

# East West Rail Phase Two Project Newsletter

Marsh Gibbon, Poundon, Charndon & Twyford, July 2020



## Welcome!

Welcome to the second issue of the East West Rail Phase 2 (EWR2) project newsletter which contains updates on recent progress and outlines forthcoming activities on the project. On behalf of the East West Rail Alliance, I wish you well during these challenging times with the coronavirus pandemic and hope that you are all keeping safe.

Since our last newsletter in April 2020, the Alliance has continued the site preparations for the delivery of the EWR2 project. As an essential infrastructure project, site operations on EWR2 have continued through the coronavirus pandemic with workers and supervisory staff continuing to attend site while support staff work from home. The Alliance commitment to reduce the project construction duration and therefore minimise disruption to the community remains very strong. By continuing to work through the coronavirus pandemic we are safeguarding the project completion date and working to make the new railway infrastructure available to the public at the earliest possible date.

I would like to thank everyone in the community for their tolerance and understanding during the implementation of our works. In particular, we appreciate that the closure of local footpaths and roads does impact the everyday lives of people in the community and that this impact is exaggerated by the additional strains imposed by the coronavirus pandemic. Please rest assured that we are making every effort to minimise the disruption while also responding to the feedback we receive from our community stakeholders.

Recognising the significant challenge posed by the coronavirus pandemic on local government, I would like to thank all our colleagues in the local planning authorities, councils and statutory bodies who have been working closely with the project team to keep the required planning applications and approvals on track.

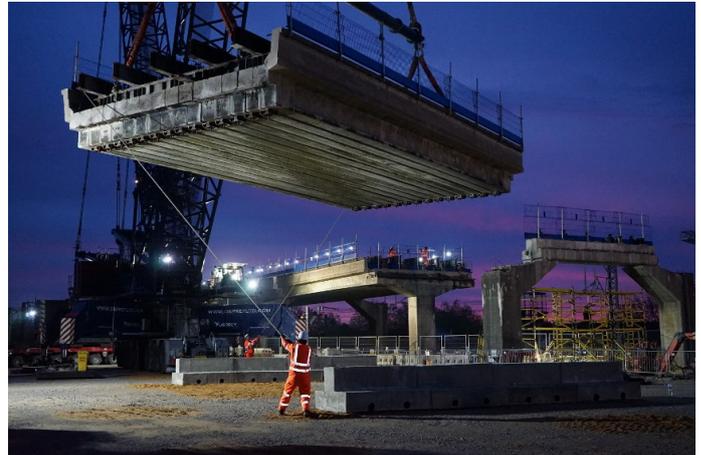
As part of our response to the feedback received on the works undertaken so far, we have significantly increased the amount of information in our project newsletter and organised the content into sections to enable a better understanding of what is happening in each area of the project.

If you have any feedback or suggestions for the newsletter, please use the email [publicinformation@ewralliance.co.uk](mailto:publicinformation@ewralliance.co.uk)

Kind regards

**Mark Cuzner**, EWR Alliance Director

## Bletchley Flyover upgrade underway



As reported in the first issue of our newsletter, a key element of the EWR Phase 2 project is the upgrade of the Bletchley Flyover. 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.

Since our last newsletter in April, the team has successfully lifted three of the 17 concrete decks (spans) that need to be removed from the flyover, including one deck which was previously located above the West Coast Main Line itself. These significant lifts were carried out using one of the largest "mobile" cranes in the country and took place whilst the railway was closed in order to maintain the safety and integrity of the railway.

The team are now preparing for the removal of the next set of decks from the flyover. These decks span over the West Coast Main Line and Buckingham Road, and so the complex lifts need to be carefully coordinated and meticulously planned.

The lifts will take place throughout July and August, and will be carried out with the help three cranes, including the AK 680-3, the largest mobile crane in the country with a lifting capacity of 1,200 tonnes.

To allow us to safely remove the decks that span over Buckingham Road, it has been necessary to close the road to all vehicles. The closure came into operation on Sunday 5 July and will be in place until Thursday 30 August.

A protected walkway has been provided through the worksite so pedestrians can still get access from one side of Buckingham Road to the other for the majority of the work. However, if and when pedestrian access cannot be maintained a shuttle bus will operate between the train station and the bus station, every 15 minutes.

## Early works underway as construction sites begin to take shape



One of our Environmental Compensation Sites



Site clearance in the Winslow Cutting



One of the 'haul roads' we are constructing to reduce the amount of construction traffic on local roads.

In addition to our works at Bletchley, the Alliance has been busy carrying out works to enable us to set up our construction sites and compounds required for the project.

The team has been making good progress, working collaboratively with local authorities and statutory bodies to ensure all the permissions and licences are in place for the required works.

We have continued the construction of all of our Environmental Compensation Sites, designed to offset the environmental impact the project will have. So far we have finished 12 of the 19 sites we're due to construct. We are underway with three further sites and the remaining four will all be complete within the next 12 months. As part of this process, we have now completed the construction of all of our artificial badger setts, and we're delighted to report that we have footage of them being used, including video showing a mother badger nursing a baby cub at one of the setts.

We have now served notice on the majority of the temporary and permanent land required for this phase, and in late May/early June, began the process of erecting hoardings and boundary fencing to mark out the various plots of land needed for our construction activity. This will help us keep our construction sites safe and secure.

In addition, as confirmed in our last newsletter, we have been carrying out vegetation clearance works to remove trees and areas of scrub which have established along the embankments of the mothballed section of the old Varsity Line and recently closed sections of the railway. These works have been conducted under a licence granted by Natural England.

We have continued to prepare for the construction of a number of our compounds, including our Bicester site. Before the compound can be established, we have needed to undertake archaeological works to ensure there are no archaeologically significant artefacts in the area. As various sections of the site have been handed back to us by our archaeological specialists, we have been back filling the land to facilitate the construction of the compound.

Finally, we have started the construction of a number of haul roads and are making road improvements to ensure that our construction vehicles can safely access our sites with as little disruption to local traffic as possible.

## Footpath Closures



As part of the project, we have already needed to close a number of footpaths/bridleways along the old 'varsity' railway line between Bicester and Bletchley. We are aware that with current covid-19 measures in place, these footpaths were being used more frequently.

The footpaths which crossover and run alongside the railway have always been part of our plans, and the proposals for their closures were included in the various consultation phases and presentations which the Network Rail and EWR Alliance has made to communities along the route.

There will be a great deal of construction work taking place to reinstate the railway, including sections of 'haul roads' which will be used by HGVs and large construction vehicles - making it dangerous to allow members of the public to use the footpaths.

We recognise that this is inconvenient and have received feedback from local people on the closure length and signage. We've taken on board comments and are improving the signage and are reviewing plans so we can re-open the footpaths as soon as work is completed and it is safe to do so.

## Alliance recognised for 'excellent' sustainable approach to design

As an Alliance, we have committed to delivering lasting environmental, social and economic benefit through the project. "Sustainability in Every Choice" is a core principle of the Alliance, which everyone who works on the project contributes towards.

To demonstrate our commitment and to track our progress, we have registered with CEEQUAL - an internationally recognised evidence-based sustainability assessment, rating and awards scheme for civil engineering and infrastructure projects. We have entered the "Whole Project Award", which assesses everything from the early sustainability strategy decisions made by the client and how these requirements are embedded into the project from design through to construction and beyond.

We are delighted to report that project has been rated as 'Excellent' as part of CEEQUAL's interim assessment, which focuses on the decisions made during the design stage.

Sustainability & Environment Lead for the Alliance, Ruth Voigt said: "Excellent is the highest rating available on CEEQUAL scheme, so we're thrilled that our approach has been recognised with this accolade. It demonstrates that sustainability has been a key component of our design strategy for the project and that stands us in good stead to deliver a truly sustainable project. Our focus is now on delivering against that strategy and gathering all the evidence we need for our final assessment at the end of the construction phase."

## How can we help?

The Alliance is fully committed to leaving a lasting legacy in the communities we serve. We have already undertaken various community engagement projects including painting signage and fencing in Calvert Green, transforming outdoor spaces at Winslow and Wescott schools, as well as installing a new patio and refurbishing the club house at Waddesdon Cricket Club.

We also engage with many schools and colleges in the area. We can come in to talk about the project, promote career paths in rail, construction and engineering and our team of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) ambassadors are trained to deliver engaging activities for primary and secondary school pupils.

Unfortunately, many of the plans we had for this year have been impacted by the coronavirus pandemic, however we are working with local stakeholders and community groups to see if there are activities we can help with during lockdown, and what we can do as lockdown measures continue to ease.

Some of our plans include:

- Working with local charity Bucks Impact to carrying out gardening for the elderly and vulnerable across Buckinghamshire
- Working Buckinghamshire County Council on a clear up of the popular local walking/cycle path between Waddesdon Green and Berryfields
- Working with local schools to deliver STEM sessions to their pupils online via Microsoft Teams

Naturally, each of these activities will only be carried out in accordance with the latest social distancing guidelines.

If you have any projects we may be able to help with, please get in touch with us at [publicinformation@ewralliance.co.uk](mailto:publicinformation@ewralliance.co.uk)

## Alliance scores 45/50 in first CCS assessment



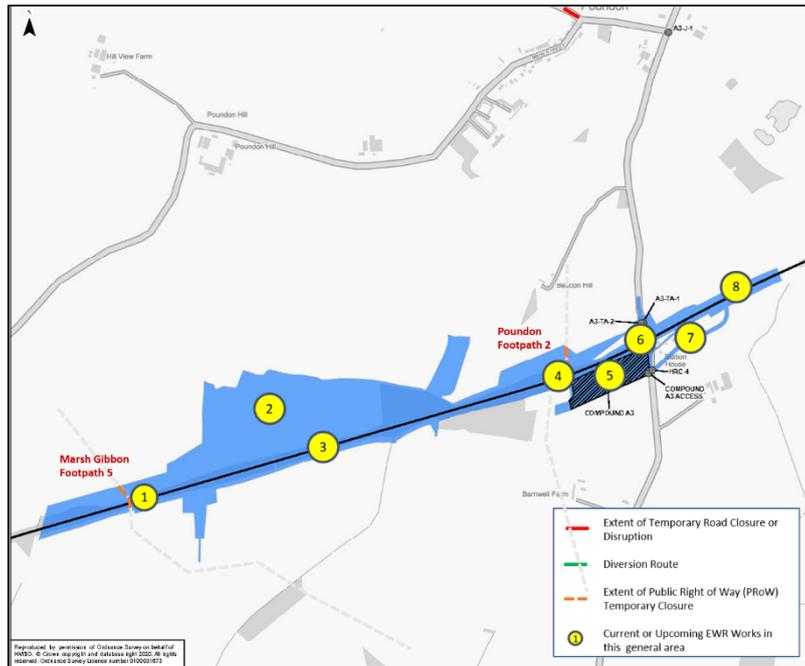
In addition to CEEQUAL assessing our sustainable approach to the project, the Alliance has registered its Bletchley site with the Considerate Contractor's Scheme (CCS), a not-for-profit, independent organisation endorsed by local authorities and government to raise standards in the construction industry by working with sites to share best practice and assess their approach to engaging with the public, our workforce and caring for the environment.

Monitors assess our performance against a set of criteria via a series of visits and audits, with the very highest performing registered sites considered for National Site Awards.

The Bletchley site had its first assessment in early July and we're delighted to report that the project scored 45/50 and achieved an 'exceptional' rating in each of the five areas that are assessed. Achieving such a high rating sets a high standard that we will aim to maintain and seek to improve as and when we register our additional sites across the project.

In the meantime, if you would like to find out more about the CCS scheme, please visit: <https://www.ccscheme.org.uk/>





## Marsh Gibbon

### 1. Marsh Gibbon Footbridge

**Description:** We will build a new footbridge to allow people to cross the new railway safely.

**Duration:** Work will start in late 2020 and is due for completion in autumn 2021.

**Disruption:** The footpath will be closed intermittently during this work. Signage will be displayed to advise as to when the closures will be in place.

**Upcoming Activity:** Over the next few months there will be some temporary closures of the footpath to keep people safe while construction traffic travels through this location along the route of the railway.

**2. Environmental Compensation Site** - 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.

**3. Railway works** - The new railway track installation will begin in the summer of 2022.

### 4. Poundon Footbridge

**Description:** We will build a new footbridge to allow people to cross the new railway safely.

**Duration:** Work will start in late 2020 and is due for completion in autumn 2021.

**Disruption:** The footpath will be closed during this work. Signage will be displayed to advise as to when the closures will be in place.

**Upcoming Activity:** Over the next few months there will be some temporary closures of the footpath to keep people safe while construction traffic travels through this location along the route of the railway.

### 5. Poundon/Marsh Gibbon Compound construction

**Description:** We will build a compound to provide staff offices, welfare facilities and materials storage. The compound will be used for the duration of our construction work.

**Duration:** Work will start summer 2020 and once work has been completed the site will be re-instated to its former condition in late 2022.

**Disruption:** There will be partial and full road closures in the area over the next six months as the local traffic routes are upgraded for construction traffic. This will include highway widening on Station Road and Main Street, plus junction improvements on Mill Lane and the A4421. This will be carefully coordinated with other works in the area to minimise disruption. All closures will be published on [one.network](#) and appropriate signage will be displayed.

**Upcoming Activity:** Over the next three months we will start the highway upgrades and build the entrance to the compound off Station Road.

### 6. Station Road underbridge repair works

**Description:** We will replace the existing bridge deck with a new steel deck and repair and strengthen the bridge structure to accommodate the new railway.

**Duration:** Work will start in late summer/early autumn 2020 and is due for completion in Spring 2021.

**Disruption:** There will be some temporary road closures during the winter, which will be notified on [one.network](#) and appropriate signage will be displayed.

**Upcoming Activity:** The work will begin later this summer.

### 7. Haul road construction

**Description:** We will construct a new haul road which will allow us to move our construction vehicles and machinery across some of our sites which will minimise disruption to local roads.

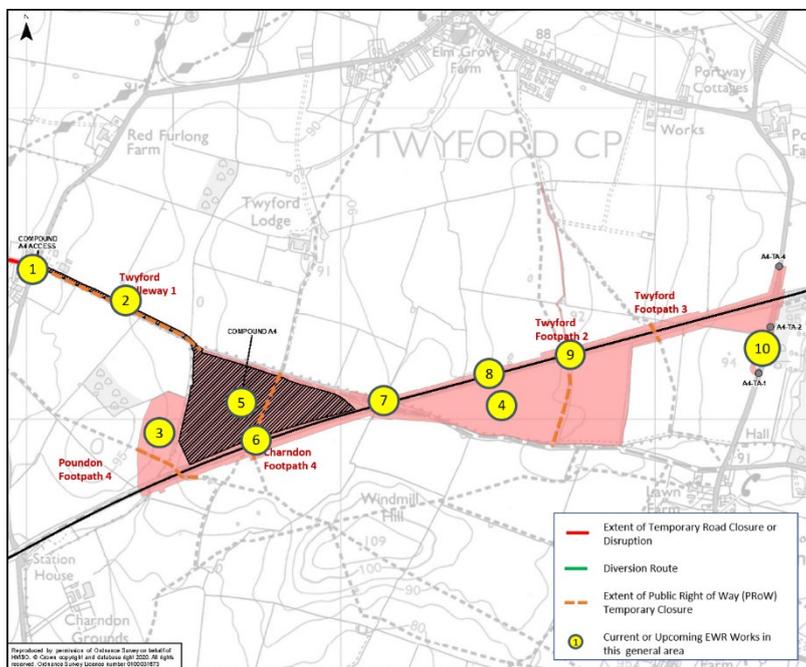
**Duration:** Work will start in late summer 2020 and is due for completion in spring 2021.

**Disruption:** There will be a number of temporary, short-term partial road closures as we construct the access to the haul road. All road closures will be published on [one.network](#) and appropriate signage will be displayed. In addition, there will be marshalling of construction traffic throughout 2021 as the haul road comes into use. The haul road will reduce the amount of construction traffic that would use the local road network within the area.

**Upcoming Activity:** Work will begin in late summer 2020

### 8. Railway works

The new railway track installation will begin in the summer of 2022.



current bridleway for construction traffic. This will allow us to move our construction vehicles and machinery across some of our sites which will minimise disruption to local roads.

**Duration:** This haul road will form part of the traffic route to be used in conjunction with the compound at Green Lane Twyford from July 2020 through to summer 2022.

**Disruption:** Once the access is built, construction traffic will begin using the route until the compound is removed once work is completed in late 2022.

**Upcoming Activity:** Work to improve the access off Station Road will be carried out during summer 2020.

**3 & 4. Environmental Compensation Site** - 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.

### 5. Green Lane, Twyford Compound construction

**Description:** We will build a compound to provide staff offices, welfare facilities and materials storage which will be used throughout the duration of our construction work.

**Duration:** Work will start in summer 2020 and once work has been completed the site will be re-instated to its former condition in late 2022.

**Upcoming Activity:** Over the next few months the site will be prepared for the compound construction. This will include vegetation clearance, ecology relocation, gas and utilities protection and construction of the compound building itself.

### 6. Marsh Gibbon overbridge repair

**Description:** We will carry out repairs and upgrade the existing bridge that goes over the railway at Marsh Gibbon. This will include a new bridge deck, brickwork repairs, new waterproofing and re-surfacing.

**Duration:** Work will start in in autumn 2020 and is due for completion in the summer of 2021.

**Disruption:** During the repair works the footpaths under the bridge will be temporarily closed.

**Upcoming Activity:** Over the next three months we will carry out some vegetation clearance in the area and the create an access point for the compound at Green Lane, Twyford.

### 7. Green Lane overbridge improvement

**Description:** We will carry out repairs and upgrade the bridge that goes over the railway at Green Lane. This will include brickwork repairs and new waterproofing.

**Duration:** Work will start in autumn 2021 and is due for completion in early 2022.

**Disruption:** There will be an increase in construction traffic accessing the site from Station Road through to the compound at Green Lane.

**Upcoming Activity:** Apart from the compound construction, no works are planned on this structure until autumn 2021.

### 8. Railway works - We will begin track installation in the summer of 2022.

### 9. Twyford footbridge construction

**Description:** We will build a new footbridge to allow people to cross the new railway safely.

**Duration:** Work will start in winter 2020 and is due for completion in late 2021.

**Disruption:** The footpath will be temporarily closed whilst we build the new footbridge across the railway.

**Upcoming Activity:** We will begin clearing the site in late summer/early autumn 2020 ready for the bridge foundation construction work to start in winter 2020.

## Poundon

### 1. Main Street, Poundon road improvements

**Description:** We will carry out junction improvements and road widening between the A4421 and Poundon to allow construction traffic to keep to the agreed construction traffic routes on main roads and minimise traffic using local public roads.

**Duration:** Work will start in summer 2020 and is due for completion in early 2021.

**Disruption:** There will be an increase in construction traffic and there will be partial and full highway closures during the road improvement works. All road closures will be published on one.network and appropriate signage will be displayed.

**Upcoming Activity:** Over the next three months, the road improvement works will start on Main Street and Mill Lane. In addition, we will begin creating the access routes for the compound from the highway (Station Road). We will also be clearing vegetation from the old railway line.

### 2. Twyford Bridleway 1 haul road construction

**Description:** We are carrying out work to upgrade the

## 10. Access point construction

**Description:** We will construct a new access from the highway (Main Street) to provide construction access on to the railway alignment. There will also be some upgrade works to the Main Street railway bridge to improve safety. This will include the installation of new parapets and general repairs.

**Duration:** Work will start in winter 2020 and is due for completion in autumn 2021.

**Disruption:** There will be temporary partial closures of the highway during the works. All road closures will be published on [one.network](#) and appropriate signage will be displayed.

**Upcoming Activity:** Over the next few months we will be improving the highway and clearing vegetation in preparation for starting the construction of the access point later in the year.

### More Information

This newsletter has been published as a summary of works in the Marsh Gibbon, Poundon, Charndon & Twyford area. If you would like more information on the entire East West Rail Phase Two project, scan the QR Code opposite to read our project-wide newsletter.

