

# Clapham-East / St Neots Group – Meeting notes

## Meeting #1 – Details

Date: 13/01/2025

Time: 18:00

Type of meeting: Virtual (Teams)

## Key discussion points and outcomes

- 1 **Introductions, workshop overview, and housekeeping**
  - 1.1 Sarah Jacobs (SJ) welcomed attendees to the meeting, introduced the EWR Co team members and ran through the housekeeping and agenda for the meeting and Terms of Reference. She reiterated that the session was being recorded to aid the collection of feedback.
  - 1.2 SJ explained that seven Local Representative Group (LRG) workshops are taking place during the non-statutory consultation with those parish councils within the draft order limits to discuss the project and gain feedback.
- 2 **Update on the Project**
  - 2.1 SJ explained that EWR Co are seeking feedback on the design and options set out within the non-statutory consultation. Due to time constraints, EWR Co are not discussing other route options or any works outside the current scope during this meeting. Feedback will be recorded and will input into the design change process. It was stressed that discussions within the workshop are supplementary to the formal feedback mechanism of the consultation, so attendees were also encouraged to submit feedback via the online feedback form.
- 3 **Introduction to the workshops**
  - 3.1 Siobhan Adeleke (SA) gave an overview of the stage the project is in within the Development Consent Order (DCO) process, detailing past engagement and consultations. SA emphasised that previous route corridor options have become increasingly refined and some preferences for the route have been confirmed. EWR Co are now consulting on the current proposals (there are some options within the proposals, but they have confirmed preferences within these). SA explained that feedback gained at this consultation from the group, and from wider stakeholders, will be considered as part of the design development process as the designs are further refined. This session is designed to be interactive.

- 3.2 Peter Norris (PN) highlighted that he attended the Bedford session however, due to time constraints, there were areas (particularly regarding flooding impacts and traffic management) that they were unable to cover in that session. PN requested that these were covered in this current session.
- 3.3 SJ emphasised that there was a lot to cover for this section, but that they would revisit these areas today if time allowed for this.
- 3.4 SA gave a summary of the non-statutory consultation so far and noted that the consultation has passed the halfway point and will close on Friday 24 January 2025. 12 in-person events have already taken place, with over 3000 attendees. EWR Co have also held two online events with almost 100 attendees and have received over 2000 responses as of the beginning of January. SA advised that there is a lot of material and information available on the EWR website, including a Virtual Consultation Room. There are four consultation events remaining – the date, time and locations for these were shown on screen.

## 4 Update on Proposals

### Design Workshops with Local Authorities

- 4.1 SA explained that EWR Co have held similar workshops with local authority planning and technical officers. In early December, EWR Co met with officers from Cambridgeshire County Council, Cambridge City Council, Huntingdonshire District Council, Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority, and Greater Cambridge Partnership. The feedback from these sessions is being taken into consideration in the development of the design. The key topics raised included the interface of the project with the local highway network, integration of EWR with the proposed local developments, active travel opportunities with a focus on first mile/last mile, and connectivity between towns around stations.
- 4.2 Jon Abbott (JA) asked why Bedford Borough Council were not included in the meeting, as EWR Co will have a large impact on this area.
- 4.3 SA confirmed that a meeting with Bedford Borough Council with targeted officers took place in early December and that EWR Co are considering the feedback from this session as the proposals are developed.

### Update on Proposals in Route Sections 4 and 5

- 4.4 Robert Milner (RM) gave an overview of the route sections covered in this session. This includes Route Section 4: Clapham Green to Colesden, incorporating 12km of new twin track railway, new passing loops near Colesden and associated embankments, viaducts and cuttings. Also, new bridges to make sure the railway is kept at an acceptable gradient to cross over and underneath existing roads. RM explained that EWR Co have tried to maintain Public Rights of Way (PROWs)

and roads in the area, although there are local diversions proposed to some PRoWs. The most significant change in the area since the 2021 consultation is that the EWR route has shifted slightly north of Wilden to create a larger gap from that village.

- 4.5 RM ran through the next section - Route Section 5: Roxton to East of St Neots. It was explained that here, there are two potential alignment options. Alignment 1b deviates just after the Colesden area to go south of the Black Cat roundabout, crossing over the amended existing A421, the A1 and East Coast Main Line (ECML) and then back over the new A421 dual carriageway.
- 4.6 RM explained that the alternative option that has been proposed is alignment 1c that runs north of the Black Cat junction, crossing over the A1 just north of the junction and ECML and then hugs the north and west sides of the A421 through the area. It was confirmed that the station design at Tempsford is similar for both options and EWR Co are also looking at bringing forward one of the two rail logistic hub options - B & F. Option B was the blue hatched area on the map (shown on screen), which is east of the ECML and east of the Little Barford area. Option F is the pink hatched area on the map (shown on screen) and is northwest of the station and west of the ECML. RM suggested that both options (B and F) work with alignment 1c, but only Option B would work with alignment 1b. The purpose of the rail logistics hub is as a temporary construction site to allow engineering trains to arrive from the ECML and lay the actual EWR tracks down on the network to build the railway and systems. RM explained that there is no preference between the alignments currently, and that EWR Co are seeking feedback during the consultation on this.
- 4.7 RM followed by describing the final designs in this section. It was explained that much of this section in St Neots is looking at cuttings as the hillside rises rapidly.

#### Environmental Impacts

- 4.8 Fiona Man (FM) provided a summary of the environmental assessments that are currently being undertaken or are due to be carried out.
- 4.9 FM explained that an [Environmental Update Report](#) has been published as part of the non-statutory consultation materials, and that a Preliminary Environmental Information Report will be shared as part of the statutory consultation, with an Environmental Statement to be submitted as part of the DCO application. FM explained that an [Environmental Sustainability Strategy](#) has been prepared which contains six sustainability pillars: Natural Environment, Carbon, Climate Resilience, Historic Environment and Landscape, Circular Economy, and People and Community.
- 4.10 FM noted that the specific environmental information for this section of the route could be found in Chapters 8 and 9 of the [Environmental Update Report](#).

- 4.11 FM explained that the [Environmental Impact Assessment \(EIA\) Scoping Report](#) has been submitted to the Planning Inspectorate, which sets out EWR Co's methodology and scope for the EIA.
- 4.12 FM gave a detailed overview of the approach to the environment for the specific section and explained that information on the environment is being gathered through surveys, technical assessments, modelling work, and feedback received during the consultations. In terms of key environmental constraints and mitigation in this section of the route there are likely to be landscape and visual impacts because of new railway infrastructure and earthworks, which may affect nearby settlements including Wilden, Colesden, Chawston and Tempsford. There is also the potential for loss of agricultural land holdings, property acquisitions and demolition. There is also a flood risk near Tempsford as the route will be crossing several main rivers and watercourses, and some of those watercourses will require an assessment under the Water Framework Directive. There are also potential impacts on bats, and possible impacts on the historic setting of listed buildings, as well as noise and vibration impact from passing trains and air quality impacts from changes to road traffic levels because of movements near the new Tempsford station.
- 4.13 FM discussed mitigation, and assured attendees that EWR Co will look to avoid, minimise and compensate for any impacts. EWR Co are looking to provide mitigations embedded within the designs, such as lowering the vertical alignment in landscapes where possible and looking to provide habitat creation areas either side of the railway to replace the loss of habitat.
- 4.14 Justin Griffiths (JG) asked, regarding the EIA, if EWR Co could set out the headings of the six areas being looked at within the assessment, and the hierarchy which these have been given in the assessment. JG requested for this to be answered in the meeting note.

**Post meeting clarification:** The environmental assessment topics covered by the Project are set out in the EIA Scoping Report which is available to download on the Planning Inspectorate's website: <https://national-infrastructure-consenting.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/TR040012/documents>. The assessment of environmental topics will be guided by relevant legislation, standards and best practice guidance which are described in the method statements in the EIA Scoping Report.

- 4.15 Eric Cooper (EC) asked why the full Environmental Statement is not available until the documents are submitted and queried if it will be available at the statutory consultation stage.

- 4.16 FM explained that because EWR Co will still be engaging with stakeholders and updating the designs, alongside considering the feedback received at the statutory consultation, the final Environmental Statement will not be available at the statutory consultation, as this will be based on the final design submitted with the DCO application.
- 4.17 EC wanted to understand if this meant the proposals would be 90-95% ready at statutory consultation stage or could there still be significant changes made to them after the statutory consultation.
- 4.18 FM confirmed that yes, the proposals presented at the statutory consultation would be in a more finalised state, but there may still be changes to the design following this in response to the feedback received at the statutory consultation.

**Post meeting clarification:** The PEIR will be available at statutory consultation which will include more detailed preliminary environmental information about predicted impacts and likely significant effects and proposals for environmental mitigation.

## 5 Design Feedback Session One - Design

- 5.1 RM introduced the design feedback session and asked if EWR Co could provide an update on the traffic assessments in this section of the route.
- 5.2 Ben Nicholass (BN) explained that EWR Co have created a series of transport models to better understand the road network, and the current issues and pinch points. Forecasting has also been carried out to help understand the impacts the project would have on the road network and how these can be mitigated. BN explained that this information and data has been collected by engaging with the relevant local authorities. BN explained that the models show that, by 2034, the network is going to be busier regardless of whether the project goes ahead or not, and it is EWR Co's responsibility to implement measures to ensure any impacts are sufficiently mitigated.
- 5.3 BN acknowledged that there has been a lot of concern around construction logistics. EWR Co are carrying out modelling to look at this specifically and more detail will be available on this in the future. Attendees were encouraged to give their input here as to any routes that construction traffic should avoid using. BN explained that it is also important for EWR Co to understand how best to remove HGVs and construction traffic from the traditional consumer peaks to reduce impact as much as possible. As part of this non-statutory consultation EWR Co have provided a [Transport Update Report](#) that clearly sets out the work that has been done to date and highlights potential areas on the network that are going to exceed their capacity in the future. Again, this is where local knowledge and

feedback is beneficial to understand where there are current issues on the network.

- 5.4 BN stated that the draft Transport Assessment that will be made available at the statutory consultation will have 90-95% coverage as EWR Co will continue to engage with the local authorities to understand the key concerns and these will have been addressed ahead of statutory consultation. After the statutory consultation, additional feedback will be taken on board and the final Transport Assessment will be submitted as part of the DCO application.
- 5.5 Mark Fitzpatrick (MF) stated that one of Brickhill Parish Council's key concerns has been related to PRowS. MF hoped that EWR Co could take steps to make improvements to the PRowS, rather than just simply maintain them. MF advised that there is a lack of bridleways going out towards the rural areas from Brickhill. There are currently two in the local area, within 400m of each other, that do not connect, and MF suggested it would be great if they could connect. MF asked if EWR Co are just planning to maintain the current PRowS and bridleways or are also planning to improve these.
- 5.6 RM responded, saying that the first step is to ensure they are maintained, but moving forward in the design, there will be consideration given to improving these, especially those that are 'quick wins'. RM added that sometimes there are challenges with PRowS – and where some may welcome bridleway additions, others (e.g. cyclists and walkers) may not wish to share paths with horses. RM encouraged MF to also provide this feedback via the feedback form so that it is considered as the proposals are refined.
- 5.7 BN echoed RM's comments, that now is the best time to feed back into the design process. BN reiterated that feedback or suggestions should be included in the official consultation responses for these to be considered, and to help improve and enhance the quality of life for local communities. EWR Co have previously gained feedback from members of the public about other concerns, such as where a specific PRow was used once a week by a large running club .
- 5.8 PN stated that he understood that the logistics hub that will be connected to the ECML will only come into play when EWR Co are ready to lay track on a prepared track bed and that it won't substantially be involved in the cut and cover exercise. PN enquired about the access and egress from the Clapham floodplain for the building of the viaduct, as all the materials will have to be dug and transported by road, which is very carbon intensive. PN also enquired where the material that is 'cut' will be stored and mentioned that EWR Co have recently announced that they are endeavouring to satisfy a maximum freight gradient of one in 100 rather than one in 80, to which all of the maps being shown are produced, therefore the footprint of the maps will need to change.

- 5.9 PN suggested that it would be sensible to consider a cut and cover tunnel, as although this would be disruptive to build, EWR Co wouldn't need to disturb much of the landscape at the sides of the line.
- 5.10 PN also stated that another potential issue that needs to be tackled is how to get rid of the surface water that the cutting will attract. If there is a heavy downpour this will be a real problem, due to the clay soils and the lack of vegetation meaning the water will not be easily absorbed.
- 5.11 PN requested EWR Co's thoughts on changing the plans to a cut and cover procedure.
- 5.12 RM responded, caveating his response by stating that EWR Co have made it clear that next year will be when they specify construction traffic routes. He stated that, at this point, EWR Co are aiming to show a feasible railway design with construction sites that will provide them with land to build the railway as well as temporary storage from excavating cuttings before the material is moved. It was stated that EWR Co would only use suitable roads to access the construction, which would likely be Clapham Road for this section.
- 5.13 RM also responded to the cut and cover question, stating that, in his view, there are two ways to construct a cut and cover tunnel. One includes building a very large cutting, putting a box in that and filling around the sides, so you would end up with a larger cut in in the temporary case, unless the side is somehow made steeper; or effectively the walls are constructed from the surface, so it would still be a significant amount of construction along the route to construct that cut and cover tunnel. RM suggested that this would potentially lead to looking at a 3-4km tunnel in this area, which is something that has not been considered. However, RM stated that if this was a key part of PN's feedback, views on this will be gained. To date, EWR Co have been aiming to mitigate the design that is constructed in cuttings from the surface in that route.
- 5.14 RM addressed the question regarding access to the Bedford viaduct and suggested that this would need to be covered by the Bedford team.

**Post meeting clarification:** The level of maturity of the design means the specific methodology for viaduct deck construction cannot be confirmed at this stage.

- 5.15 PN responded that, due to insufficient time on the previous Bedford meeting, there was little attention given to the type of viaduct to be built and its construction. PN emphasised that the design currently doesn't address questions such as how cranes will move on and across the floodplain at this stage, but suggested EWR Co must be close to inputting this detail into the models.



- 5.16 SJ advised that this session was not for the Bedford section, and that EWR Co would be engaging further in the future with the attendees to have more in depth conversations regarding construction plans and impacts. SJ suggested that attendees send her an email with any questions regarding this so that these points can be answered, and that EWR Co will also look to run a session that might include more information on construction plans over the next few months- dependent on what information is available before statutory consultation
- 5.17 RM confirmed that what is fed into the traffic modelling is not necessarily what is predicted to be the final construction plans, as a reasonably worst-case scenario may be used to ensure a conservative view is taken. It is up to the contractor to ensure construction is carried out in the most efficient way possible.
- 5.18 JA stated that the cutting will plough right through his ward Clapham and Oakley. He also advised that at the consultation event in Bedford attendees seemed to be pleased that the heights of the viaducts are being lowered, but this means that the cutting would be deeper and have a larger impact on the environment over the longer term, so he would also like to look at a cut and cover tunnel. JA added that this would cause disruption when being built, but in the long-term it would make it easier to connect the PROWs afterwards and should help to restore the environment back to its original state before construction.
- 5.19 SJ confirmed that this feedback would be taken away and considered by the team.
- 5.20 EC said that he would welcome a specific discussion with both teams covering this area as it is split down the middle. EC noted that in the consultation documents there was limited information on this, and that he would like to emphasise that Clapham High Street flooded three times last year and so water is a significant issue there. EC stressed that this is a key area for environmental impacts and mitigation and that this needs serious consideration. EC had two questions regarding the multi-storey car park development: who will be responsible for paying for the works needed to mitigate the impacts of this and how would impacts be mitigated.
- 5.21 BN stated that EWR Co would be assessing where mitigation needs to be delivered and will work with the local highway authority to ensure this is proportionate. Who delivers this mitigation work will be decided later, but EWR Co will be required to pay for appropriate mitigation regardless of who delivers it. EWR Co would only be required to mitigate the impacts that the project causes and would not be required to mitigate impacts that would occur anyway without EWR. The mitigation proposals would need to be a joined-up approach with the local authorities to provide a realistic solution.



- 5.22 RM added in response to JA's comment about the cut and cover tunnel, that tunnels are significant constructions, particularly cut and cover tunnels, and that these are generally the means of a last resort.
- 5.23 Brent Fielder (BF) advised that Wilden was probably the worst affected village along the route due to high viaducts and deep, wide cuttings proposed alongside residential properties and gardens, and therefore Wilden Parish Council would also be asking for cut and cover tunnels. BF explained that Wilden Parish Council would be asking for continuous welded rail and track bed damping to mitigate the effect of the railway as it is going right past residential properties and gardens. BF's second question was whether there was still a need for the passing loops at Colesden, and asked if these can be removed from the proposals to save EWR Co money and reduce disruption on the local area. BF's third question was whether EWR Co will pay to repair any damage caused by construction and construction traffic, to return the roads to the condition they were in before this, or would this be Bedford Borough Council's responsibility? BF made a further point that Wilden already experiences flooding on the high street, and BF believed that construction would exacerbate this and is not convinced that the balancing ponds currently proposed are in the right place. BF's final question was regarding PRoWs and whether any would be closed as part of the proposals.
- 5.24 RM advised that, as part of the proposals, the construction has been moved further north away from Wilden itself, and EWR Co are looking to use sensible diversions for the existing roads and footpaths in the area. EWR Co would be responsible for maintaining roads used to an appropriate level and would need to ensure roads are suitable in the first place for the construction vehicles, and EWR Co would be responsible for the costs of this.
- 5.25 RM advised that the drainage design for the project considers future flooding levels and climate change impacts, and there are detailed drainage designs to support this.
- 5.26 In relation to the PRoWs, RM confirmed that there are a number of PRoWs that would need to be diverted or combined, which will mean some PRoWs would need to be closed, but EWR Co would look to ensure a PRoW from A to B is still available, the original route just may be changed.
- 5.27 RM explained that, the passing loops are required for freight trains, as it is expected that the route will see two freight trains per direction, per day. The loops are needed so the passenger trains can pass the freight trains (allowing the freight trains to essentially pull over). If further operational modelling takes place and shows the loop is not required, then it would not be included in the proposals, but as it stands the modelling shows that the passing loops are required.

- 5.28 BF asked about the areas of land highlighted in purple on the map on screen, and what would happen to this land after construction had finished.
- 5.29 RM explained that the purple land would be returned to the reasonable satisfaction of the landowners. Much of this land is agricultural, so these landowners would be compensated for associated crop loss in the following years too, as the fertility of the land takes a while to recover.
- 5.30 BF explained that there was a rumour and a concern that the purple land shown on the onscreen map would be utilised for extra housing in the future and requested confirmation that this was not the case.
- 5.31 RM confirmed that EWR would not be able to use this land for future housing, and that there are strict rules on how if it is not needed by EWR the land must be returned to its previous condition and it would be offered back to the landowner.
- 5.32 BF stated that the only point there hadn't been a satisfactory answer on is whether there would be a cut and cover tunnel through Wilden and/or continuous welded rail.
- 5.33 RM explained that his understanding was that they would use modern technology to lay the track with long lengths of track being laid, and the railway would be designed for low maintenance and has low noise when the trains are running across it. RM stated that noise assessments will be undertaken across the project and, if noise limits are breached, mitigation measures would be looked at such as dampening systems.
- 5.34 RM referred to his previous comment on the cut and cover tunnels – it was stated that a cut and cover tunnel would not significantly alter the amount of construction needed here and therefore it would likely be difficult to make a case for the additional investment needed for a cut and cover tunnel in this area. However, any response suggesting that a cut and cover tunnel should be used will still be taken into account.
- 5.35 BF stated that throughout the project EWR Co have told stakeholders that more answers will be available at the next consultation and queried whether at the statutory consultation the proposals would be in the final state and would have no further changes.
- 5.36 RM advised that the consultations to date have been designed to gain feedback at an early stage and develop the designs further. RM confirmed that by statutory consultation, the aim is not to present options, and the design consulted on would be the design EWR Co intend to take forward to DCO. There may be minor updates to the design in response to the feedback received at statutory consultation, but unless there were any major changes which would give rise to the need for further consultation, it would essentially be the design that it submitted within the DCO application.

- 5.37 SJ added that EWR Co have pushed for the current non-statutory consultation to take place, to present further options to stakeholders and provide an opportunity for stakeholders to provide their feedback.
- 5.38 Gordon Johnston (GJ) stated that there is an elderly population in this area and questioned how with a lack of footpaths and cycle paths, they would access the station as some would have to travel over three miles to access the station.
- 5.39 GJ also advised that noise mitigation was very important to Wyboston, Chawston and Colesden Parish Council as the prevailing winds are from the south-west and requested that solid sound deflecting/reflecting/absorbing barriers are put in place, not just trees. GJ suggested that this may require a further meeting to discuss.
- 5.40 BN commented that accessibility may be a challenge, especially with an ageing population, but that EWR Co needs to consider all users who will need to access transport infrastructure. BN welcomed the feedback and advised that if there are any concerns or anything that GJ believes EWR Co and the transport operators need to consider as part of the future planning for social mobility to please submit these comments formally. BN advised that the purpose of the consultation is to gather these comments, so that EWR Co doesn't just have to rely on modelling.
- 5.41 GJ replied that within their parish (Wyboston, Chawston and Colesden), there is no bus service, so if someone doesn't own a car they are not able to travel easily, and this should be included in the modelling.
- 5.42 Justin Griffiths (JG) asked several questions, requesting that the answers to these are provided in the summary meeting note:
- Can EWR Co confirm if the British Horse Society have been consulted regarding the designs or diversions of any bridleways? *RM confirmed that EWR Co have engaged with the British Horse Society and are ensuring the designs are in line with required highway and design standards.*
  - For awareness, none of the plans for alignment options 1b or 1c around the Black Cat roundabout include the new footpaths/bridleways being implemented by National Highways. The plans need to incorporate these and the impacts of the Black Cat highway work into the design solutions. *RM advised that EWR Co have the A428 Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet improvements projects' models so are aware of the aspects of the project's design, and the project's new proposed paths and bridleways have been taken into account.*
  - Have the Roxton Garden Centre confirmed if they are willing to close their business if alignment option 1b is taken forward? *RM confirmed that EWR*

*Co have spoken to Roxton Garden Centres but can't divulge the details of this conversation.*

- *What will the last mile route be for those living in Wyboston, Chawston and Colesden, and Roxton to the new Tempsford station? RM advised regarding last mile access to Tempsford station that either option assumes access off Barford Road. Transport modelling assessments will be carried out to assess whether any amendments may be needed to the junctions nearby or Barford road itself.*
- *What acoustic barriers are proposed for alignment options 1b and 1c? RM confirmed that it has been assumed for the design presented to date that noise barriers wouldn't be required along the route based on the noise modelling, except for in some areas where the line passes close to existing housing in the Cambridge area. FM confirmed that the modelling and assessment work to understand required mitigations, such as noise barriers, are still being carried out.*
- *Can EWR Co confirm if the existing rail operators on the ECML have committed to stopping, and at what intervals, at the new Tempsford station? RM advised that EWR Co work with Network Rail, rather than the individual operators, and have confidence from the initial modelling work that there is sufficient space in the timetable for other services on the ECML to stop at Tempsford. JG stated that it was important for those living nearby to the proposed new station at Tempsford to understand the likely number of services stopping at this station.*
- *What are the heights of the viaduct above ground on options 1b and 1c? RM advised that the height at the start of the viaducts is available on the [plan and profile maps](#). JG confirmed he would look at these.*
- *Can EWR Co confirm if the viaducts will be constructed from steel or concrete? RM confirmed that the design for the viaducts is currently still being considered and the materials to be used for these are still to be confirmed. FM confirmed that an assumption would need to be made regarding the materials used for the viaduct to inform the carbon assessments (this would be a reasonable worst case), but the contractors will have flexibility in the design and materials they choose to use.*
- *Can EWR Co outline what brief has been given to the designers of the viaducts? RM advised that EWR Co will specify enough detail for the design in order for the environmental and traffic assessments to be carried out, but would provide scope for the detailed designers and contractors to input into the final design, so that their expertise and innovation can be taken into account in the design.*

- 5.43 JG queried whether the viaduct design will be available at statutory consultation.
- 5.44 RM advised that visualisations would likely be available to show any visual impacts that the viaducts may cause, but the consultation wouldn't necessarily include details of the final designs for all structures.
- 5.45 JG asked about the proposed multi-storey car park near Bedford Hospital South Wing and at what point would EWR Co inform the public about what access would be like to the hospital during the construction of the new multi-storey car park.
- 5.46 BN confirmed this information would be available at the statutory consultation.
- 5.47 JG advised that this is a big worry for those who need to access the hospital.
- 5.48 SJ confirmed that EWR Co will seek to minimise impacts on patient care as far as possible and are in ongoing discussions with the local council and Bedford Hospital regarding this.
- 5.49 Nicola Gribble (NG) queried about a small section of land within the Red Line Boundary near Wilden High Street.
- 5.50 RM confirmed that this is where the PRoW is.
- 5.51 NG queried whether there are plans to demolish any more houses other than in the Poets area.
- 5.52 RM confirmed that in the current design, in the parts of the project covered by sections 4 and 5 in the [consultation document](#) none would be demolished, but there may be some direct impacts to some residential properties. Within section 6 one property may need to be demolished at Two Pots Farm and there have been discussions with Roxton Garden Centre regarding demolition as part of alignment option 1b.
- 5.53 PN stated that EWR Co have said one of the social benefits being considered as part of the scheme is a cycle track adjacent to the rail line, and queried to what extent this is being considered.
- 5.54 RM confirmed that the request for cycle ways adjacent to the railway have been raised a number of times. EWR Co are looking at active travel across the route and would consider cycle routes alongside the railway where this is the best option, but in many cases, this isn't the best route for people to get from A to B.
- 5.55 PN asked if this is being considered where there's an advantage to the route running along the railway. RM confirmed yes.
- 5.56 PN asked to what extent the railway will be fenced. RM confirmed that the line would be fenced along the whole route.
- 5.57 PN asked what type of fence this will be. RM confirmed the fence would be in line with Network Rail specifications.

- 5.58 PN asked if there would be provisions for wildlife to travel through the fences. RM advised that where it is known that there is wildlife, EWR Co would look to provide crossings where it is practicable to do so.
- 5.59 PN asked when the statutory consultation would take place. SJ confirmed that it is hoped it would be within 12 months of the close of the non-statutory consultation, but this has yet to be confirmed by the DfT.
- 5.60 BF stated that at the Wilden event he was informed that there would be overhead electrification at the Wilden cutting and advised that there is a rumour that the small section of land within the Red Line Boundary near Wilden High Street would require the demolition of houses near this.
- 5.61 RM confirmed that in the current design no houses would be demolished in this area, and advised that regarding electrification, the preference is for discontinuous electrification, and options for this are currently being explored.
- 5.62 NG queried, regarding wildlife corridors, what would happen to animals such as badgers, deer, foxes and hares whose range would be cut by the double fence lining the railway.
- 5.63 FM confirmed that ecological surveys need to be completed to understand where these animals' habitats are, and where their range paths go. FM confirmed that EWR Co would be working closely with Natural England, and this work is still ongoing, but the impacts on animals and their habitats is being considered.
- 5.64 NG queried what mitigation would be put in place for animals that can't climb over or pass through the fences. FM confirmed that for badgers for example, their setts may either have to be relocated or suitable access would need to be provided for badgers to access this, but if access is mostly cut off by the fence, EWR Co would likely need to relocate the sett.
- 5.65 NG advised that in the area there are healthy populations of Muntjac deer, Chinese Water deer and Roe deer.
- 5.66 FM advised that deer are notoriously hard to survey as they have large roaming areas, but if NG has any information to share regarding the location of these deer, please share these with the team for this to be considered.
- 5.67 RM advised that a lot of the proposed habitat mitigation is to improve the ecology in the area and enhance existing habitats.
- 5.68 GJ advised that the electricity supply in the area is very fragile and questioned whether measures are being taken to upgrade this to cope with the electrification of the rail. GJ advised that the area is becoming more reliant on solar power but there isn't sufficient battery power for this to provide the required electricity alone.
- 5.69 RM confirmed that power in this area will be taken from the Little Barford power station and EWR Co are working with electricity providers to understand supply

feasibility. EWR Co wouldn't increase electricity capacity but would check there is sufficient supply in the network for EWR to connect to this.

5.70 GJ advised that Little Barford power station is gas powered,.

5.71 John Dunford (JD) advised that EWR Co need to seriously consider whether discontinuous electrification is the right option, as this wouldn't benefit freight trains as locomotives with diesel, electric and battery power are only able to use power for short distances. This may mean that the EWR route would likely have diesel locomotives dragging freight trains.

## 6 Closing remarks, AOB

6.1 SJ thanked the attendees for their contributions during the session and advised that all the information and documents for the non-statutory consultation are available on the [EWR website](#).

6.2 SJ advised that if any attendees have any further questions these can be sent via the official EWR email channels, and that the meeting recording, transcript and meeting note would be shared with attendees in the following week.

## Feedback Log:

Issue	Description
1.	Concern raised that there are currently two bridleways in the Brickhill area that do not connect, and a subsequent request was made to investigate the feasibility of connecting these.
2.	Concern raised regarding access and egress from the Clapham floodplain for construction of the viaduct.
3.	Concern raised regarding how surface water accumulation in Clapham due to the cutting will be dealt with, highlighting that if there is a heavy downpour this will be a real problem, due to the clay soils and the lack of vegetation meaning the water will not be easily absorbed.
4.	Query regarding where materials 'cut' will be stored, as well as concern shown for the carbon impacts of removing and transporting these materials.
5.	A point was raised about EWR Co changing their plan to satisfy a maximum freight gradient in one in 100 rather than one in 80, noting that the footprint of the maps shown needed adaptation.



Issue	Description
6.	Request for a cut and cover tunnel to be considered in the Clapham area.
7.	Concern raised about flooding risk at Clapham and Wilden high streets.
8.	Request that a cut and cover tunnel is considered in Wilden.
9.	Request that a welded rail and track bed damping is considered at Wilden to mitigate the noise impacts of the rail line travelling directly past residential properties and gardens.
10.	Query regarding whether the passing loops at Colesden are still necessary.
11.	Attendee stated that the majority of the population in Wyboston, Chawston and Colesden are elderly, and with a lack of footpaths and cycle tracks, the modelling may not be completely representative. It was also noted that there is no bus service in the area.
12.	Statement made that it was important for those living nearby to the proposed new station at Tempsford to understand the likely number of services stopping at this station.
13.	Query regarding the proposed multi-storey car park near Bedford Hospital South Wing, and at what point EWR Co will inform the public about what access will be like to the hospital during the construction of the new-multi storey car park.
14.	Request for mitigation to be put in place for animals that can't climb over or pass through the fences to cross the railway, advising that there are healthy populations of Muntjac deer, Chinese Water deer and Roe deer near/ in Ravensden.
15.	Attendee advised that the electricity supply (taken from the Little Barford Power Station) in the area is very fragile and questioned whether measures are being taken to upgrade this to cope with the electrification of the rail. Advised that the area is becoming more reliant on solar power but there isn't sufficient battery power for this to provide the required electricity alone. Furthermore, Little Barford power station is gas powered.

## Summary of actions

- **ACTION 1**: Fiona Man to provide information regarding the hierarchy of the six areas covered in the EIA.
- **ACTION 2**: Attendees to send any questions regarding the Bedford section of the route to Sarah Jacobs via email, for an answer to be provided.
- **ACTION 3**: EWR Co Bedford team to provide further detail to Peter Norris regarding the access routes for construction traffic for the Bedford viaduct.
- **ACTION 4**: EWR Co to look into the possibility of running a session on construction plans and impacts in the coming months.
- **ACTION 5**: EWR Co to consider a further meeting regarding noise impacts and proposed noise mitigation measures with Wyboston, Chawston and Colesden Parish Council.

## Attendees:

### EWR Co attendees

- **Sarah Jacobs** - Senior Engagement Manager
- **Siobhan Adeleke** - DCO Statutory Stakeholder Engagement Manager
- **Rob Milner** - Development Programme Manager
- **Fiona Man** - Senior Environmental Advisor
- **Ben Nicholass** - Traffic, Transport Planning and Modelling Senior Manager

### Parish Council representatives

- **Cllr Tony Hyde** - Abbotsley Parish Council
- **Cllr Mark Fitzpatrick** - Brickhill Parish Council
- **Cllr Jon Abbott** - Clapham Parish Council
- **Cllr Eric Cooper** - Clapham Parish Council
- **Cllr Zara Layne** - Harpur Ward, Bedford Borough Council
- **Cllr Colleen Atkins** - Harpur Ward, Bedford Borough Council
- **Cllr Nicola Gribble** - Ravensden Parish Council (and Ward councillor for Renhold and Ravensden on Bedford Borough Council)
- **Cllr Bernie Russell** - Ravensden Parish Council
- **Cllr Justin Griffiths** - Roxton Parish Council
- **Cllr John Dunford** - St Neots Parish Council
- **Cllr Brent Fielder** - Wilden Parish Council
- **Cllr Sharanjit Sira** - Wyboston, Chawston and Colesden Parish Council
- **Cllr Gordon Johnston** - Wyboston, Chawston and Colesden Parish Council
- **Martin Ley**
- **Peter Norris** - Technical Advisor

## Apologies

- Little Barford Parish Council
- Tempsford Parish Council
- Toseland Parish Council
- Colmworth Parish Council