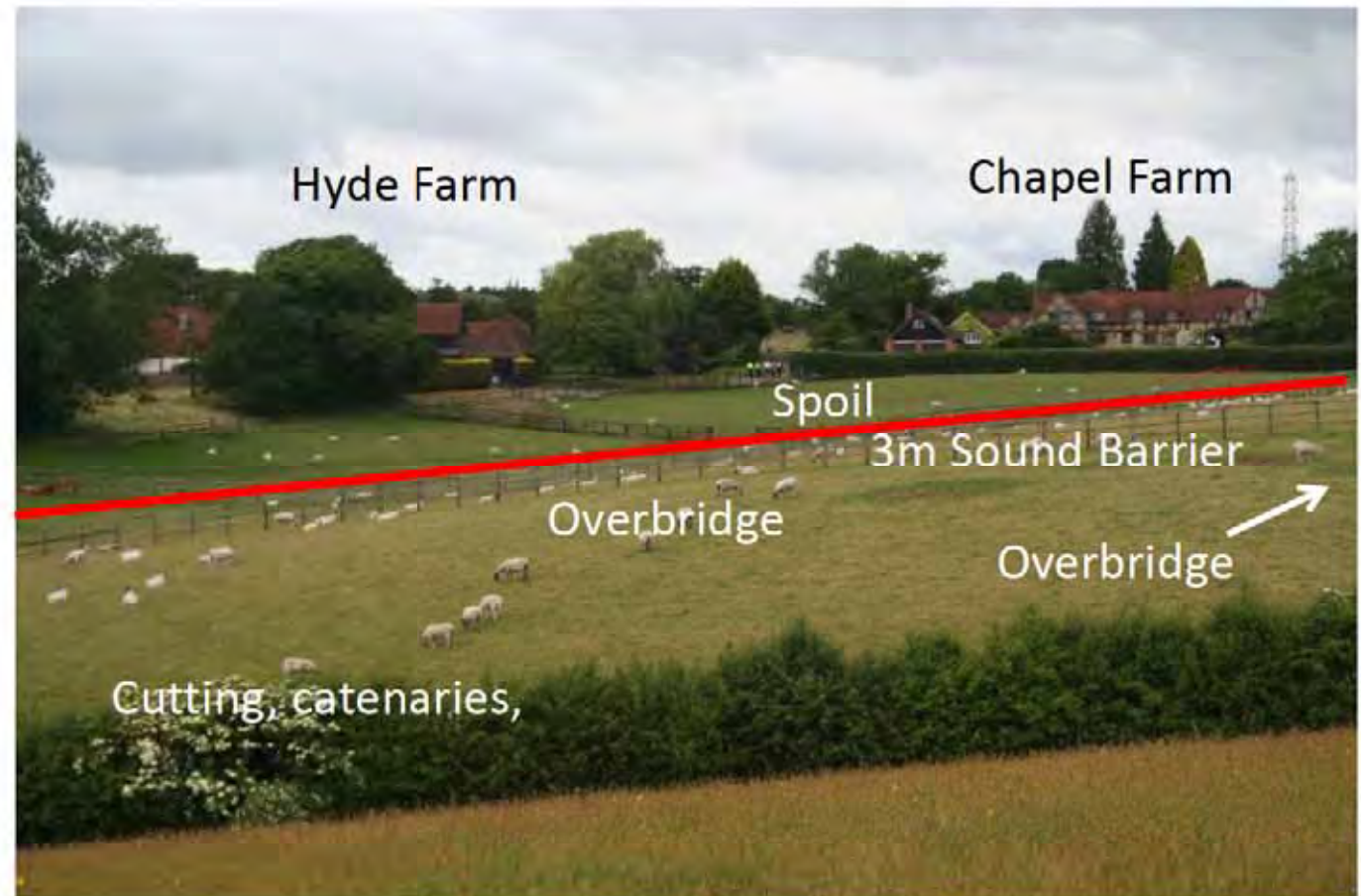
70 metres from railway

30 metres from cutting



HS2

Cuts
through
here

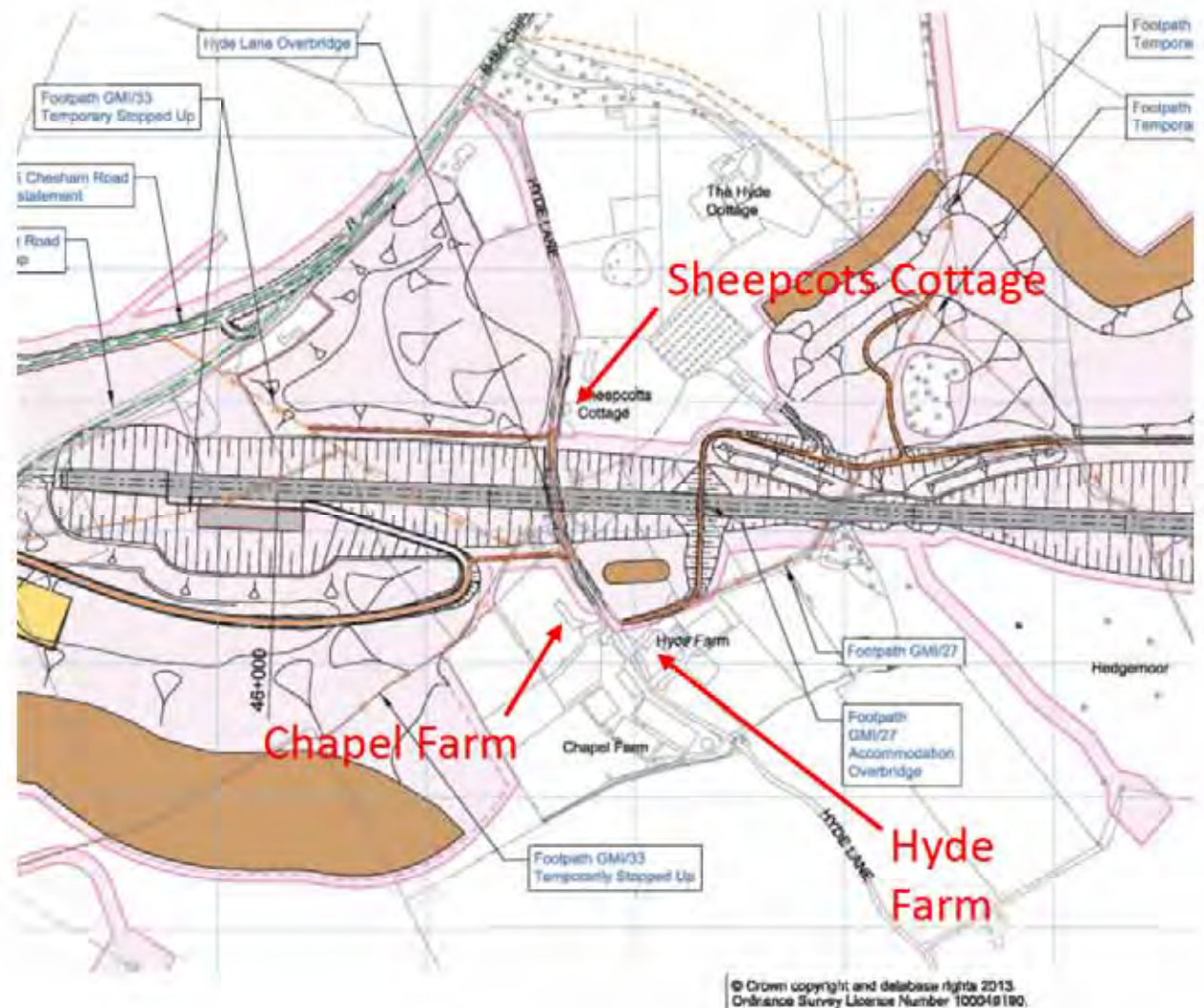


What is happening at Hyde End

- a picture is given by
the HS2 plans

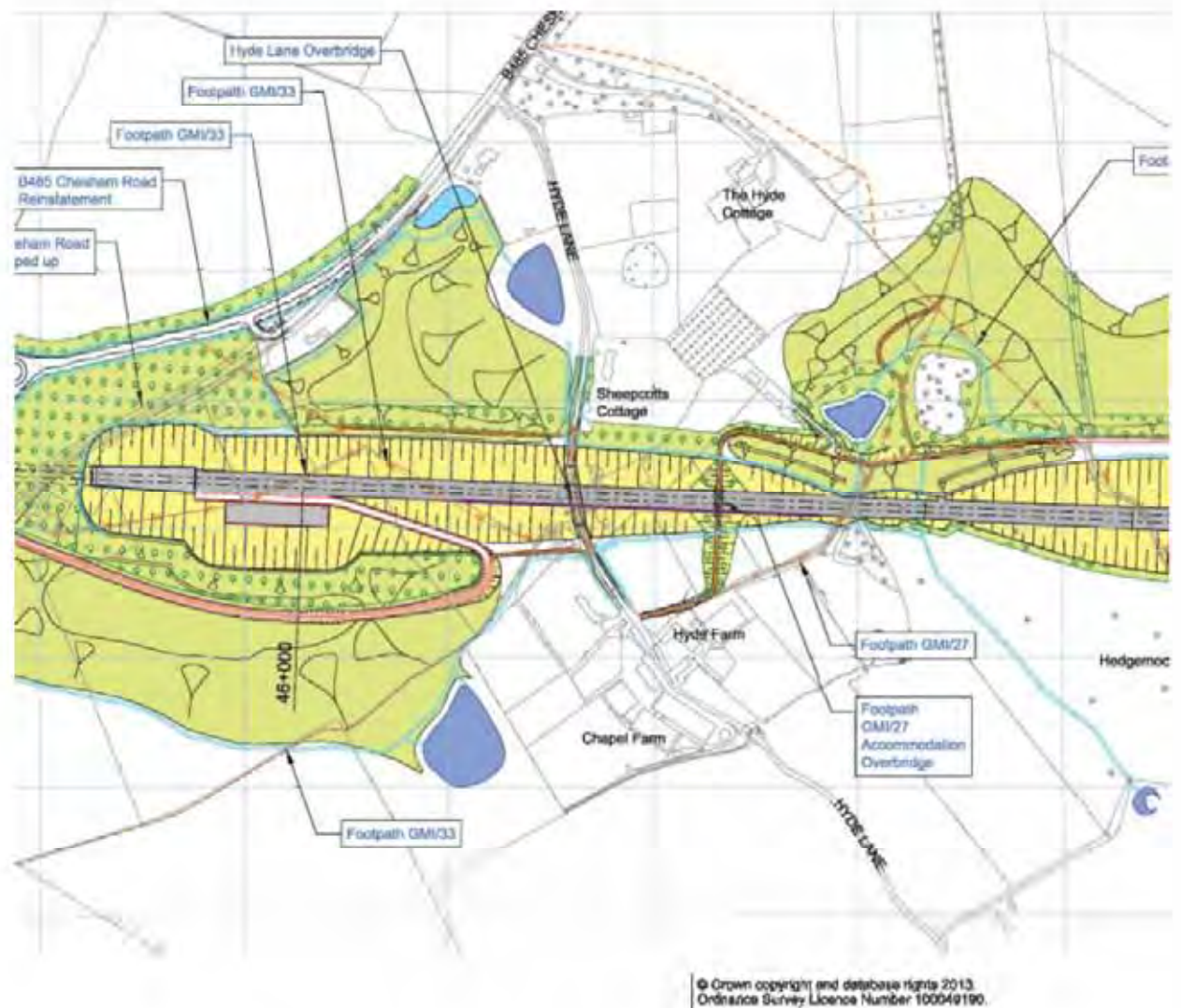
The construction phase

- Shallow cutting
- Construction work for 3 years in 2 phases
- 2 over-bridges only 130 metres apart
- Footpath over-bridge 4 metres above ground level - embanked



The works completed

- Views down into cutting along railway - paraphernalia, portals
- 3 metre-high sound barrier ???
- Bunding and soil placement will re-shape landscape
- Noise – so bad Sheepcotts Cottage qualifies for insulation



Does this sustain and enhance?

NO



How great is the harm?

HS2 – “moderate adverse”

In reality:

- rural setting devastated
- Hyde Farm and Sheepcotts Cottage already vacant
- equestrian use no longer viable
- who will want to live there?

no residents

no maintenance



What happens when a listed building has the life taken out of it?

Grade II listed farmhouse:
Too close to the M25



Other examples
from Chiltern District

Former 18th century barn:
Too close to a landfill site?



- Decline
- Dereliction
- Vandalism
- Arson

Will the promoters' solutions avoid this?

NO

Compensation – only for the owners, who leave.
Nothing for the buildings left behind.

Re-sale – blighted by railway – basement bargain -
downward spiral – loss of viability



Hunts Green Farm

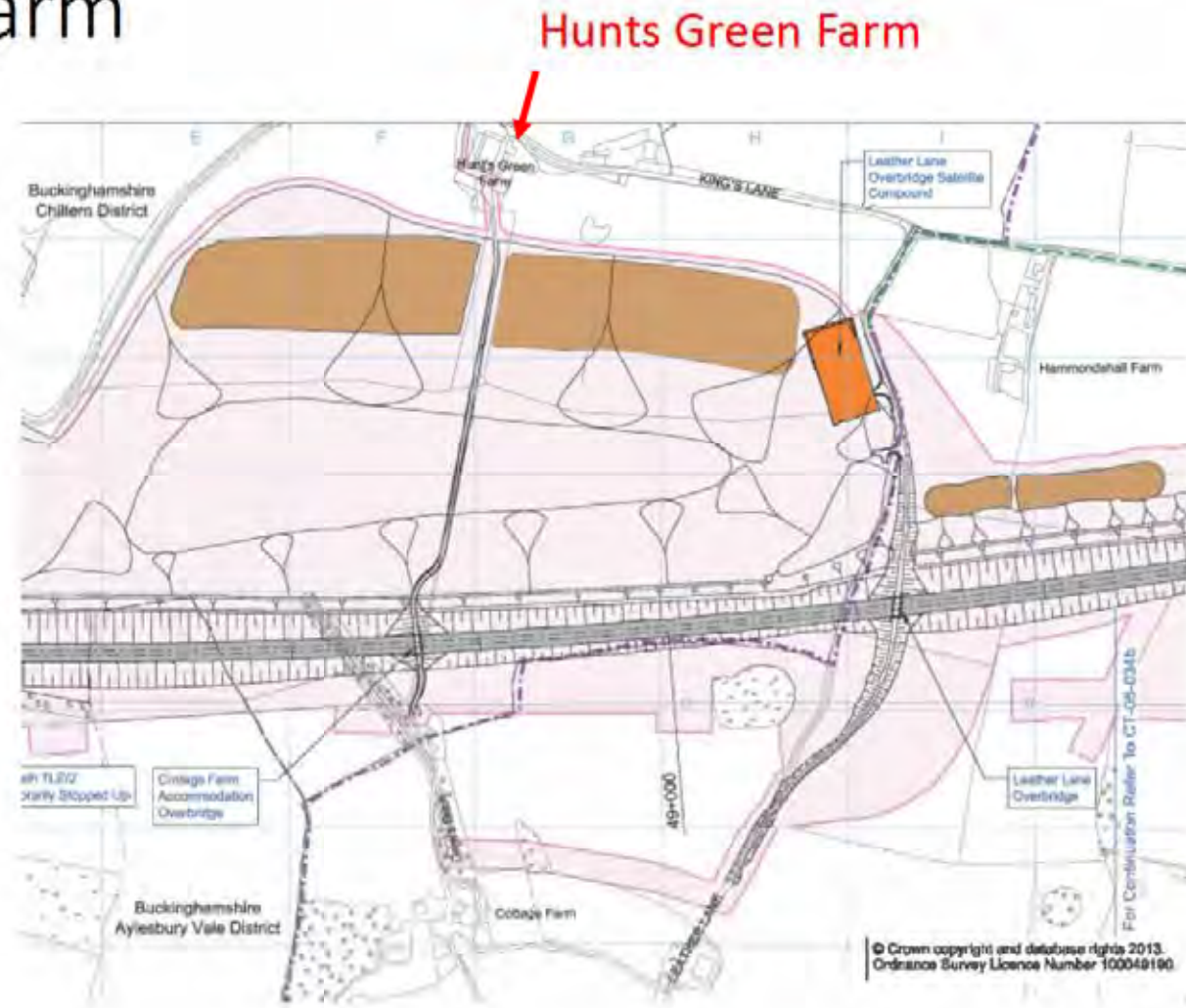
- Grade II listed farmhouse and barn
- 17th century origins
- One of few historic farmsteads still in agricultural use
- Isolated agricultural setting on flat plateau



Hunts Green Farm

HS2 will run 500 metres away, but....

- Half the farmland will be taken by HS2 for stockpiling during construction
- Construction traffic to use track around farm
- Satellite Compound



Hunts Green Farm

HS2 assess effect as –

- temporarily moderate, permanently minor in heritage terms



Hunts Green Farm

Real impact:

- loss of agricultural use
- vacancy
- dereliction unless farm buildings are converted to residential use
- loss of historic farm



Leather Lane

- Historic lane leading from valley floor to ridge
- Narrow and sunken by centuries of use
- Tree-lined
- Part of historic setting for Grade II listed Hammonds Hall Farm (early 17th century)



HS2 and Leather Lane

- To be diverted
- To be raised on an embankment
- To pass over HS2 on a bridge 4 metres above ground level
- Loss of tree line
- Balancing pond
- Complete destruction of distinctive historic character



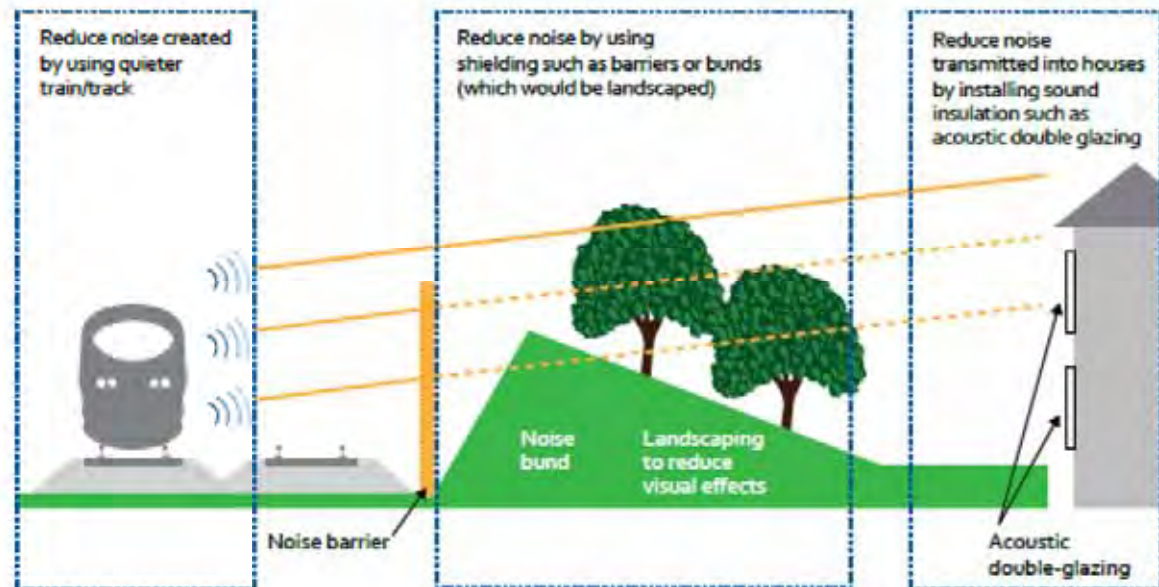
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Why won't lesser mitigation work?



Because

Bunds and sound barriers will be harmful to the natural landscape setting



Because

Sound insulation
will compromise
the architectural
interest

Double-glazing
What about the
roof??



Because

Mitigation along the open cutting cannot be fully effective – HS2 agree that there will be outstanding harm:

Grim's Ditch: "totally altered....changes in the ability to understand and appreciate the resource in its historical context and setting" –

"permanent major adverse" effect –

"mitigation plantingwill mitigate the overall impact but not appreciably"

Hyde End: "the rural agricultural context in which the group is set will be comprehensively changed" - "permanent moderate adverse"

Hammondshall Farmhouse: "permanent moderate adverse"

86 King's Lane: "permanent minor adverse"



Because

Compensation
for owners who
move away will
not secure a
future for the
historic
buildings that
remain



Cost of proposed scheme to HS2

- Mitigation – bunds, barriers, landscaping
- Compensation
- Security firms and guard dogs
- Interim maintenance
- Refurbishment
- Re-sale

No need with a tunnel!



Cost to the public

- Potential loss of viability/loss of listed buildings
- Irreparable damage to the settings of individual assets
- Irreparable damage to a specially distinctive historic environment
- Irreparable damage to the understanding and experience of the AONB and its history
- Diminution of a national asset



Why we need the tunnel to be extended

- To preserve ancient woodland, Grim's Ditch and local lanes
- To preserve historic buildings in residential, agricultural and equestrian use, with incentive to repair and maintain
- To preserve the rural setting
- To preserve heritage as important to enjoyment of the AONB

