Meeting note

Project name East West Rail – Bedford to Cambridge and Western

improvements

File reference TR040012

Status Final

Author The Planning Inspectorate

Date 2 September 2021

Meeting with East West Rail Company Limited

Venue Online

Meeting Project update

objectives

Circulation All attendees/ <additional circulation>

Summary of key points discussed and advice given

The Planning Inspectorate (the Inspectorate) advised that a note of the meeting would be taken and published on its website in accordance with section 51 of the Planning Act 2008 (the PA2008). Any advice given under section 51 would not constitute legal advice upon which applicants (or others) could rely.

Project update

The Applicant gave a presentation which included a project update, proposed programme, summary of the second non-statutory consultation, information on environmental matters, approach to statutory consultations and section 53 authorisations. The slides for the presentation can be seen at **Annex A** below.

Discussion

Approximately 9000 responses were received to the recent second non-statutory consultation, which closed in June.

The Inspectorate also queried levels of optionality in terms of the two-timetable concept and the power supply. The Applicant explained that the intention was to base the DCO application on a proposed single approach to station locations and that the power supply could be diesel, or it could be electric either through gantries, batteries or a combination of both. A decision was yet to be made on this issue.

In terms of consultation the Inspectorate asked whether the Applicant would be consulting on the entire project or just the area subject to the section 35 direction. The Applicant explained that whilst only the new railway works between Cambridge to Bedford directly fall within the section 35 direction, the Applicant considered that the improvement works between Bedford and Oxford would constitute associated development and therefore these works would form part of the DCO application unless any were brought forward early. The recent consultation had therefore been undertaken on the whole route between Oxford and Cambridge.

The Applicant confirmed it intended to seek a Scoping Opinion in early 2022 (which is intended to be after the announcement of the preferred route alignment) and asked the Inspectorate for more information on digital scoping reports. The Inspectorate advised that it is open to discussions about digital scoping but still required the scoping report in PDF format. The Inspectorate pointed the Applicant towards Advice Note 7 for GIS shapefile requirements and Advice Note 17 in relation to cumulative effects.

The Inspectorate advised the Applicant to provide justification in its scoping report where it plans to scope out any matters as the decision to scope out is taken on a case-by-case basis.

The Applicant confirmed that it was due to submit its application in April 2023.

Specific decisions/ follow-up required?

The following actions were agreed:

- Copy of the section 35 direction to be resent to the Inspectorate
- Further discussion on digital scoping
- Discussion in advance of the submission of any s53 authorisation request

Annexes:

Annex A: Project update slide deck

Annex A: Project update slide deck

East West Rail – Bedford to Cambridge and Western Improvements Project

Second project meeting with the Planning Inspectorate

2nd September 2021

Agenda

No.	Agenda item
1.	Welcome and Introductions
2.	Project Update
3.	Proposed Programme to DCO Application
4.	Summary of Second Non-Statutory Consultation
5.	 Environmental matters: Scoping Report Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR)
6.	Approach to Statutory Consultation
7.	Section 53 Authorisations
8.	Contact with PINS Going Forward
9.	Any Other Business

Welcome and introductions

Project update

Project update

Since our inception meeting in January, we have

- Completed the second round of non-statutory consultation
- Begun writing the EIA Scoping Report
- Continued to engage with all stakeholders and affected landowners
- Undertaken a number of environmental surveys required to form the baseline for the EIA
- Worked towards the recommendation of the preferred route alignment (decision not yet made)

Proposed programme to DCO application

Our indicative timeline to construction



Stage 01

Choosing the Preferred **Route Option**

(Bedford to Cambridge only)

- Public consultation
- Analysis and design
- Preferred Route Option chosen

We held a non-statutory public consultation, talking with people living and working across the route corridor, elected representatives and many other organisations and interest groups. Using their comments alongside environmental, economic and technical studies we chose a Preferred Route Option.

Stage 02

Developing Route Alignment Options and identifying extra infrastructure between Oxford and Cambridge

- Design and test possible route alianments
- Identify potential additional infrastructure needed to run services between Oxford and Cambridae
- Environmental and land surveys
- Second non-statutory public consultation (this consultation)

In this stage we are consulting on the options we have developed for the Preferred Route Alignment, We are also now considering station locations, starting to survey land, and studying connections with local transport networks. We have also established what further additional infrastructure may be required between Oxford to Bicester, Bletchley and Bedford to allow future EWR trains to run all the way through to Cambridge. This will be included in this consultation.

Your responses to this consultation will help us to choose a Preferred Route Alignment and move the Project into the detailed design phase.

Stage 03

Choosing a **Preferred Route** Alignment and additional infrastructure

- Analysis and design
- Options for additional infrastructure between Oxford to Bicester, Bletchleu and Bedford chosen
- Statutory public consultation

We will choose a Preferred Route Alignment between Bedford and Cambridge, and the options for additional infrastructure between Oxford to Bicester. Bletchley and Bedford, We will base this choice on feedback from two previous consultations and continuing environmental, economic and technical studies. It will be presented to the public alongside other parts of the Project, including the proposed design, in a statutory consultation. The information from this consultation will be used to finalise our proposals for the railway. We will also seek the next stage of funding and approval from government.

2021/2022

Stage 04

Securina development consent

Stage 05

Construction begins

- EWR Co submit application
- Planning Inspectorate holds an Examination
- Secretary of State for Transport makes a decision

- Construction begins

We submit the proposals to the Secretary of State as part of an application for a "Development Consent Order". On his behalf, the Planning Inspectorate will carry out a public examination of our application which normally lasts up to six months. People will be able to comment on the application. The Inspectorate goes through a strict process of examination and hearings, before making a recommendation to the Secretary of State on whether our proposals should go ahead. A final decision is usually given within six months of the examination closing.

Once we've complied with any initial conditions or requirements included in the Development Consent Order, the government will consider the full business case for the Project to make the final decision to proceed. Following further conversations with the public and stakeholders. can start to construct your new railway.















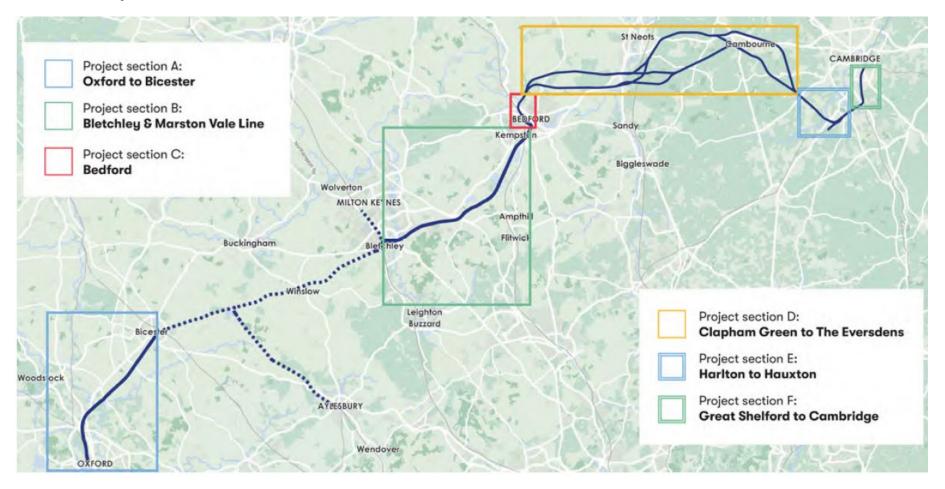


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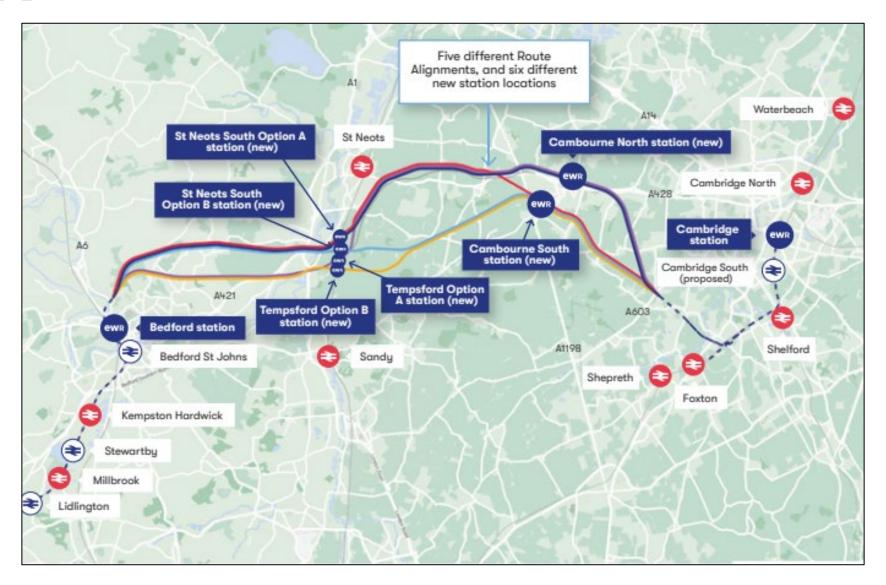
Summary of second non-statutory consultation

Approach to second non-statutory consultation

The Project is currently divided into six sections:



Section D



Section D – Alignment 1



Section D – Alignment 9



Summary of second non-statutory consultation

The second non-statutory consultation ran from 31 March to 9 June 2021 (10 weeks)

The consultation focused on two key themes:

- Customer experience and railway operations; and
- The infrastructure proposals across all six sections of the entire Oxford to Cambridge route

The consultation materials comprised a Technical Report, Consultation Document and other supporting plans and factsheets on various matters.

Face to face engagement during the consultation was not possible due to restrictions to limit spread of Covid-19.

EWR Co undertook a wide range of activities to publicise the consultation and encourage participation including:

- Delivery of over 270,000 consultation summary documents to addresses in the vicinity of the route;
- Extensive publication of the consultation through direct email and traditional and social media channels;
- Development of a consultation-specific webpage and seven virtual consultation rooms to help explain the proposals;
- Organised 18 public webinars and 16 live chat events;
- Held 64 online meetings with locally elected representatives (MPs and councillors)
- Published videos exploring key aspects of the consultation; and
- Managed a dedicated phone line where people could call to ask questions, request further information or discuss the proposals with members of the project team.

Summary of responses from second non-

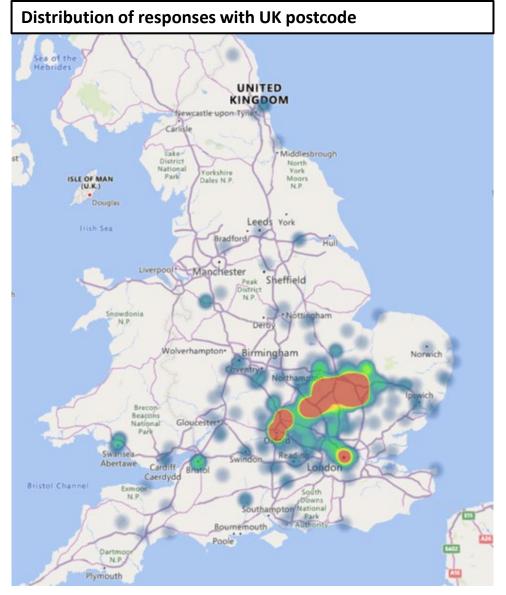
statutory consultation

9,775 responses were received to the consultation

Number of responses received from different stakeholder groups		
Stakeholder group	Totals	
Individuals	9,461	
Prospective statutory consultees	109	
Others	205	
Total	9,775	

Next steps

- Work is ongoing to analyse all the feedback received so comments can be taken into consideration in the next stages of design development
- Feedback will be summarised in a consultation feedback report that will be published



Environmental matters

Scoping Report - overview

- Programme
- Discussions with key stakeholders (see following slides)

Scoping Report – discussions informing drafting

- Natural England / Historic England / Environment Agency
- Network Rail / Highways England / HSE
- Local Authorities:
 - Oxford City, Oxfordshire, Bedford Borough, Central Beds
 - Milton Keynes, Cambridgeshire, Huntingdonshire
 - Cherwell

Scoping Report – Key issues for scoping

Approach to optionality / design development

Bedford to Cambridge – Preferred route alignment will be identified

Bletchley to Bedford – 2 timetable concepts

Route wide – power supply: diesel/electric

- Potential matters to be scoped in or out
- Digital delivery

Preliminary Environmental Information Report

- Work has commenced on preparation of the PEIR
- Structure under discussion

Approach to statutory consultation

Approach to statutory consultation

- We will work closely with all local authorities on the production of the Statement of Community Consultation, which will be made available to the general public in the most accessible and convenient means possible
- We would present the proposed final route alignment, including the associated red line boundary that would encompass all the works
- We will also consult on any associated development

Section 53 authorisations

Section 53 authorisations

- Separate meeting held with PINS officers specifically on s.53s following the January DCO Inception Meeting
- Keen to understand ways in which the determination period for the licence applications can be minimised as far as possible (at present, they are typically 6-12 months, albeit this is dependent on the type of application)
- Two applications are currently being developed, further separate consultation with PINS needed, and further additional applications may follow thereafter
- We will notify PINS of our intended date of formal submission

Contact with PINS going forward



Any Other Business