

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 objectives	Project update
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: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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

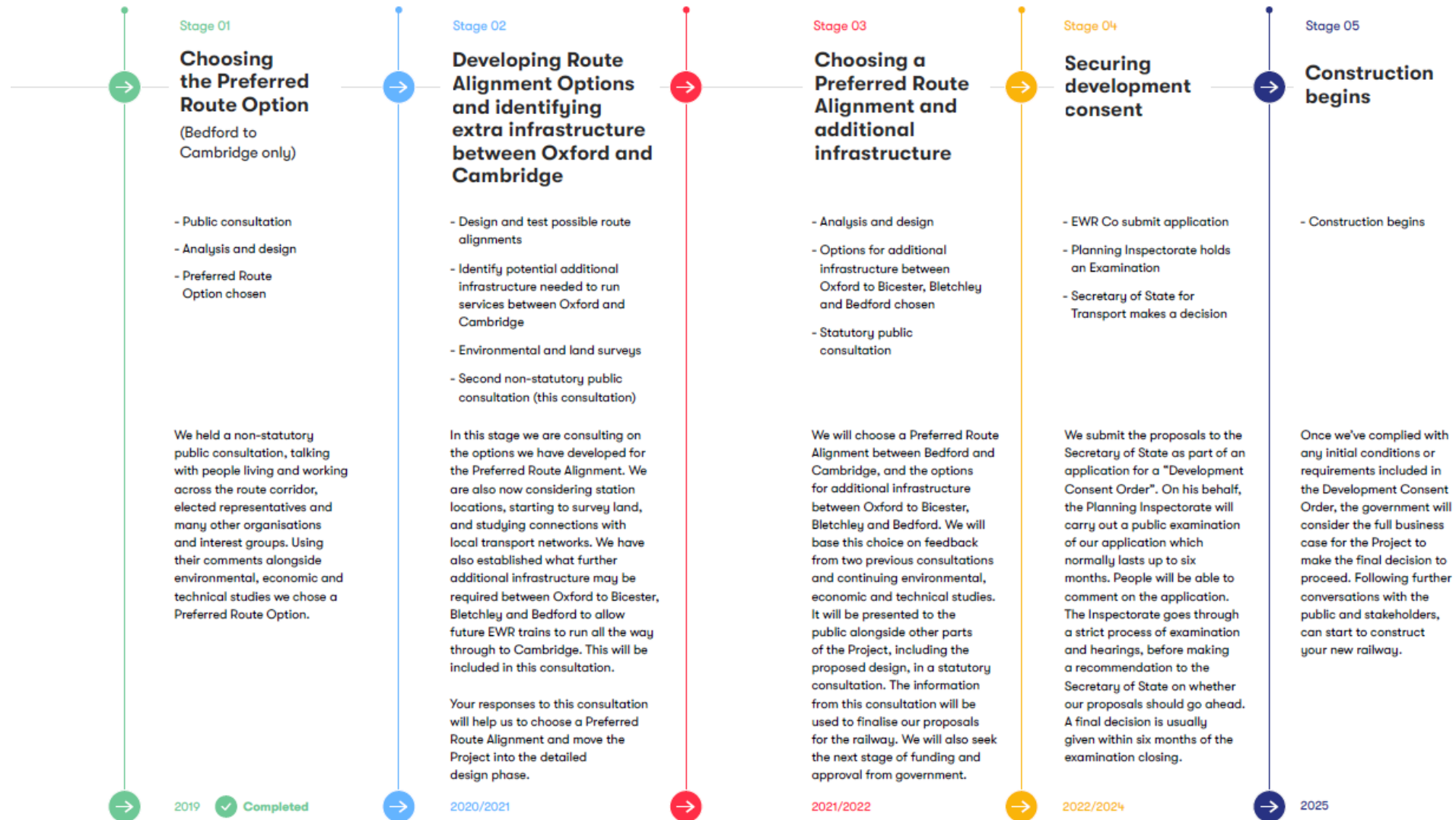
Project update

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

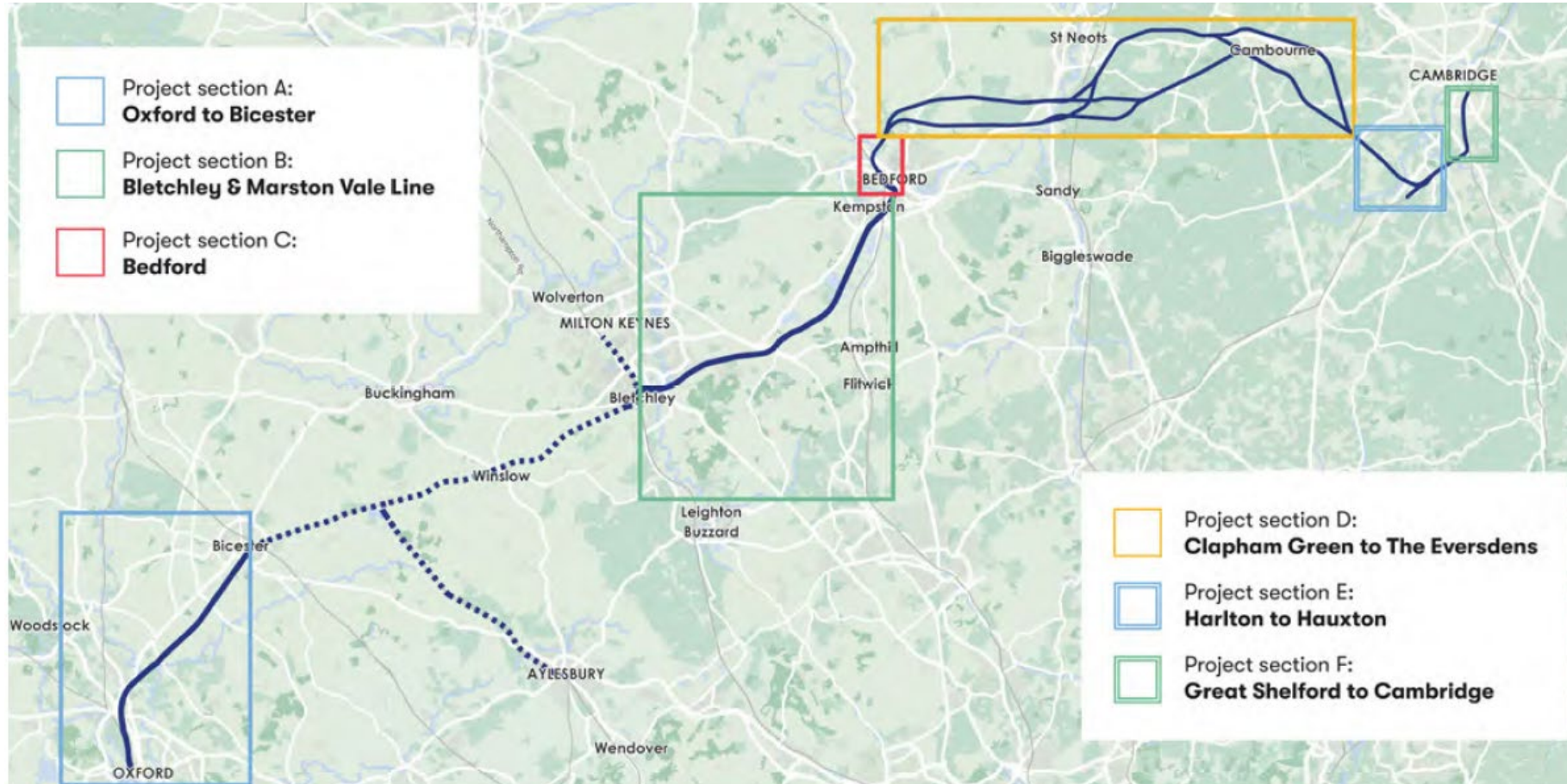
Our indicative timeline to construction



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

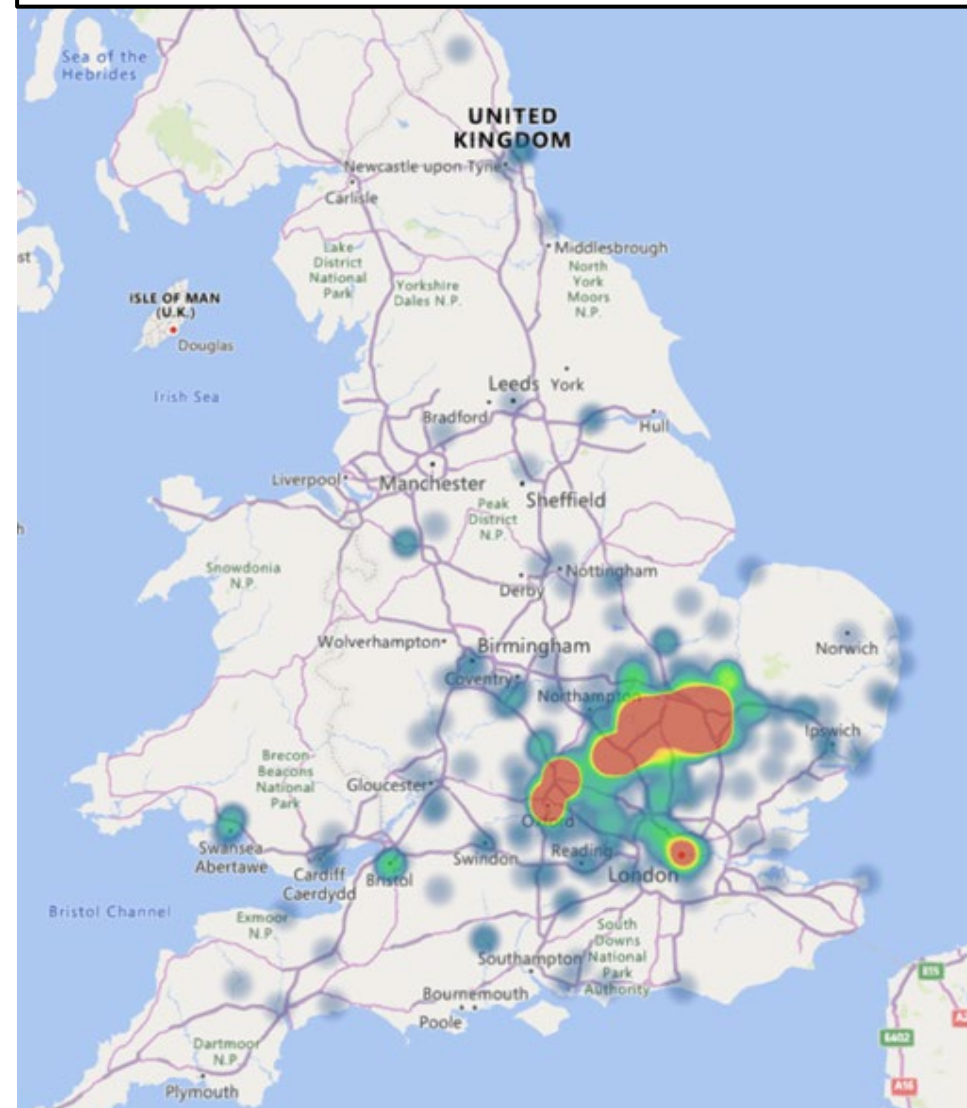
Number of responses received from different stakeholder groups

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

Distribution of responses with UK postcode



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

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