

The Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025

East West Railway Company (EWR Co) is preparing to submit a Development Consent Order (DCO) application under the Planning Act 2008. Recent changes made through the Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025 (PIA) will update the DCO process to make it simpler and more efficient.

The PIA will speed up and streamline the delivery of critical infrastructure, supporting delivery of the Government's 'Plan for Change' milestone of fast-tracking 150 planning decisions on major economic infrastructure projects by the end of this Parliament.

One of the key features of the PIA in relation to nationally significant infrastructure projects (NSIPs) is the streamlining of pre-application consultation requirements. It is intended to provide applicants with more flexibility to develop focussed and effective local engagement.

The Government identified that the pre-application consultation requirements were disproportionate and a cause of delays to NSIPs.

The PIA will remove the legal duty to consult specific people and organisations, including landowners, local authorities and the community. It means applicants will no longer need to publicise and consult on preliminary environmental information in relation to a proposed development and will no longer be required to produce a consultation report as part of their application for DCO.

What does this mean for people living and working close to the East West Rail route?

Although there will no longer be a requirement to hold a statutory consultation prior to submitting our DCO application, we are carrying out a non-statutory public consultation on our updated proposals in spring 2026. We think this is important to make sure people have the opportunity to review our updated proposals and share feedback before we submit our DCO application. All feedback we receive will be considered as we finalise our proposals.


The new legislation also gives us more flexibility in how we engage with communities. As our designs develop, it allows us to focus more on local issues and provide more targeted engagement with the people and organisations most affected. We have been engaging with key stakeholders (including local authorities, environmental bodies, Network Rail, National Highways and emergency services) and local communities on an ongoing basis during the development of our proposals and will continue to do so.


We have developed a comprehensive programme of meaningful engagement with local authorities, statutory bodies and other technical stakeholders, enabling them to influence our scheme design. Design update sessions have taken place to provide communities with more information on emerging design in areas of the EWR project where this differs significantly from what was seen at the last non-statutory consultation. The spring public consultation complements those ongoing engagement activities.

Get in touch

If you have any questions, please get in touch using the details below:

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