



EW2 Project Newsletter



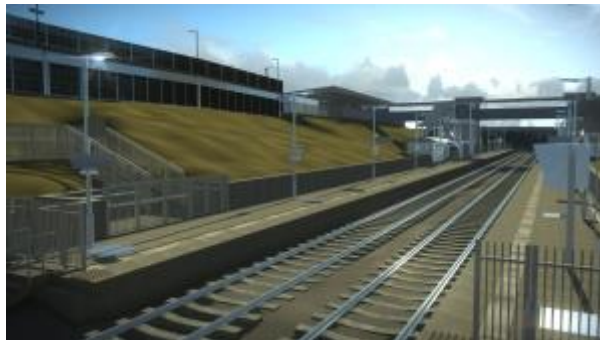
East West Rail

East West Rail will re-establish a direct rail link, connecting communities between Oxford and Cambridge and will improve connections between East Anglia, Central, Southern, and Western England.

East West Rail is being built in phases:

- Phase 1 which was completed in December 2016 upgraded track and signalling between Oxford and Bicester and provided a link to the Chiltern Main Line enabling trains to travel from Oxford via Bicester Village to London Marylebone.
- Phase 2 will reinstate and upgrade old railway lines, allowing new train services to run from Oxford to Milton Keynes, Oxford to Bicester and Milton Keynes to Aylesbury. It will create a new station at Winslow, build two new platforms at Bletchley, install eight new over-bridges, 22 new footbridges or subways, and make changes to 97 railway crossings.

- Phase 3 is currently being developed by the East West Railway Company and will provide the railway link from Bedford to Cambridge. For further information on this phase, **click here**¹.



EWR Alliance - who are we?

The EWR Alliance was established in 2015 to deliver the construction of East West Rail Phase 2 and consists of four partners: Atkins, Laing O'Rourke, Network Rail and VolkerRail.

Our Principles

¹<https://eastwestrail.co.uk/the-project/central-section>



Transport and Works Act Order (TWAO)

The Transport and Works Act Order (TWAO) has been approved by the Secretary of State for Transport and came into force on 25th February 2020, this now allows the EWR Alliance to start main construction works.

Read the full story on Network Rail's website²

Government guidelines

The health, safety and wellbeing of the communities along the route of the new railway remains our absolute priority alongside that of our staff.

The Government's current COVID-19 strategy makes clear that construction activity can continue so long as work can comply with this guidance.

As a critical transport service provider Network Rail and the East West Rail project are identified as key workers and therefore work will continue.

Protecting our staff and workers will remain paramount in our ongoing working arrangements. The nature of the EWR2 project means that for the most part work is not required in closed environments or within close proximity. Therefore, in terms of worker separation, most of the EWR2 works can be carried out while maintaining 2m separation. Where this cannot be achieved specific arrangements to address the risk will be applied on a case by case basis.

We will continue to monitor the situation daily and if Government advice changes our working arrangements will be further reviewed.

²<https://www.networkrail.co.uk/news/first-new-railway-in-50-years-between-oxford-and-bletchley-takes-major-step-forward>

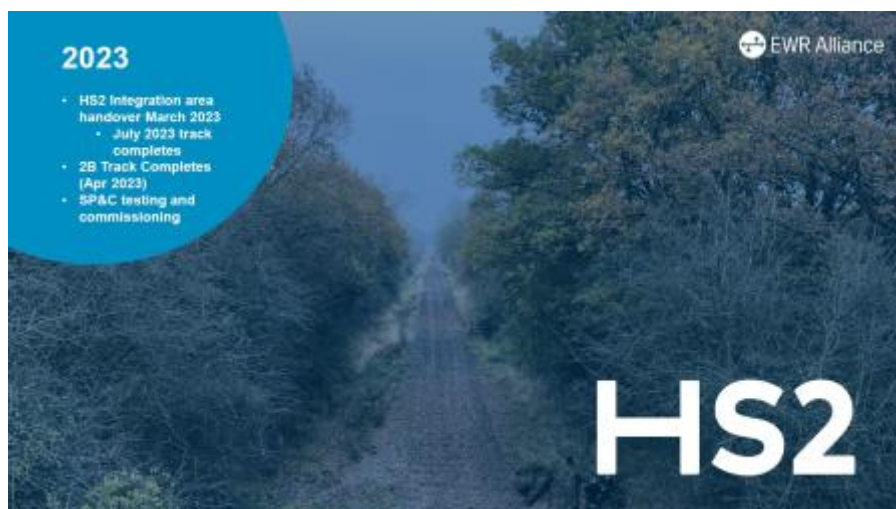


1 - EWR Alliance staff receive a site briefing observing the 2m separation measures

Construction Work Overview

Click on the arrow on the right side of the image to see a summary of our construction work over the next few years.





Environment

We are currently undertaking the first phases of the vegetation clearance works required to facilitate the EWR2 project. Unfortunately, delivery of the scheme necessitates the removal of a large number of the trees and areas of scrub which have established along the embankments of the mothballed and recently closed sections of railway.

Following good practice, the mitigation hierarchy of Avoid > Mitigate > Compensate > Offset/Enhance has been applied when designing the project, in order to minimise the amount of vegetation removal required.

We are also committed to providing biodiversity net gain by replacing removed habitats with ones that, once established, will provide equal and eventually greater value to biodiversity overall. Much of this compensatory habitat has already been planted in Ecological Compensation Sites along the scheme to allow early establishment.



More specific concerns have been raised by local residents about vegetation removal works occurring during the bird nesting season. As much as possible of the required vegetation removal was undertaken over winter 2019/20, outside of the nesting bird season. Whilst we would prefer to undertake all our vegetation removal in this way, there were/are several other constraints at play which precluded this approach. Some examples include:

- We have to consider hibernating great crested newt, common amphibians and reptiles – populations of which are present along most of the route. Certain aspects of the de-vegetation works need to occur within the bird nesting season to avoid significant negative impacts to these species.
- The Transport and Works Act Order (TWAO) came into force just before the start of the nesting bird season this year. This, combined with the lead-up times for obtaining other consents (such as development licences for other protected species), has necessitated working into the bird nesting season.

- The sheer scale of the scheme means that only removing vegetation outside the bird nesting season (which can extend for over 2/3rds of the year in mild years) would delay the project by several years at an enormous time and financial cost.

It is important to note that whilst it is illegal to destroy the nests or eggs of all UK bird species whilst nesting, it is not against the law to carry out vegetation removal works during the nesting bird season, provided that such impacts can be avoided.

This does not mean that we are undertaking the vegetation removal with complete disregard for nesting birds. We have a process in place to avoid causing impacts to nesting birds which can be briefly summarised as follows:

1. Area of vegetation to be removed is identified.
2. A nesting bird check of the vegetation is carried out by a suitably-experienced ecologist, no more than 24 hrs prior to clearance commencing. This involves the ecologist watching and listening for a period of time to identify any breeding behaviour and, if applicable, the likely location of any nests.
3. Where vegetation is too dense to pinpoint the location of nests in this way, the ecologist will accompany the de-veg. gang during the works and check-ahead at regular intervals to identify any nests and set-out protection measures.
4. Any active nests identified during steps 2 or 3 are protected with an appropriate works exclusion zone, defined by the ecologist, to protect the nest from disturbance.
5. The vegetation with the nest is only removed once the ecologist has confirmed that young (if any) have fledged and that the nest is no longer in use.

Devegetation - The Process

Devegetation will need to be undertaken during the nesting bird season



STAKEHOLDER
NOTIFICATIONS
SENT



ECOLOGICAL
SUPERVISION
THROUGHOUT



USE OF PERMIT
SYSTEM



EXCLUSION
ZONES SET UP
AROUND NESTS

Bletchley Flyover

One of the key elements of work will be to upgrade the viaduct at Bletchley known as the 'Bletchley flyover'.

The flyover was built in the early 1960's and allows trains travelling east to west to cross over the West Coast Main Line where trains travel north to south.

To bring the flyover up to modern standards and ensure it is structurally sound for the next 60 years we will need to dismantle and rebuild the flyover.

Preparatory work has been taking place over the last year to move overhead lines and stanchions which will now allow us to remove and replace the decks. Work will begin at Easter to drill and cut out the existing decks followed by lifting out of the deck spans. This work must take place whilst the railway lines are closed in order to maintain the safety and integrity of the railway, therefore work is planned to take place:

- Easter Bank Holiday Weekend: Thursday 9th April 23:00 – Monday 13th April 17:00.
- Saturday 18th April 22:00 – Sunday 19th April 07:00.
- Saturday 25th April 22:00 – Sunday 26th April 07:00.
- May Bank Holiday Weekend: Sunday 3rd May 00:00 – Monday 4th May 05:00.
- Monday 11th May – Thursday 14th May – 22:00 – 07:00 each night.

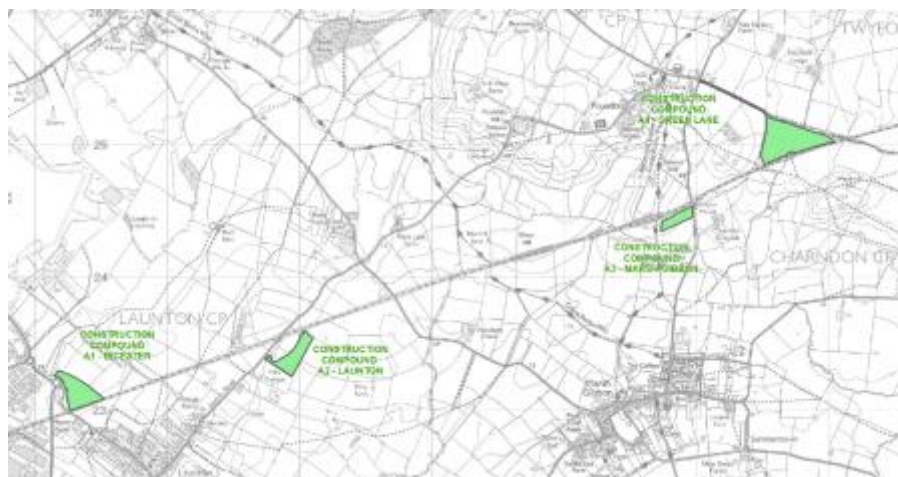
Construction Compounds

Before main construction can begin, we will need to build construction compounds. These will be located along the railway route and act as strategic hubs for engineering, planning, and construction.

The compounds will include offices, storage for materials, maintenance and parking facilities together with welfare facilities for construction workers.

We will have eleven compounds – seven will have substantial office space and four will be for bulk storage.

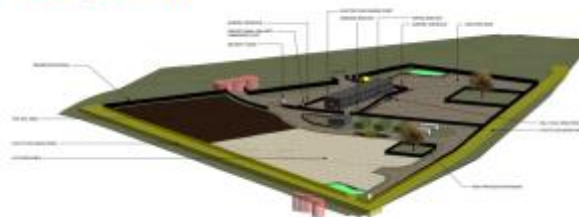
Click on the arrow on the right side of the image to see the compounds positioned along the line of route.





Here is an example of what Compound A1 will look like and an image of Compound C1.

Compound A1



Compound C1



Construction Traffic and Traffic Management

Traffic routes were consulted on as part of our TWAO process. All routes have been assessed to determine their suitability and we will be carrying out improvements to junctions, providing passing places, and repairs where required. Whilst we carry out work, we may sometimes need to put in traffic management measures such as traffic lights or close a section of the road and put in diversions.

When closing a road, signs will be placed along the route giving dates of road closure one week beforehand and road diversion signs will be in place one day before road is closed.

Information on all road closures and diversions can be found [here](#)³ through the one.network website.

We have regular liaison meetings with local highway authorities to discuss our proposed road works with the aim, as far as possible, of minimising disruption. We will notify authorities of any proposed road works and changes 28 days before works begin.

All construction traffic will follow clearly signposted and identified authorised routes. Abnormal loads will be handled on a case by case basis and may deviate on an individual basis from the normal construction routes. These loads will be notified to the Local Authorities and Emergency Services beforehand.

Click on the arrow on the right side of the image to view the approved traffic routes.

Detail – Bicester to Marsh Gibbon

- No HGV or LGV construction traffic through Launton Village
- No HGV or LGV construction traffic through Marsh Gibbon Village
- Only LGV construction traffic through Stratton Audley Village, HGVs go past Stratton Audley Park and Poundon
- Abnormal Loads considered on a case-by-case basis



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³<https://one.network/>

Detail – Marsh Gibbon to Steeple Claydon

- No HGV or LGV construction traffic through Marsh Gibbon Village, Twyford, Charndon or Calvert
- HGVs go past Poundon, Charndon and Calvert
- HGVs go through Edgcott and past Grendon Underwood
- LGVs go through Steeple Claydon and HGVs go through a small portion of Steeple Claydon
- Abnormal Loads considered on a case-by-case basis



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Detail – Steeple Claydon to Winslow

- HGV Routes skirts through and past Padbury, past Adstock, through Verney Junction and through Winslow
- HGV Route goes through Verney Junction
- LGV Route goes through Great Horwood
- No HGV or LGV construction traffic through Addington, East Claydon, Granborough, Adstock
- Abnormal Loads considered on a case-by-case basis



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Detail – Winslow to West Bletchley

- HGV Routes go through Mursley and past Drayton Parslow and North End as well as West Bletchley (B4034 and Newton/Bletchley Rd)
- No HGV or LGV construction traffic through Little Horwood
- LGVs only will transit through the north of Newton Longville
- Abnormal Loads considered on a case-by-case basis



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Detail – West Bletchley and Milton Keynes



The project will be employing the Voyage Control system to manage construction traffic and logistics. This system allows us to proactively manage, monitor, co-ordinate, track and communicate.

Commitments Overview

We will:

- Be considerate constructors
- Be CLOCS* Champions and achieve FORS** Silver Standard
- Keep to operating hours unless agreed by exception (0700 – 1800)
- Keep to the routes as identified within the Environmental Statement of the TWAO
- Robustly manage the supply chain to ensure compliance and safety
- Follow the approved process for abnormal loads
- Be sustainable in our practices
- Minimise impact on the highways whenever and wherever reasonably possible
- Maximise use of construction compounds as hubs of activity

CLOCS (Construction Logistics and Community Safety)*

*FORS** (Fleet Operator Recognition Scheme)*

Contact us

Any queries or questions please contact us on publicinformation@ewralliance.co.uk⁴

⁴<mailto:publicinformation@ewralliance.co.uk>