

**SUPP-408-1**

**TRANSPORT AND WORKS ACT 1992**

**TRANSPORT AND WORKS (INQUIRIES PROCEDURE) RULES 2004**

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

**PROOF OF EVIDENCE**

**OF**

**MARTIN TUGWELL**

**EAST WEST RAIL CONSORTIUM**



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# **1 Introduction**

## **Personal Statement**

- 1.1 My name is Martin Tugwell and I am the Programme Director of England's Economic Heartlands (EEH) and I am also the lead officer working on behalf of the East West Rail Consortium. I am a Chartered Engineer with a B.Sc (Hons) in Civil Engineering. I am a Fellow of the Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation and a Member of the Institution of Civil Engineers.
- 1.2 I have over 20 years of experience working at senior level on strategic transport and infrastructure planning, having worked at the regional and national level for both government and regional authorities. I have been directly involved with the East West Rail project since 2000 in support of regional and local authorities promoting the scheme.
- 1.3 I will provide evidence on behalf of the East West Rail Consortium that will underpin and support the Statement of Case submitted by the applicant, Network Rail.
- 1.4 My evidence will demonstrate how key areas of local government and local enterprise partnerships have worked collaboratively under the auspices of the Consortium, and more recently England's Economic Heartland (EEH), to identify that East West Rail Phase 2 (the Order scheme) is an essential piece of strategic infrastructure. Our strong and united belief is that delivery of the scheme is fundamental to the realisation of our ambition to realise significant economic growth, as well as acting as a catalyst for the provision of new employment opportunities and housing growth.
- 1.5 I will provide further evidence of the necessity for the Order scheme founded on the Consortium's further commitment to the development and expansion of the EWR network to Cambridge (the Central Section) and beyond (Eastern Section).

## **2 Strategic Context**

- 2.1 The National Infrastructure Commission in its final report (Partnering for Prosperity: A new deal for the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford Arc, November 2017) identified the region as being critical to the long term success of the UK economy. The Commission identified the region as having the potential to be a global hub for science, technology and innovation, one with the potential to double, or even triple the size of its economy within the next 30 years.
- 2.2 Economic potential on this scale would be truly transformational in nature. Realising that potential will require an approach that goes beyond 'business as usual'.
- 2.3 The Commission identified the need to improve connectivity across the region as being central to realising its economic potential. It identified the delivery of a 'multi-modal spine', including an east-west rail link as being a 'once-in-a-

generation' opportunity to deliver that improved connectivity. The Commission recommended that delivery of East West Rail should be prioritised by Government in order to support the overarching ambition for the region.

- 2.4 In setting out the ambition to realise the economic potential of the region, the National Infrastructure Commission emphasised the importance of growth being delivered in a way that results in overall net betterment. Creating new opportunities for rail travel that offer practical alternatives to the private car is consistent with this approach.
- 2.5 In its initial response to the Commission's report (November 2017) the Government committed funding for Network Rail to continue with the development of the western section of East West Rail from Bicester to Bedford. The Government established the independent East West Railway Company on 14 December 2017 in order to support the delivery of the Order scheme.
- 2.6 In its formal response to the Commission's report (October 2018), the Government endorsed the principle of accelerating delivery of the western section of the East West Rail project. The Government also endorsed the Commission's recommendation to accelerate work on the development of the central section of East West Rail between Bedford and Cambridge.
- 2.7 Under the terms of the National Planning Policy Framework, Government endorsed National Infrastructure Commission recommendations carry added weight in determining specific proposals.

### **3 England's Economic Heartland**

- 3.1 England's Economic Heartland brings political and business leaders together in a strategic collaborative partnership. Its membership includes local authorities from Swindon through Oxfordshire and Milton Keynes across to Cambridgeshire and from Northamptonshire through to Hertfordshire. The full membership of England's Economic Heartland is shown at Appendix 1.
- 3.2 In February 2016 EEH established the Strategic Transport Forum as the forum that provides the single voice on strategic transport issues for the region. The Forum is the Sub-national Transport Body for the region, with an ambition to become a statutory body by 2020.
- 3.3 England's Economic Heartland has a shared ambition to realise the economic potential of the region that it embraces, and is preparing the overarching Transport Strategy for the region in support of that ambition. It is committed to ensuring that through its policies and proposals the Strategy will contribute to achieving overall net betterment.
- 3.4 Work on developing the Transport Strategy is underway, with the overarching objective being to 'connect people and places with opportunities and services'. A draft of the Strategy is scheduled to be published in summer 2019. The overarching Transport Strategy will be used to make the case for additional

investment in support of the business investment that will deliver economic growth.

3.5 The Strategic Transport Forum has already identified the delivery of East West Rail as a strategic priority for the region, one that will be central to the Transport Strategy. In this context the Forum supports the National Infrastructure Commission's recommendation that delivery of East West Rail should be accelerated.

3.6 The Forum looks to the East West Rail Consortium to provide leadership on its behalf for local authorities and local enterprise partnerships affected by the East West Rail project. My evidence is submitted on behalf of the East West Rail Consortium ('EWRC'). The full membership of the EWRC is shown at Appendix 2. The Order scheme lies within the boundaries of five of the local authorities, namely:

Bedford Borough Council

Central Bedfordshire Council

Milton Keynes Council

Oxfordshire County Council

Buckinghamshire County Council

3.7 All of these authorities are both members of England's Economic Heartland and the East West Rail Consortium. The planning authorities of Aylesbury Vale District Council in Buckinghamshire and Cherwell District Council in Oxfordshire are members of the Consortium.

3.8 Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership, Buckinghamshire Thames Valley Local Enterprise Partnership and the South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership are all members of England's Economic Heartland, as well as being supporters of the Consortium.

3.9 The strength of collaborative working on strategic infrastructure across the region reflects the common agenda and shared purpose amongst all local partners, particularly when it comes to the pivotal role that East West Rail has to play in transforming connectivity across the region.

3.10 This is further amplified when considering the planned future expansion of East West Rail toward Cambridge and beyond as outlined in Sections 6 and 7 of my proof of evidence.

#### **4 East West Rail Consortium**

4.1 The East West Rail Consortium was formed in 1995 with the objective of promoting and securing a strategic railway connecting East Anglia with Central, Southern and Western England, including a spur to Aylesbury. The Consortium

supports the Transport and Works Act Order submission made by Network Rail that is being considered by this Inquiry.

- 4.2 The Consortium brings together local authorities and local enterprise partnerships, as well as Network Rail and the Department for Transport, in a collaborative partnership that has actively supported the development and delivery of East West Rail for over 20 years.
- 4.3 As evidenced in Section 2 the East West Rail project also enjoys the support of England's Economic Heartland: the Sub-national Transport Body for the corridor. The EEH Business Unit, established to provide technical and professional support on strategic infrastructure issues, supports the work of the Consortium.
- 4.4 Throughout the development (and delivery) of the project the Consortium has been pivotal in ensuring a close and strong working relationship between local partners, the Department for Transport and Network Rail. The effectiveness of the working relationship is reflected in the level of support for East West Rail across the wider community.
- 4.5 A measure of the strength of the working relationship is that local authority activity in support of the development and delivery of East West Rail is counted as 'Work in Kind': a mechanism which is unique to this project and which enables a monetary value to be assigned to local partners' activities in support of the scheme. The use of 'Work in Kind' has also helped reduce some of the risks associated with the delivery of the project. All Works-in-Kind proposals are agreed with Network Rail.
- 4.6 With the establishment of the East West Railway Company the governance of the Consortium has been strengthened to emphasise the Political leadership role of local partners and to ensure the Consortium can be a strong and effective member of the governance arrangements associated with the East West Railway Company. This sees the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Consortium (both elected local authority Members) sitting on the Programme Board for East West Railway.
- 4.7 The East West Rail Consortium has consistently been the champion of the critical importance of delivering a strategic railway connecting Suffolk and Norfolk, with Central, Southern and Western England.
- 4.8 The core focus of the Consortium continues to be the delivery of a complete East West Rail Link that will deliver a step-change in east-west connectivity, linking Oxford, Milton Keynes, and Cambridge, on to Ipswich and Norwich.
- 4.9 In addition, the East West Rail project will improve strategic connectivity across the region – via interchange – with a number of major national rail corridors. In this way East West Rail will enhance the attractiveness of rail travel by reducing the need to travel into/out of London (bringing with it the additional benefit of releasing capacity on London routes). At the same time East West Rail will open up new journey opportunities across the entire region thereby making a positive

contribution to the need to improve connectivity in ways that lead to net betterment.

- 4.10 The Consortium's position has been developed over time on the basis of technical work that it has commissioned, using funds provided by its membership, supplemented by funds secured from other sources.
- 4.11 The Consortium has commissioned work since 1995, work that over time established the initial basis for the Order scheme and on which subsequent work has built.
- 4.12 Development of the Western Section scheme began in earnest in December 2003 when the Consortium completed an initial feasibility study and produced a Consolidated Business Case. Thereafter the Consortium continued to develop the western section guided by Network Rail's eight stage investment approval process (GRIP).
- 4.13 Further studies funded by the Consortium were completed during 2005 to 2007 and in February 2008 a GRIP Stage 3 optioneering report for the western section was completed. The results of this work led to the commissioning of an outline design (GRIP Stage 4) enabled via a grant from the (then) Department for Communities and Local Growth (DCLG) and Growth Area Funding.
- 4.14 The GRIP 4 work was completed in June 2010, and was delivered in two parts; firstly, the outline design and capital cost estimate, which included drawings and technical specifications of the necessary railway infrastructure, such as trackwork, signalling, telecommunications, stations and the like; and secondly, a draft Outline Business Case (OBC) report was produced.
- 4.15 At this point the Consortium embarked on the preparation of a programme entry application for submission to the Department for Transport to seek the majority of the capital funding of EWR through the High Level Output Specification (HLOS) for the Control Period 5 (2014-2019).
- 4.16 The application manifested itself through submission to Government in November 2011 of a comprehensive prospectus (see Appendix 3) that summarised the economic and strategic case for inclusion of the western section for funding within CP5. It described what the Consortium considered the western section would do for business, housing, employment and economic growth.
- 4.17 Following submission of the prospectus to the Department for Transport, the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his 2011 Autumn Statement announced that funding for the western section would be provided.
- 4.18 The Order scheme continues to enjoy consistent strong support from local authorities and local communities, which has been the case throughout its development. This, along with the approach to 'Work in Kind', illustrates the commitments made by Consortium members in support of the project to help it progress and reduce risks to its delivery.

- 4.19 These commitments enabled the Secretary of State for Transport in July 2012 to confirm in the House of Commons that funding for the delivery of the Western Section would be made available in CP5. Thereafter the responsibility to deliver the Order scheme was assumed by Network Rail.
- 4.20 In 2014 the upgrade to the railway between Oxford and Bicester, previously known as the "Evergreen 3" project, was incorporated into the wider East West Rail project as Phase 1 of the Western Section. That Phase, which included a new Station at Oxford Parkway, was completed in two stages and opened fully in December 2016.
- 4.21 The success of Phase 1 is reflected in the extent to which passenger numbers have significantly exceeded the original estimates. This confirms the case made in support of that scheme that the establishment of new strategic rail links deliver improved connectivity and that travellers will take advantage of new opportunities for rail travel in ways that support the delivery of planned housing and economic growth.
- 4.22 In addition, experience from Phase 1 demonstrates that the wider travel opportunities created through interchange to/from new rail links brings added benefits that support strategic objectives across a much wider area.

## **5 Position Statement**

- 5.1 At the meeting of the East West Rail Consortium Strategic Board held on 11 September 2018, the Consortium recorded its strong support and commitment to enable the successful delivery of the Order scheme.
- 5.2 The Order scheme is part of the overarching East West Rail project, which the National Infrastructure Commission identified as being a key element of the 'multi-modal spine' across the Oxford – Milton Keynes – Cambridge corridor.
- 5.3 The Government has endorsed the Commission's recommendation in support of the strategic need for the scheme: and in addition, England's Economic Heartland – the Sub-National Transport Body for the region – has also confirmed East West Rail as being a key strategic project, delivery of which should be prioritised.
- 5.4 Whilst individual Consortium members may make representations on matters of local detail separately where that is necessary, the East West Rail Consortium as a whole is strongly supportive of the overall strategic case underpinning the Order scheme and the principle of the proposal submitted under the Transport and Works Act.
- 5.5 The Consortium's support is however conditional upon the Order scheme delivering on a number of key issues that it has previously been identified as needing to be integral elements of the Order scheme. These issues should be considered as a package, with the Consortium's support conditional on all of them being addressed. Those issues are:

- a) A commitment to the inclusion of a new station entrance at Bletchley Station - the Eastern Entrance - within the works for the Order scheme.

With the delivery of the Order scheme the importance of Bletchley Station as an interchange for rail services will increase significantly. This will in turn increase the attractiveness of Bletchley as a location for new development. The current station entrance/exit is on the 'wrong side' of Bletchley, making the inclusion of a new 'eastern entrance' an essential requirement if the development opportunities in Bletchley are to be maximised at a later stage. The inclusion of a new 'eastern entrance' in the Order scheme would avoid the additional cost and disruption to rail services that would arise if a new 'eastern entrance' had to be built after the completion of the Order scheme.

Milton Keynes Council has developed plans in partnership with Network Rail and the East West Railway Company (EWR Co.) that will lead to the creation of an entrance to the eastern side of the station.

It is proposed that this new entrance will be funded as Works-in-Kind by Milton Keynes Council on the basis that it is seen as integral to the opportunity being explored to regenerate Bletchley Town centre.

- b) Continued inclusion of the improvements proposed for the section of the route between Bletchley and Bedford (Marston Vale Line) as an integral element of the works for the Order scheme.

The East West Rail Consortium has consistently identified the need for improvements to this section as part of the overall East West Rail project and in particular as part of the works to be included in the Order Scheme.

Proposals set out within the emerging Local Plans for Central Bedfordshire and Milton Keynes have been prepared on the basis that these improvements will be delivered: this demonstrates how the local authorities have taken into account the benefit of investment in the rail network when preparing their Local Plans. The draft Local Plan includes a significant number of new housing development proposals located immediately adjacent and along the rail corridor. Failure to deliver the improvements to the Marston Vale Line would jeopardise the ability to deliver the draft Local Plan.

A Works-in-Kind proposal has been put forward by Central Bedfordshire Council to transform Ridgmont Station, located on the Marston Vale Line, to become a transport hub that supports planned housing growth is planned for implementation during the construction phase of the Order scheme. The East West Rail Consortium acknowledge that a longer-term solution for improved connectivity between Bletchley and Bedford will be required: the Consortium's position is that this will need to be considered as part of the work associated with the development of the Central Section.

- c) A continued commitment to deliver improvements to the Claydon Junction to Aylesbury section of the route as an integral element of the Order scheme.

The East West Rail Consortium has consistently identified the need to include the 'Aylesbury spur' as an integral element of the Order scheme.

Proposals set out within the draft Local Plan identified that approximately 50% of planned housing growth during the Plan period will be located in/around Aylesbury. The East West Rail Consortium is of the view that improved rail connectivity – as provided by the Order scheme – is essential to reducing the impact of planned growth, whilst at the same time providing residents across the region with improved access to opportunities and services.

The importance of the 'Aylesbury spur' to the longer-term development of rail services across the region was identified by Network Rail in the West Midlands & Chilterns Route Study published in August 2017.

The East West Rail Consortium has consistently identified the need to realise the potential of the Milton Keynes – Aylesbury – Princes Risborough - High Wycombe rail corridor. It has consistently argued that Government should seek to put in place appropriate safeguarding that will ensure the potential of the corridor (which will require double-tracking in due course) can be realised. Of particular concern is the pressure on land adjacent to the existing rail corridor (which is single-track) between Aylesbury and Princes Risborough.

- d) A commitment to ensure that train services operating over the Order scheme support the strategic objective of developing, on the opening of HS2, through services on the Northampton – Milton Keynes – Bletchley – Aylesbury – High Wycombe – Old Oak Common axis

The final report of the National Infrastructure Commission identified the critical role that improved connectivity has to play in enabling the economic potential of the region to be realised.

The works included in the Order scheme will create opportunities for improved connectivity both east-west and north-south: work commissioned by the East West Rail Consortium identified travel between over sixty major urban centres will be possible with one change of train.

The East West Rail Consortium acknowledge that at this stage the development of the service timetable for the Order scheme needs to take place within the framework provided by the current timetable for services on the West Coast Main Line.

However, the opening of the first phase of HS2 shortly after the opening of the Order scheme will present its own once-in-generation opportunity to reconsider, from first principles, the allocation of capacity on the West Coast Main Line.

The East West Rail Consortium, and England's Economic Heartland's Strategic Transport Forum, have both been consistent in identifying the importance of realising this opportunity as being of strategic importance for the region as a whole if the ambition to realise its economic potential and achieve net betterment is to be delivered.

- e) A commitment to ensure that train services operating over the Order scheme support the strategic objective of East West Rail services continuing through Oxford Station and onto Didcot Parkway.

In order to realise the improved connectivity across the region made possible by the Order scheme it is essential that new train services run beyond the geographical extent of the Order scheme.

Didcot Parkway Station is centrally located within Science Vale UK – home to the Harwell Science and Innovation Campus the UK's world-class centre for science, innovation and enterprise; the European Space Agency Centre; the Culham Centre for Fusion Energy and the world's largest fusion experimental facility; Milton Park, the largest business park in the UK outside of London.

Science Vale UK is at the heart of a network of science-based R&D facilities that are world-leading and which supports activity across the UK. Improved connectivity, via rail services operating over the Order scheme, is essential to meeting the objective of the emerging Transport Strategy for the region: to connect people and places with opportunities and services.

In addition the enhanced interchange opportunities realised by extending train services through to Didcot Parkway, with its connection to the Great Western Main Line, will bring additional benefits – both to the region and the Order scheme.

- f) A commitment to require that the Order scheme makes adequate provision for additional freight services.

Realising the economic potential of the region means ensuring that investment in strategic infrastructure makes adequate provision for future freight services. The need to achieve net betterment at the same time further emphasises the importance of making adequate provision for rail freight services – both existing and potential.

At the same time the East West Rail Consortium has consistently highlighted the need for the East West Rail project to consider – and if necessary make provision for – freight services that have been diverted from other strategic rail corridors. In this context the proposals set out in the London Mayor's Transport Strategy are particularly relevant.

The London Mayor's Strategy sets out the strategic ambition to remove long-distance freight services from the Gospel Oak to Barking route: this being required in order to enable additional passenger services.

England's Economic Heartland Strategic Transport Forum in its consultation response to the London Mayor's Transport Strategy set out its support for this strategic ambition. However this support is conditional upon capacity for the diverted freight services being available on alternative strategic rail corridors.

Although East West Rail will not be capable of functioning as an alternative strategic rail corridor until completion of the Central Section: the design and delivery of the Order scheme should be taken forward on the basis that it will have the capability and capacity to accommodate additional freight services, recognising that this may require some additional investment in the future.

- 5.6 Local Plans across the Western section area are already in place, or being prepared, in expectation of the Order scheme being delivered. Delivery of the Order scheme therefore provides a real opportunity to demonstrate how rail infrastructure investment supports the planning and delivery of growth; with significant proposals coming through in all local authority areas within the footprint of the Order scheme.
- 5.7 The East West Rail project provides an attractive, viable alternative to the car through the restoration of the mothballed section of the railway, enabling fast and frequent scheduled rail services which by improving connectivity, will support the delivery of planned growth.
- 5.8 It will encourage people to switch from car to rail which is consistent with the need to deliver growth whilst also achieving net betterment. Such an outcome is consistent with the recommendations of the National Infrastructure Commission for whom realising the economic potential of the corridor in ways that enable a 'net betterment' to the corridor as a whole was a key.

## **6 Future Expansion of EWR to Cambridge (Central Section)**

- 6.1 The East West Rail Consortium is fully supportive of the Secretary of State's commitment to accelerate the development and delivery of the Central Section. Investment in both the Order scheme and Central Section is further complemented by realising opportunities to improve services to/from east of Cambridge (the Eastern Section).
- 6.2 It is therefore essential that consideration of the Order scheme takes into account the value of East West Rail as a whole being viewed as being capable of being greater than the sum of its parts.
- 6.3 The East West Rail Consortium commissioned work to develop the Conditional Output Statement for the Central Section in compliance with Network Rail's approach adopted within the long-term planning process for new and enhanced railway schemes.
- 6.4 The focus of that work was on identifying service performance outcomes that have the prospect of delivering significant economic benefits and supporting the

delivery of planned growth that subsequent phases of the study can consider in their design, and assessment of operational feasibility.

- 6.5 Subsequent to the completion of this study, the final report was submitted to Network Rail who under the instruction from the Department for Transport took on the Conditional Outputs as their primary focus for further examination and development in support of the Central Section part of the project.
- 6.6 The ongoing development work of corridor, and then route, options for the Central Section is now being led by the East West Railway Company which anticipates undertaking a non-statutory consultation in the first part of 2019, with a view to identifying a preferred corridor in late summer 2019.
- 6.7 In October 2018 the Chancellor of the Exchequer awarded £20 million for further development work on the 'critical' Central Section of EWR.

## **7 Expansion of EWR to Ipswich and Norwich (Eastern Section)**

- 7.1 Similar to the earlier work for the Central Section, the East West Rail Consortium commissioned work to deliver a Conditional Output Statement for the Eastern Section.
- 7.2 The work commissioned captured and presented the evidence on the key drivers for change and intervention with respect to:
  - Economic activity and growth, including trends in population and employment, employment sectoral make-up and labour market characteristics;
  - Transport network efficiency and performance, including multi-modal comparisons, analysis on journey times and service frequency;
  - Passenger travel demand; and
  - Freight demand (particularly in the context of the strategic Felixstowe – Nuneaton freight route and traffic associated with the Haven ports). To complete the picture, the Consortium is also developing a strategic proposition in support of plans to enhance and promote greater rail connectivity between Cambridge, Norwich and Ipswich. This all demonstrates the value of East West Rail as being greater than the sum of its parts.
- 7.3 The East West Rail Consortium is undertaking the preparation of a Prospectus which will set out the Consortium's agreed vision for the Eastern Section as part of the wider East West Rail project. In particular it will identify opportunities for interventions considered necessary to deliver the aspirations for delivering significant enhancement to the rail links within the Eastern Section with the specific overriding objective of facilitating the delivery of economic growth, new housing and employment opportunities.

7.4 Delivery of improvements as part of the Eastern Section are not dependent upon completion of the Central Section, rather they would support the proposals for the Central Section by enabling travel opportunities that are currently either very difficult or not practical.

## **8 Summary and Conclusion**

8.1 The East West Rail Consortium has a long-established track-record with regard not just to the Order scheme but the East West Rail project.

8.2 The genesis of the Order scheme took place through strong and effective collaboration between the Consortium partners, Network Rail and the Department for Transport. The strength of this partnership has manifested itself in numerous ways throughout the development of the Order scheme, not least of which in the form of 'Work-in-Kind', a unique arrangement which has seen the Consortium partners work with the scheme promoters to de-risk the delivery of the scheme.

8.3 England's Economic Heartland Strategic Transport Forum, the proposed Sub-national Transport Body for the region, has identified East West Rail as a strategic priority, one that will form a key building block for the development of the emerging Transport Strategy.

8.4 Consideration of the Order scheme (the Western Section) must be viewed in the context of the wider East West Rail project, the objective of which is to secure a strategic railway connecting East Anglia with Central, Southern and Western England, including a spur to Aylesbury.

8.5 Both the East West Rail Consortium and England's Economic Heartland are strongly supportive of the overall strategic case underpinning the Order scheme and the principle of the proposal submitted under the Transport and Works Act.

8.6 However, their support is conditional upon the Order scheme delivering on the key issues set out in this evidence to the Inquiry. Both the East West Rail Consortium and England's Economic Heartland consider these issues as needing resolution, as a package, if the full potential of the Order scheme is to be realised.

8.7 The basis on which the Order scheme has been developed – through a strategic collaborative partnership between local partners, Network Rail and the Department for Transport – means that the Order scheme enjoys considerable, if not unprecedented, levels of support for a scheme of this scale.

8.8 Ensuring the issues identified by the Consortium are addressed will help ensure that support is retained.