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Intercity Express Programme - vegetation clearance and management

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To: "gillian.pinfield@hotmail.co.uk" <gillian.pinfield@hotmail.co.uk>

Dear Sir/Madam

Western Intercity Express Programme - vegetation clearance and management

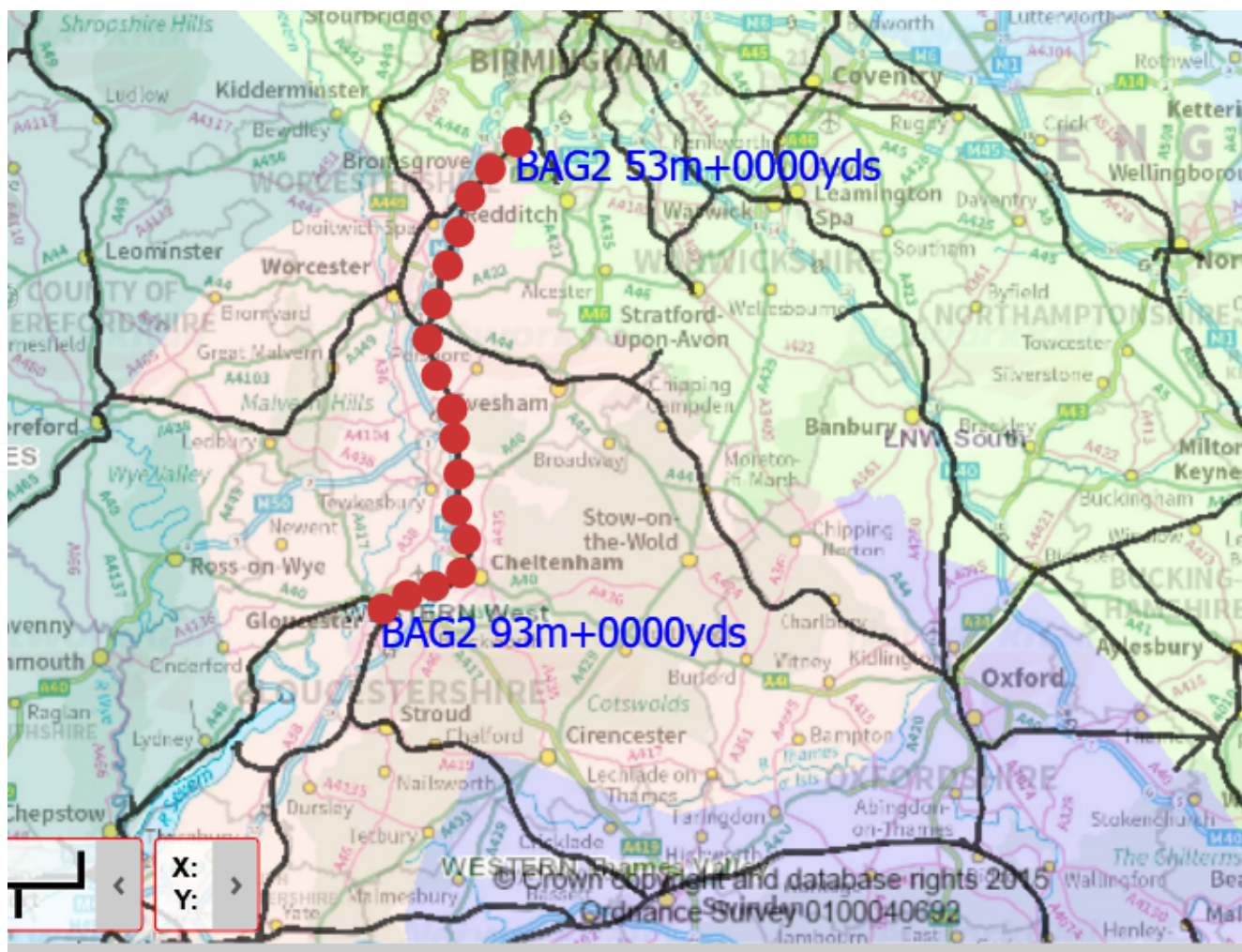
I am writing to advise you of our de-vegetation programme that will be carried out between January and summer 2017.

Why do we need to undertake this work?

The works required are part of a larger scale project to clear and maintain lineside vegetation in preparation for the new Intercity Express Programme (IEP) trains, which are due to be introduced onto the Western Route shortly. We need to make sure there is adequate clearance on both sides of the track so that the new trains are not damaged when travelling on non-electrified lines.

What are the works involved?

The vegetation clearance is to take place in the area highlighted on the map below. It will involve stripping trees and vegetation by 8m or to the boundary fence, whichever is the lesser, from the outer running rail. Any third party trees that are affected will either be removed, reduced in height, or have their branches cut back, after agreement has been sought with the relevant railway neighbour. When work is to take place from third party property a land access agreement will be signed and records kept.



How we will manage the impact on the environment?

We recognise that all vegetation removal needs to be carried out sensitively to avoid unnecessary damage to flora and fauna. Our overall aim is to create an 8m wide grassland habitat that will support a diverse range of flora and fauna but pose a much lower risk to the operational railway. Ecological desktop and site based surveys will be carried out prior to works commencing along with pre start checks and briefing talks by the cutting teams. The teams have also undergone ecological awareness training. In all instances, if there is any concern about damage being caused to a known habitat then works will be halted until we can be certain that it is safe to proceed.

When will the work take place?

The initial vegetation clearance started in November 2016 (in rural areas) and will finish in the summer of 2017; however, as this is work is being carried out in several different areas, residents will not be affected for the whole period. Subsequent maintenance works will be carried out until March 2019 when the program finishes and the new rolling stock enters service. Most of the work will take place during the week, between the daylight hours of 08.00-17.00. When there is a requirement to work during the night, a separate letter will be sent to the affected residents detailing the times and exact location of the works. We will aim to send this out 2 weeks in advance.

If you have any questions regarding this work, or would like to arrange a meeting to discuss this in person, please feel free to contact me.

Kindest regards

Lily Exton

Community Relations Manager | Network Rail

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