

**The Network Rail
(East West Rail Bicester to Bedford Improvements) Order**

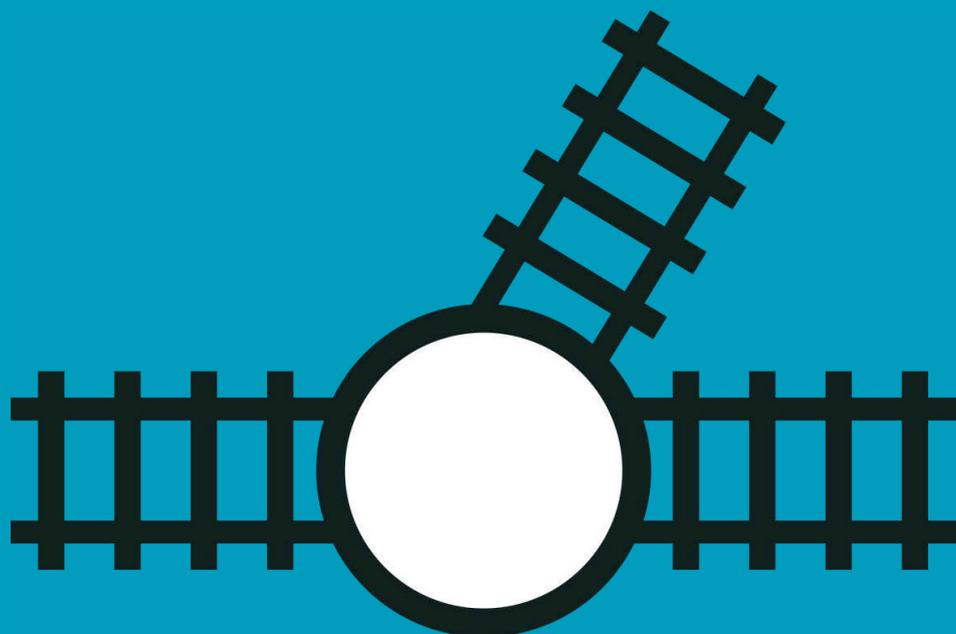
Transport and Works Act 1992

The Transport and Works
(Applications and Objections Procedure)
(England and Wales) Rules 2006

Statement of Aims

Rule 10(2)(c)

July 2018





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DEPARTMENT FOR TRANSPORT

JULY 2018

TRANSPORT AND WORKS ACT 1992

**TRANSPORT AND WORKS (APPLICATIONS AND OBJECTIONS PROCEDURE)
(ENGLAND AND WALES) RULES 2006**

**THE NETWORK RAIL (EAST WEST RAIL BICESTER TO BEDFORD IMPROVEMENTS)
ORDER**

STATEMENT OF AIMS

Rule 10(2)(c)



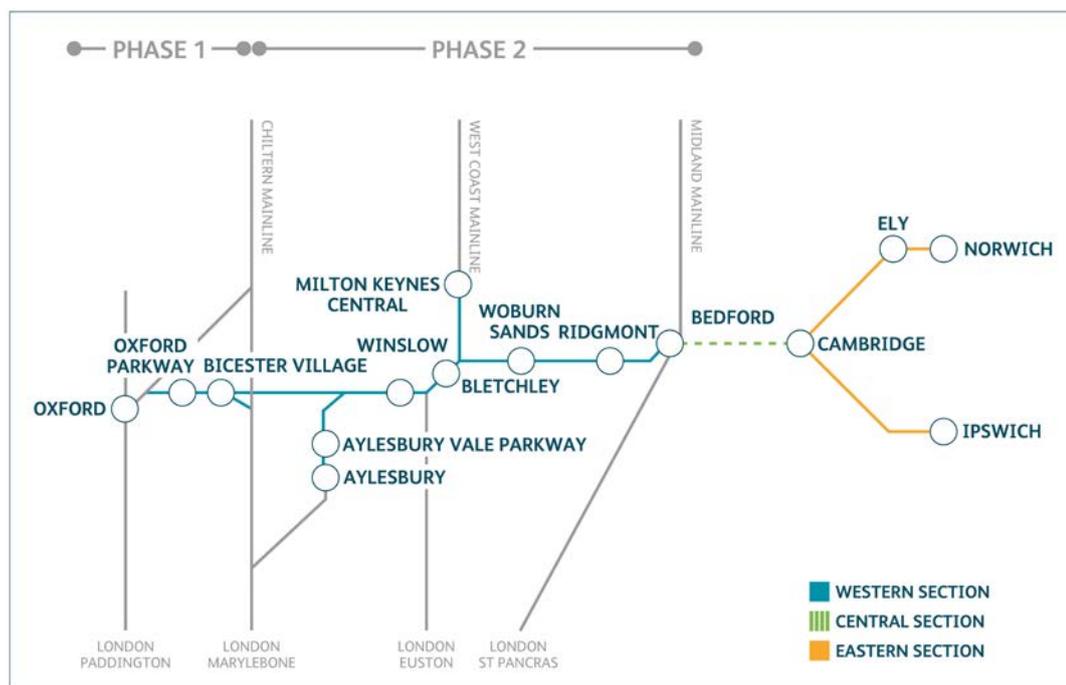
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INTRODUCTION

1. The purpose of this application is to provide Network Rail Infrastructure Limited (“Network Rail”) with powers to authorise the upgrade of the partially disused Bicester-to-Bletchley-to-Bedford and Aylesbury-to-Claydon Junction routes, together with the construction or reconstruction of stations at Winslow, Bletchley, Aylesbury Vale Parkway, Woburn Sands and Ridgmont, known as East West Rail Western Section Phase 2 (“EWR2”). This will facilitate the operation of new passenger services between Oxford and Milton Keynes, Oxford and Bedford and Aylesbury and Milton Keynes.

BACKGROUND

2. EWR2 is part of East West Rail, which aims to establish a strategic railway connecting East Anglia with Central, Southern and Western England. Once built, East West Rail will link the strategic growth areas along the M11 corridor and support growing hi-tech, digital economic sectors by connecting the key hubs between Oxford and Cambridge. It will, via connections with the Great Eastern, East Coast, Midland, West Coast and Great Western Main Lines, connect to the ports of Felixstowe and Harwich, avoiding travel on congested tracks around North London, and could provide an extra route for north-south freight traffic from the port of Southampton.
3. The aspiration for East West Rail has been promoted and developed since 1995 by a group of local authorities and businesses, known as the East West Rail Consortium, with an interest in improving access to and from East Anglia and the Milton Keynes South Midlands growth area.
4. East West Rail comprises three connecting sections (see Figure 1):
 - Western - the route of the western section follows existing lines between Bedford and Oxford, Milton Keynes and Aylesbury;
 - Central - the original rail link between Bedford and Cambridge was closed in the 1960s, dismantled and the land disposed of; East West Rail Central Section would reintroduce a rail link between the two locations over a brand new alignment; and
 - Eastern – this route links Cambridge and East Anglia and relies on existing infrastructure.

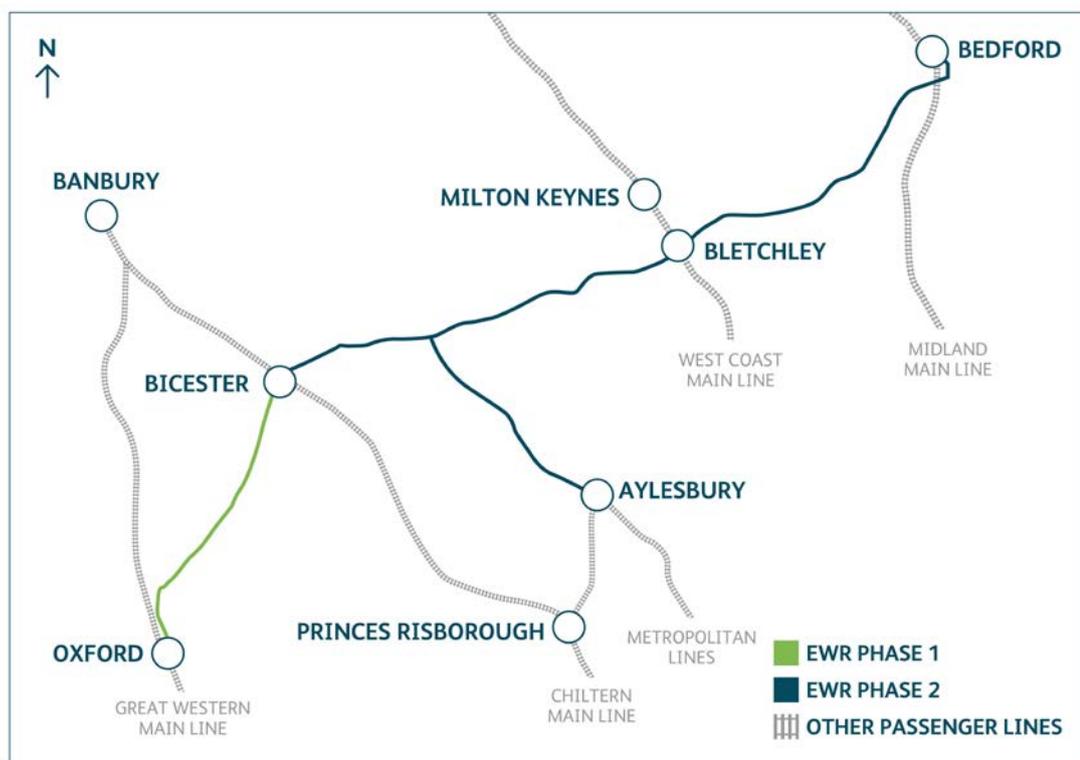


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Figure 1: East West Rail Sections

EAST WEST RAIL WESTERN SECTION

5. The Western Section of the route consists of two distinct phases of work known as East West Rail Phase 1 and East West Rail Phase 2 (see Figure 2):
 - East West Rail Phase 1 was completed in December 2016 and involved the upgrade of the Oxford-to-Bicester railway line allowing new direct passenger services from Oxford to London Marylebone.
 - East West Rail Phase 2 (EWR2 - the subject of this application) involves; upgrading and reinstating the Bicester–Bletchley–Bedford, and Aylesbury–Claydon Junction railway lines. The key proposals for EWR2 include alterations to or replacement of a number of rail over road bridges and road over rail bridges along the route; improvement of facilities at or closure of a number of highways, private roads and public rights of way (PRoW) level crossings; provision of replacement footbridges or diversions at closed level crossings; a new station and ancillary facilities at Winslow, new platforms at Aylesbury Vale Parkway and Bletchley stations and platform extensions at Woburn Sands and Ridgmont stations to support the proposed new train services and increased passenger numbers.



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Figure 2: EWR Phase 1 and EWR2

STATUS OF EAST WEST RAIL WESTERN SECTION PHASE 2

6. EWR2 forms part of Network Rail’s Enhancements Delivery Plan and is a named scheme in the High Level Output Specification for Control Period 5 (2014-19). As such it remains a committed scheme.
7. EWR2 is also supported by the Government and the East West Rail Company Ltd, which is a company formed by the Government for the purposes of promoting and overseeing East West Rail.

INTERFACE WITH THE HIGH SPEED 2 PROJECT

8. EWR2 crosses an area affected by High Speed 2 (HS2) between Grebe Lake (Calvert), Queen Catherine Road (Steeple Claydon) and Station Road (Quainton).
9. The proposed route of HS2 runs parallel to the Marylebone–Claydon Junction line for 7.6km, running north of Quainton to Claydon Junction and then crosses under the Oxford to Bletchley line. Continuing north, the route of HS2 broadly follows the remains of the former Great Central Main Line track bed.

10. Figure 3 shows the consequence of HS2 on the existing section of railway required for EWR2. As a result of this, approximately 12.5km of works to existing railway line is required within this area as authorised under the High Speed Rail (London - West Midlands) Act 2017, rather than as part of this application.

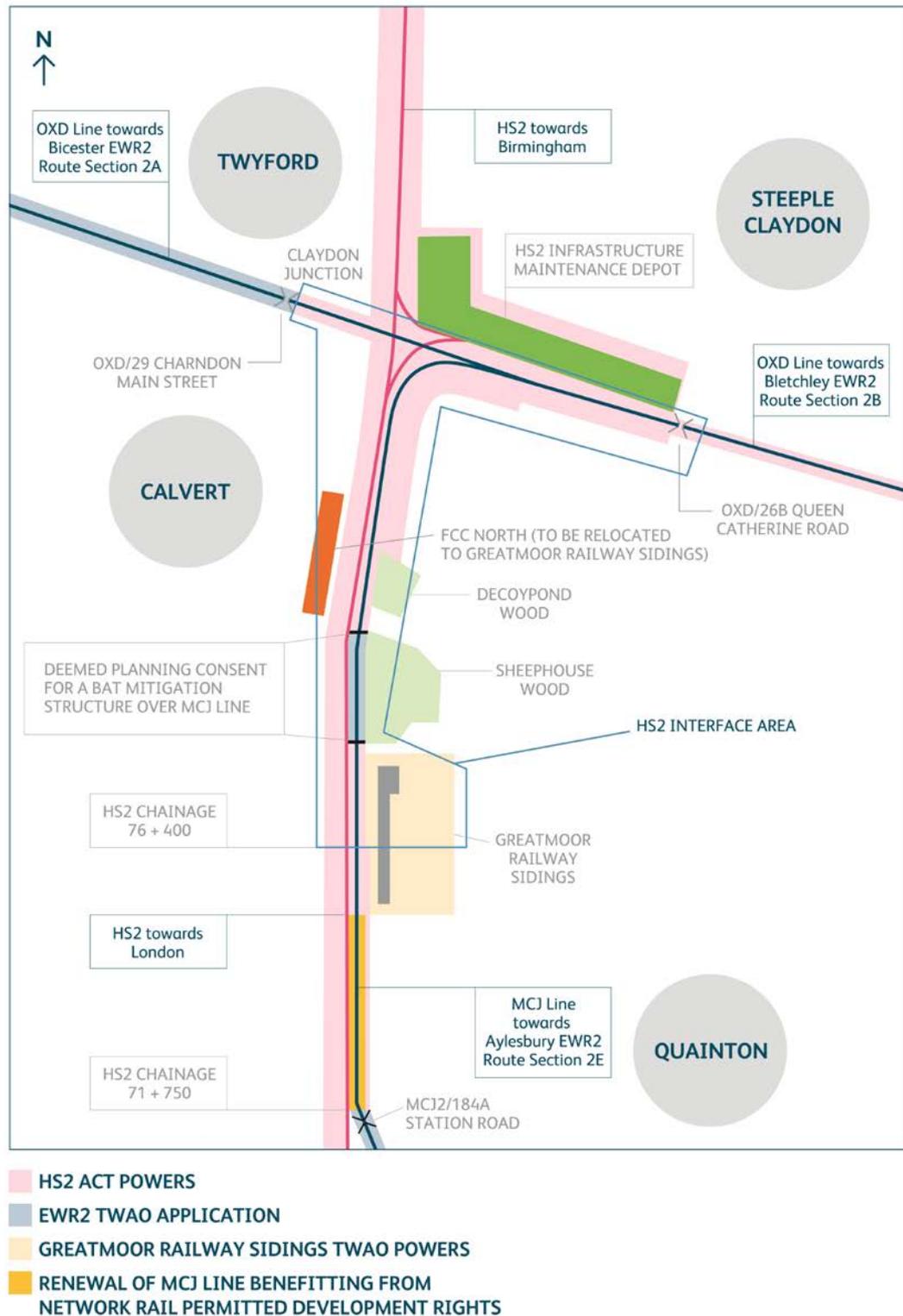


Figure 3: HS2 Interface Area

11. The existing rail freight terminal at Calvert is to be relocated as part of the HS2 scheme. The construction of the replacement terminal was authorised separately to the main HS2 works by way of a Transport & Works Act Order (the "High Speed Rail London-West Midlands) (Greatmoor Railway Sidings Etc.) Order 2018").

KEY OBJECTIVES

12. The key objectives of the scheme are as follows:

To improve east west public transport connectivity through rail links between Oxford, Bicester, Bletchley and Bedford/Milton Keynes, and between Aylesbury, Bletchley and Milton Keynes;

In contrast to strong north-south radial links extending from London, east-west trips across the corridor are difficult, slow and unreliable, but will be improved by EWR2. As a result, commuting between key hubs on the corridor is almost non-existent and the area does not function as a single labour market.

To meet initial forecast passenger demand through new and reliable train services;

The project proposes the delivery of a train service consisting of:

- *2 hourly passenger services between Oxford and Milton Keynes;*
- *1 hourly passenger service between Oxford and Bedford; and*
- *1 hourly passenger service between Aylesbury and Milton Keynes.*

Franchising arrangements to determine who will operate the train services along the upgraded route are to be determined by the Department for Transport. As part of determining this, a decision will also be taken on the rolling stock to be used to operate East West Rail services.

To stimulate economic growth, housing and employment through new and reliable train services;

The project will support the creation of new homes and communities along the line of route. The project is supported, particularly through the participation of the East West Rail Consortium, by the local authorities who are working in conjunction with housing developers to plan for the provision of new housing along the route.

The National Infrastructure Commission, in their report published in November 2017 on the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford Arc, identified East West Rail as an enabler for a once-in-a-generation opportunity to unlock land for new settlements; a view endorsed by the Government in the Autumn 2017 Budget.

Contribute to improved inter-regional passenger connectivity and journey times;

The lines to be upgraded by the project will connect several of the most significant railway lines in the UK. The routes connected consist of the Great Western network at Oxford, the Chiltern Mainline at Bicester, the London to Aylesbury line at Aylesbury, the West Coast Main Line at Bletchley and the Midland Mainline at Bedford.

By virtue of connecting these key lines, the new rail services to operate upon East West Rail, whilst consisting of an initial primarily local service, will facilitate interchange between each route which will significantly shorten the journey times between a number of destinations; many of which where travel is currently only possible via time-consuming interchange at London.

Maintain current capacity for rail freight and appropriate provision for anticipated future growth;

The existing operational rail infrastructure set for upgrade as part of the project is currently only served by freight, primarily conveying household waste to the landfill site and energy from waste facility located at Calvert, Buckinghamshire. EWR2 will retain the current freight capacity utilised by these services; as well as making possible new freight flows through the increased inter-connectivity between running lines.

The loading capability and gauge clearance that the railway is built to will reflect the potential freight growth which can operate over the line.

Consider and plan for future demand and economic growth;

Given the potential for housing growth along the line upon the commencement of the initial train service, a need to consider and plan for future demand is highly necessary. Network Rail has worked with the Department for Transport and East West Railway Company Ltd to develop the scheme in such a way that the right balance is taken between the initial capital costs of the scheme and appropriate provision being made for future growth, such as agreeing that new overbridges being installed by the project are built to a sufficient height to allow for future electrification.

Provide a sustainable transport solution to support economic growth in the area.

Positively contribute to tackling climate change by minimising the potential adverse impacts of growth by providing a more sustainable means of travel.

