



Welcome



Welcome to the Winter 2020/2021 issue of the East West Rail Alliance project newsletter. I hope you are all keeping safe and well in these challenging times.



Despite the additional challenges Covid-19 presented in 2020, I am pleased to report that - as a critical national infrastructure project - and thanks to the commitment of the team and the measures we have put in place to keep our project team as safe as possible - we have continued to operate throughout the pandemic so far and remain committed to doing so.



2020 was a significant year for the Alliance and the EWR2 project. In February 2020 the Transport Works Act Order for the project was awarded, which sparked an intense period of working collaboratively with local planning authorities to get all the permissions and consents needed for the project in place. Once again, I would like to thank everyone who supported the successful completion of this phase of the project and enabled the Alliance to commence the construction works.



Now, twelve months on, the main construction compounds are nearly all operational and the highway improvement works are well advanced in all areas across the project. Within the project boundary we have carried out the essential environmental

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A section of Bletchley flyover is removed

and ecological mitigation works and made the site ready for the new railway construction.

We have also been able to progress a number of our main construction activities, such as carrying out bridge repairs, dismantling the sections of the Bletchley Flyover, and opening the temporary traffic diversion which is required to facilitate the construction of the new overbridge at Charbridge Lane.

In another significant development for the project, in the last week the government has confirmed its funding commitment to the scheme by providing the £760m required to complete the project. With full funding in place the Alliance can now focus on continuing our collaboration with our partners and supply chain to deliver this challenging infrastructure project.

2020 was a key year for establishing the project and preparing for the construction delivery. 2021 will be equally as critical as the project targets to achieve completion of most of the main civil works. We are acutely aware that setting up our sites has caused disruption across the project areas and we sincerely apologise for the inconvenience this has caused. Going forward we will continue to strive to plan and deliver our works so as to minimise the disruption for local residents and businesses. We remain committed to engaging with the community and listening to feedback so that we can improve our performance.

Thank you for your continued support and interest in the project.

Mark Cuzner, Alliance Director



Traffic has been successfully diverted at Charbridge Lane



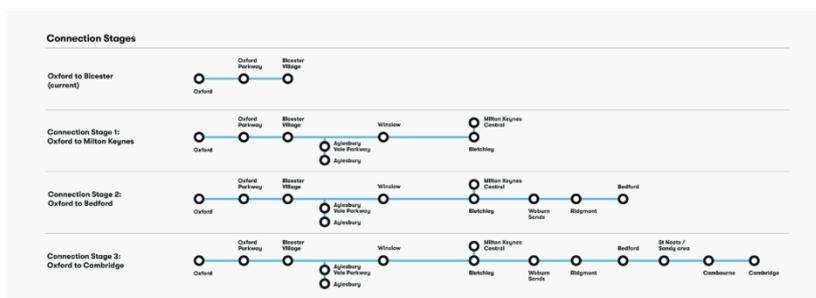
£760m commitment made to support delivery of next phase of East West Rail

We're delighted that the Government has announced £760 million to support the delivery of the East West Rail line between Oxford and Bletchley/Milton Keynes and means this section of East West Rail is expected to be up and running by 2025.

Delivery of this stage is expected to provide work for 1,500 people, injecting an estimated £1.1bn pounds into the local economy.

The investment announcement also sees the East West Railway Company (EWR Co), set up by the Secretary of State for Transport in 2018 to develop and oversee the delivery of East West Rail, set out a phased approach to delivering the East West Rail project. EWR Co is designing the delivery of the service with the community in mind, by minimising disruption to local communities, spending taxpayer money in the best way, and delivering reliable services. To do this East West Rail will be delivered in three "Connection Stages", which relate directly to a full journey – not just a piece of track:

- **Connection Stage One:** Oxford to Bletchley and Milton Keynes
- **Connection Stage Two:** Oxford to Bedford
- **Connection Stage Three:** Oxford to Cambridge



East West Rail Connection Stages

What does this mean for your area?

For Connection Stage 1 – communities between Oxford and Bletchley and Milton Keynes – East West Rail Alliance will continue to deliver construction works for this section of the railway on behalf of EWR Co. This includes:

- Constructing a new station at Winslow and new high-level platforms at Bletchley station
- Making railway crossings safer
- Upgrading track and infrastructure

While EWR Alliance is carrying out the construction works between Bicester and Bletchley, EWR Co is also designing the section of the railway between Bletchley and Cambridge.

The Alliance is responsible for the construction of the Bicester – Bletchley section of Connection Stage One and receiving the funding for this stage of the project means we can continue our work already started at Bletchley Flyover, Winslow Station and across the whole project footprint.

Consultation in 2021

EWR Co is planning a non-statutory public consultation soon to hear your views on proposals for the exact route of the new section of railway line that would run between Bedford and Cambridge. The consultation will also cover more detailed plans for sections of the line between Oxford and Bedford which we have developed in response to earlier consultation with our stakeholders and communities.

Find out more here:

<https://eastwestrail.co.uk/latest-news/project-updates/consultation-in-early-2021>



Bletchley Flyover Update

Since April 2020, the Alliance has been dismantling sections of the 1960s-built Bletchley flyover so that a new flyover can be built to modern standards.

Three of the largest mobile cranes in the UK have been used to remove huge sections of the flyover, with many of the lifts needing to take place overnight so as not to impact the operation of the West Coast Main Line below – one of the busiest railways in Europe.

As part of the work, 14 of the flyover's 37 spans that crossed the West Coast Main Line and Buckingham Road have been dismantled. The first span, which weighed in at a hefty 295 tonnes, was lifted out at the end of April 2020 with the following spans removed over the course of the summer and autumn.

The final span was lifted out by crane in October and the last of the supporting piers and pillars were removed over the weekend of 9-10 January 2021.

In addition to the dismantling works, over Christmas Day and Boxing day, the team in Bletchley completed a 50-hour possession whilst the West Coast Main Line was closed, installing 130m of new overhead line equipment.



Precast concrete bridge abutments are installed at Station Road

Temporary Traffic Diversion Opened at Charbridge Lane

In the early hours of Tuesday 19 January, a new temporary diversion road opened to road traffic on Charbridge Lane. Opening the traffic diversion was a major milestone for the project team, as it means the Alliance can now start to build the new overbridge which will carry traffic over the new East West Rail line once it is built. It is expected that the temporary diversion will be in place until the summer of 2022. During this time access to Tythe Barn and the local allotments will remain in place.

Elsewhere on the project we have continued to carry out bridge refurbishment and repair works, and have opened several of our construction compounds, built 'haul roads' for construction traffic to travel between a number of sites and made highways improvements to ensure local roads are able to cope with construction traffic and relieve any potential congestion at entrances to our sites. In addition, we have completed drainage works at Winslow cutting ahead of the construction of the new Winslow Station, and we have undertaken a variety of environmental mitigation works to reduce our impact on the environment.



A pier from Bletchley flyover is lifted from the West Coast Main Line



Traffic Management

Prior to Christmas we received a number of complaints regarding mud on the roads, this was also raised at our monthly Buckinghamshire Community Board meeting on 10th December where councillors raised their concerns. We take our obligations to road safety and our commitments under the TWAO seriously and have carried out a number of actions to ensure roads are kept as clean as possible.

As part of our plan to restore roads to the required state, prior to Christmas we carried out a full location to location survey along the whole route to thoroughly assess conditions and put in place additional cleaning, extra road sweepers and deployed additional manpower to remove material tracked onto Furze Lane, which was highlighted as particularly muddy.

Moving forward we have a back-to-black wet wash sweeper which has been deployed to areas identified as particularly problematic. This sweeper is deployed at least once a week and is in addition to our normal regime of street sweeping every day. Our 24hr mobile security patrol, as a further measure, will now be monitoring the conditions of the roads in our areas of responsibility to ensure we receive early warning of spills and hazards, thus enabling us to respond in the quickest manner possible. Street sweepers will continue to be targeted at problem areas and compounds will be developed as quickly as possible and have tarmacked internal roads which will alleviate vehicles tracking mud onto the roads.

Wheel washers are installed at Bicester, Poundon and Bletchley, and will be installed at Winslow, Newton Longville, Swanbourne, Queen Catherine Road and Verney Junction once received from our supplier. We plan on Winslow and Newton Longville being installed week of 18 January 21, followed by Swanbourne two weeks later and finally Queen Catherine Road and Verney Junction by the end of February. In the meantime, we have jet washes in place at Winslow which was identified as an area of particular concern.

Salt spreading

A sub-contractor and additional plant is being employed to salt those sections of road that are not normally covered by Buckinghamshire Council for East West Rail designated supply routes or where a section of road has been specified as a recommended diversion to East West Rail road works.

Creating Social Value

With the ongoing pandemic, many of the community engagement projects the Alliance had planned for 2020 were naturally postponed. Despite that, we have continued to engage with the local community, carrying out a number of projects at a safe, social distance whilst also continuing to carry out charitable activity raising money for local and national charities.

Shortly before Christmas, Alliance project team members held a food collection for Winslow Rotary Club, who went on to distribute the donations amongst local food banks in Winslow, Buckingham and surrounding villages.

The team also raised £320 for Save the Children's Christmas Jumper campaign and colleagues at our construction compound in Bicester – in partnership with our supply chain partners, Buckingham Group, raised a fantastic £1,053.50 by holding a series of cake sales, curry lunches and a raffle. Our thanks to Buckingham Group, who then donated an extra £1,000 to the total, which will be split between three local charities: Marsh Gibbon Pre School, The Hummingbird Cancer Support and Therapy Centre and Aspire Oxfordshire Community Enterprise (for homeless, vulnerable and poverty-stricken people).

Finally, a team of volunteers from the Alliance have been carrying out gardening improvements a refurbishment at Grendon Underwood School, with plans to complete further work with the school in February 2021.



Our team at A1 raised over £2,000 for local charities last Christmas



Biodiversity Net Gain Strategy Published

The EWR Alliance has committed to creating a 10% Biodiversity Net Gain through the delivery of the EWR2 project. We believe we are the largest UK infrastructure project to commit to this ambitious goal and in order to help us achieve our target, the Alliance has worked closely with Natural England and various environmental bodies to create a Biodiversity Net Gain Strategy, which was submitted to the relevant Local in late 2020 and is now awaiting approval.

The Alliance is working closely with stakeholders to identify opportunities to support us in achieving a 10% net gain in biodiversity across the project and will be running workshops and, if possible, site visits in 2021.

The Alliance has been busy delivering some fantastic benefits to wildlife and has so far constructed a network of Ecological Compensation Sites (ECS) across the project which combined equal the size of the urban area of Winslow. Through monitoring visits, our ecologists have confirmed use of these sites by bats, great crested newts, badger, reptiles, and a host of other protected and notable species. You can read more about the development of our "B24" ECS site below.

With the support of our valued stakeholders we look forward to the exciting things to come in our future Biodiversity Net Gain journey on EWR2.



7000 trees have been planted at our ECS near Winslow

A year in the life of an Ecological Compensation Site

A key component of the Alliance's Sustainability strategy and our commitment to have a Biodiversity Net Gain of 10% is the creation of Ecological Compensation Sites ECS across the project.

These strategically located sites have been established to help us offset the environmental impact of the project by providing large areas of land for the environment to flourish. The Alliance has established 9 of the 20 ECS due to be created, and has been planting trees, flora and fauna, translocating calcareous grass and other plant species from areas we will be working and providing new habitats for local wildlife.

Many of the sites have been transformed from low value, arable land into purpose-built havens designed to benefit invertebrates, butterflies, birds, bats, great crested newts, otters and badgers.

One of the largest ECS sites we have created is the "B24" site near Winslow. Scroll through the gallery below to see how the B24 site has developed over the past twelve months.



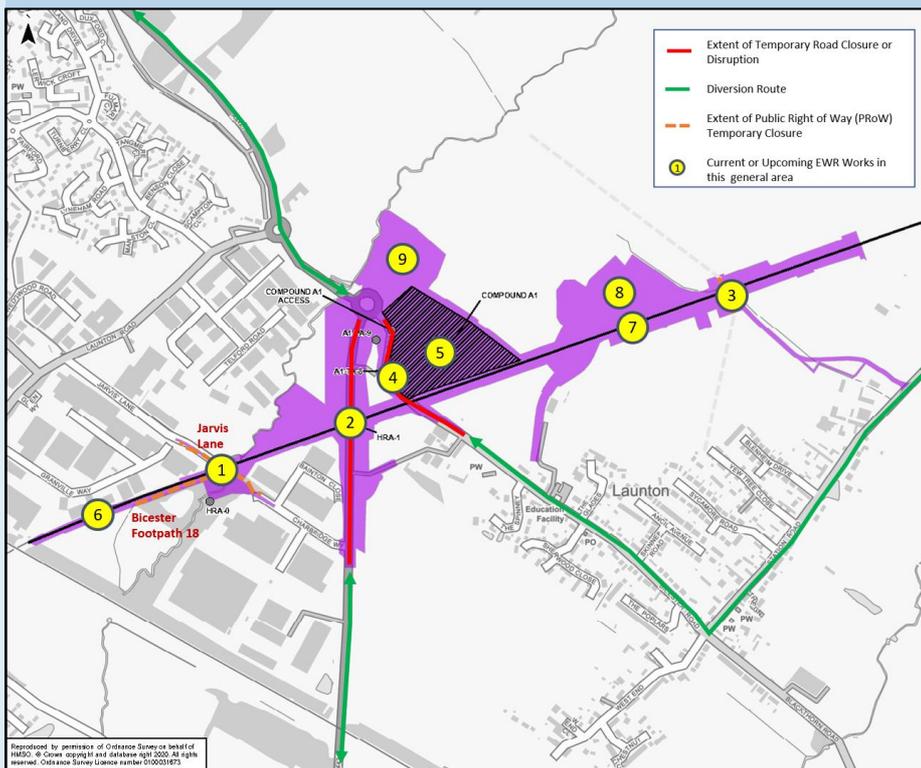
Our Ecological Compensation site near Winslow



Progress in your area – Bicester & Launton

The coded maps in this section mark out areas of Bicester & Launton where we will be working. Use the numbers to find out what is happening in each area, and what activity is coming up in the next three months.

Bicester



1. Jarvis Lane railway works and footbridge works

Description: We will be reconstructing the old railway line in this area and a new footbridge is to be built which will allow people to safely cross the railway. We will reopen footpaths as soon as it is safe to do so.

Duration: Work began in spring 2020 and is due for completion late 2021.

Disruption: Footpath closure/diversions will be in place at various points during this time.

Recent Progress: We have recently completed the piling and pile caps for the new footbridge and works to the railway formation have started.

Upcoming Activity: The railway earthworks will continue and railway components will be delivered for installation.

In addition, Jarvis Lane footbridge will be installed and the Langford Brook culvert lined in Spring 2021.

2. Charbridge Lane road bridge

Description: One of the most significant construction activities in the area will be the

new road bridge on Charbridge Lane, which we will construct using multiple temporary road diversions to minimise disruption to the local community.

3. Grange Farm footbridge

Description: Along the temporary haul road that we're constructing between Bicester Road and Station Road Launton, a new footbridge will be built in the Grange Farm area to allow safe crossing of the new railway.

Duration: Work began in autumn 2020 and is due for completion in winter 2021.

Disruption: There will be continued public rights of way closures in place whilst the new footbridge is constructed, and whilst the haul road between Bicester Road and Station Road Launton is used for construction traffic serving other areas of the project.

Upcoming activity: Over the next three months the project will begin construction of the footbridge foundations once the access to the site and working area has been built. The haul road along the railway corridor will also continue to be used to facilitate the construction of Station Road overbridge and other civils works between Bicester and Station Road, Marsh Gibbon.

4. Bicester Road over bridge works

Description: There will be full and partial road closures in this area as we refurbish the existing bridge and construct a new entrance for the local allotments. All lane and road closures will be publicised via [one.network](#) and appropriate signage will be displayed.

Duration: Work to this bridge is planned to start in early 2021.

Disruption: Unfortunately, due to the extent to of the brickwork repairs to the bridge span, Bicester Road will need to be closed for approximately eight weeks.

Upcoming activity: Works will begin in the next few weeks, starting with scaffold being erected and brickwork repairs taking place. The brickwork wall parapet will also be demolished and replaced.

In addition to the bridge repairs, we are planning to utilise the road closure to complete the new allotment highway access.

5. Main Bicester Compound construction

Description: A small compound was constructed in late 2019 with a view to establish our main Bicester compound just off the roundabout on Bicester Road. This will be the main hub for work in this area and will include site offices, storage for materials, maintenance, parking provision, together with welfare facilities for construction staff.

Duration: The compound is now fully operational and will be in place until work in the area is complete in late 2022. The land will then be re-instated to its former condition.

Disruption: There will be an increase in construction traffic into the site throughout the duration of our works in the area.

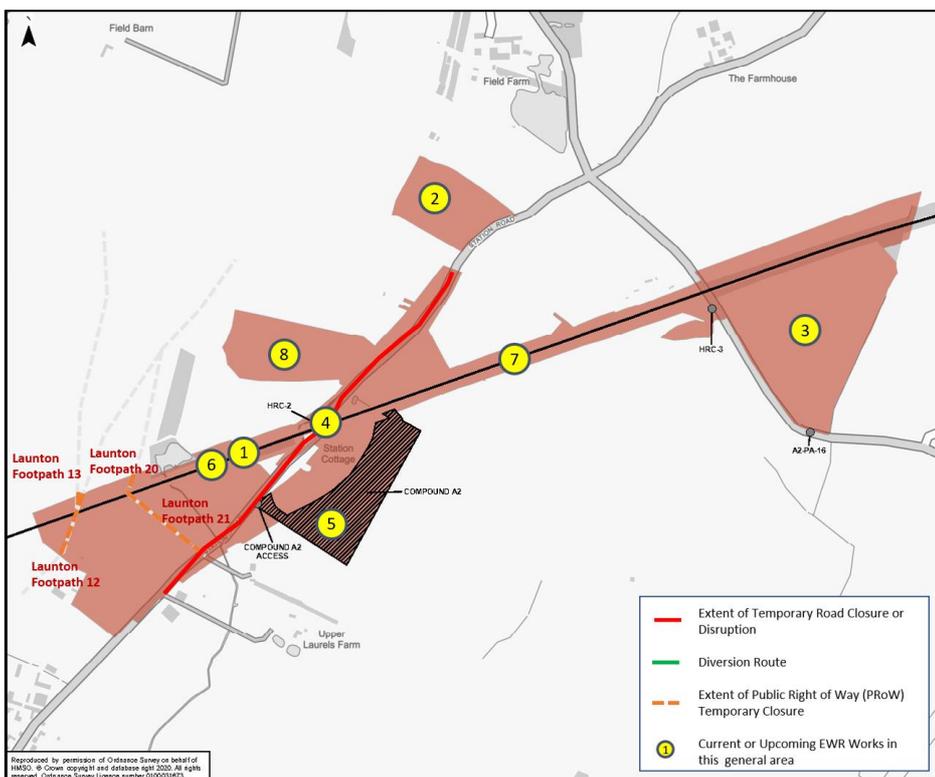
6 & Railway works and haul road construction

In spring 2021 we will begin preparing the formation for the new railway to be constructed in these areas. The formation provides the ground upon which the new railway will be installed. The installation of the track is due to begin summer of 2022. In addition, we are currently constructing new haul roads for our construction traffic to use in these areas to minimise our use of public highways.

8 & 9. Environmental Compensation Sites

These sites have been established to mitigate our impact on the local ecology and will include features to allow local species to flourish. They include the creation of aquatic habitat features like river back waters, grasslands, scrub and woodland with specific species and features for badger, otter, reptiles, great crested newts, bats, butterflies etc.

No works are planned on any of these sites until the weather improves in late spring.



Launton

1. Castlemann's underbridge repair

Description: The existing bridge structure will be upgraded to strengthen the bridge for the new railway. This will include carrying out brickwork repairs to the structure.

Duration: The work will begin early 2021 with the initial brickwork repairs. A concrete slab to the underpass will be constructed in summer 2021 when most convenient to the underpass users.

Disruption: During the work there will be some restrictions to the access under the bridge.

2 & 3. Environmental Compensation Sites

These sites have been established to mitigate our impact on the local ecology. They include the creation of aquatic habitat features like river back waters, grasslands, scrub and woodland with specific species and features for badger, otter, reptiles, great crested newts, bats, butterflies etc.

No works are planned on any of these sites until the weather improves in late spring.

4. Station Road crossing and overbridge

Description: As part of our works, the existing level crossing at Station Road will be replaced with a road bridge, providing road users with a bridge over the new railway.

Duration: The construction of the bridge started in summer 2020 and is still due for completion in summer of 2022.

Disruption: There will, at times, be full and partial closures of Station Road whilst we construct the new road bridge. All closures will be publicised on [one.network](#) and appropriate signage will be displayed.

Upcoming Activity: Work has progressed well with the bridge piling and foundations complete. This has involved driving piles into the ground and then constructing a concrete mat to provide a suitable, stable foundation for the new overbridge. Work over the next three months will include the installation of precast concrete bridge components that will be assembled to construct the full bridge structure.

5. Station Road, Launton Compound construction

Description: We are finalising the construction compound to help with the construction of the road bridge on Station Road. The compound will be used to provide materials storage as well as welfare facilities for construction staff.

Duration: We started the compound construction in summer 2020 and it is due for completion in early 2021.



6. Haul road construction

Description: We have constructed a new haul road in this area for our construction traffic to use in order to minimise our use of public highways.

7. Railway works

In spring 2021 we will begin preparing the formation for the new railway to be constructed in these areas. The formation provides the ground upon which the new railway will be installed. The installation of the track is due to begin summer of 2022. In addition, we are currently constructing new haul roads for our construction traffic to use in these areas to minimise our use of public highways.

→ For any queries or questions please contact us on: publicinformation@ewralliance.co.uk





Scheme wide earthworks programme

In November 2020 the Alliance began its main earthworks and drainage programme in the Bicester Fringe area. This involves preparing and forming the earthworks required for the construction of the railway infrastructure and track, for example by creating embankments, slopes and cuttings needed for trains to run smoothly. We have aimed to minimise the amount of earthworks required by utilising the existing railway land wherever possible, however, to ensure East West Rail meet modern specifications, it will be necessary to complete circa 1 million m³ of earthworks.

The earthworks programme will be delivered by our two supply chain specialists, J Murphy & Sons and Buckingham Group, who will both be operating out of the construction compounds we are establishing along the route. Most of the work will take place on the railway line itself, however residents may see an increase in construction traffic as the works are completed and there may occasionally be roadworks and closures required in certain locations. These will be publicised on [one.network](#) and appropriate signage will be displayed.

The list below provides a summary of our earthworks programme across the project.

- **Jarvis Lane – Charbridge Lane (approx. 0.5km):** Late 2020 – spring 2021
- **Charbridge Lane to Marsh Gibbon (approx. 3.5km):** summer 2021 – early 2022
- **Marsh Gibbon to Main Street, Charndon (approx. 4.5km):** spring 2021 – summer 2021
- **Charbridge Lane overbridge (phase 1):** completed early 2021
- **Charbridge Lane (phase 2):** spring 2021 – late autumn 2021
- **Charbridge Lane (phase 3):** late 2021 – spring 2022
- **Charbridge Lane (phase 4):** spring 2022 – summer 2022
- **Station Road Launton:** spring 2021 – late autumn 2021
- **Queen Catherine Road to Verney Junction (approx. 3km):** spring 2021 – late autumn 2021
- **Queen Catherine Road embankments:** spring 2021 – summer 2022
- **Verney Junction Overbridge south approach:** Spring 2021 - early 2022
- **Winslow New Station – Furze Lane Compound:** spring 2021 – early 2022
- **Whaddon Road, Newton Longville to Station Road, Swanbourne Compound:** spring 2021 – spring 2022
- **Whaddon Road, Newton Longville to Station Road Compound:** spring 2021 – winter 2021
- **Whaddon Road, Newton Longville to Whaddon Road Compound:** spring 2021 – late 2021
- **Whaddon Road, Newton Longville to Bletchley Road Compound:** spring 2021 – late autumn 2021

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