

Land and Property – Your Questions Answered if your property is within the draft Order Limits

East West Rail is a project of national significance which means that instead of applying for planning permission from a local authority, permission will be sought at a national level from the Secretary of State for Transport, via a Development Consent Order (DCO). The DCO would authorise the construction and operation of a new railway between Bedford and Cambridge and associated works including works to upgrade and refurbish the existing railway between Oxford and Bedford. Further information about East West Rail can be found on our website: www.eastwestrail.co.uk

This document answers some questions which you may have at this stage and how you can get involved in our consultation commencing in April 2026.

In this document, the term ‘landowners’ is used to describe freehold owners of land, property owners, tenants, and those with other interests in land.

If you are a landowner and we are not already in contact with you please contact our Land and Property team using the details at the end of this document so we can discuss how our proposals may affect your land.

I have received a Consultation letter and Land Interest Plan – what do they mean?

We have sent you a letter and a Land Interest Plan as based on Land Registry information and our land referencing process, we believe that you have an interest in land or property which is within the area of land we may need to build, operate and/or maintain the project, known as the draft Order Limits. This means that your land or property may be required to build or operate the Project.

The Land Interest Plan enclosed shows the draft Order Limits outlined in red, and the land or property in which you have an interest outlined in blue. The plan has shading to show how we would need to use the land. Land required for permanent acquisition is shaded pink, land

where we need temporary possession and permanent rights (for example to access and maintain utilities) is shaded blue and land we need to use temporarily is shaded green.

Where we are proposing environmental mitigation or carrying out works that affect existing highways, private accesses and Public Rights of Way this is shown on our land use plans as permanent acquisition to ensure we can deliver the works. We will work with impacted landowners to understand potential impacts and discuss the appropriate ownership of these areas by agreement. We will ensure that access to landowners' retained land is maintained. Our Consultation Brochure includes information on potential impacts and proposed mitigation on public rights of way, highways and private access roads.

The draft Order Limits and proposed land use shown on the plans reflect our current designs for the project. The extent of land and proposed uses for that land may change in the future as we respond to consultation feedback and continue design development. The location of some elements, such as drainage ponds, environmental mitigation and the routes of utility diversions are still being refined, so our plans make allowance for this in certain locations. Once we have more certainty, the draft Order Limits and proposed land use will be updated, and we will discuss the changes with you if you are affected.

The route section that your land is located within is shown in the key on your Land Interest Plan. You can find more information on our proposals in this route section and the wider Project in our Consultation Brochure. This and supporting material including full set of plans from Oxford to Cambridge is available at: eastwestrail.co.uk

The Development Consent Order (DCO) application will include all powers necessary to build, operate and maintain the new railway, including compulsory acquisition powers to ensure we can secure all the required land. The Order Limits and Land Plans submitted as part of the application will identify all land required and where we require permanent acquisition, permanent rights or temporary possession of land.

We will refine our draft Order Limits following consultation and before we submit our DCO application. As our proposals develop, we will continue to seek to reduce the impact of our proposals on homes, land and property where possible and on sensitive environmental features and historic landscapes. Although the DCO will include the necessary rights and powers to ensure delivery of the project, including powers of compulsory acquisition, we want to engage with all landowners to reduce the impacts of the proposals and to secure land and rights required for the project by voluntary agreement.

In the letter you have received we have asked you to review the Land Interest Plan (enclosed with our letter) and advise our Land and Property Team on land@eastwestrail.co.uk if you no longer have an interest in the land or have other interests that you think are impacted by the draft Order Limits. We will review and update the land interest information as part of our land referencing process throughout the preapplication process.

When will you provide further design details and land requirements and consult with me about them?

Throughout the pre-application process, we will seek to discuss our proposals with landowners. Although the DCO will include the necessary rights and powers to ensure delivery of the project, including powers of compulsory acquisition, we want to engage with all landowners to reduce the impacts of the proposals and to secure land and rights required for the project by voluntary agreement.

It is important that you have the opportunity to tell us what you think about the proposals for East West Rail, responding to the consultation is a way for you to provide feedback on, and influence, the design of our proposals. We will also engage and consult with other statutory consultees (such as the local authorities and the Environment Agency) and the local community.

We may need to make further changes to the draft Order Limits following feedback received from you and other landowners during the consultation. There are also likely to be changes due to design refinement and in relation to the land utility companies may need to divert their existing assets or make new utility connections. We will let you know if any changes impact you and discuss these with you.

Following the consultation, we will consider all feedback received and, along with the results of further technical assessments and environmental impact assessment we'll finalise our design proposals, with a focus on sustainability and mitigation of potential environmental effects. We will present our proposals as well as more information on technical detail, potential impacts and proposed mitigation measures in our DCO application.

We may also need to contact you to undertake survey work on your land or property, or continue surveys already taking place, for ecology, ground investigations or archaeological investigations. If we need to, we will contact you separately to explain the type(s) of survey we would like to carry out.

We will continue to be in touch across all stages of the process to update our land interest information. We do this to identify the people and organisations with legal interests in land that may be affected by our proposals. We check this information regularly so we know who owns, occupies and uses the land to keep them fully informed about our consultation and later down the line, involvement in the DCO process.

When the DCO application has been accepted for examination by the Planning Inspectorate, we will notify those landowners whose home or property may be directly affected by our proposals and provide details on how they can make representations on the application and the deadline

for doing so. During the examination of the DCO application, we will stay in touch with those landowners to continue negotiations to seek to enter into agreements to acquire the necessary land and rights voluntarily.

Should the Secretary of State decide to grant the DCO then EWR Co will write to formally notify those whose home or property may be directly affected by our proposals. We would then start the process of gaining entry onto land for construction, either through agreements or through the compulsory acquisition powers provided by the DCO.

You can find more about the Planning Act 2008 process and Development Consent Orders on the Planning Inspectorate's National Infrastructure Planning website:
nationalinfrastructureconsenting.planninginspectorate.gov.uk

Our fact sheets on the Development Consent Order (DCO) Process and what it means for landowners and Summary of the Blight Notice process – provide further information on the DCO process and are available at eastwestrail.co.uk

Will EWR Co be using compulsory purchase to buy homes, land or property?

We would prefer to enter into a voluntary negotiated agreement with you. However, so that we have the certainty that we can acquire this land to build and operate our proposals, we will still need to seek the appropriate powers for compulsory acquisition in our DCO application. In our application, we must satisfy the Secretary of State that the land is required for the proposed railway or is required for the railway, and that there is a compelling case in the public interest for the land to be acquired compulsorily.

Our dedicated Land and Property team are available to meet with landowners and their agents to start discussions on negotiated agreements and agree terms for the acquisition of land and rights over land needed for our proposals.

We have produced various guides to explain compulsory acquisition including *Guide to Compulsory Acquisition and Compensation*. These guides are available at eastwestrail.co.uk

Safeguarding the land needed for our proposals

The Secretary of State for Transport has made Safeguarding Directions for our proposals. The aim of safeguarding is to make sure that the land needed to build and operate the new railway is protected from new development that may conflict with it. The Safeguarding Directions require local planning authorities to consult EWR Co on relevant planning applications for



development within the boundaries shown on the safeguarding plans before deciding on the relevant planning permission. This process enables us to consider ways to resolve any conflicts so that development can be approved.

The Safeguarding Directions reflect our proposals published in the You Said, We Did Autumn Update in November 2025. We are currently reviewing the safeguarded area and we will ask the Secretary of State to update the directions where design work has advanced. We expect to ask the Secretary of State to do this in summer 2026.

More information on safeguarding, including the Safeguarding Directions and plans of the safeguarded area, is available at eastwestrail.co.uk/safeguarding

We have previously written to those with an interest in land and property within the safeguarding area to explain what this means. We will write to you if you are affected by future updates to the Safeguarding Directions.

Can EWR Co buy my land, property or home now?

As well as helping to protect the land needed for our proposals, the Safeguarding Directions also mean that statutory blight provisions are available to eligible property owners. If you own and occupy a property in the safeguarded area, you may be eligible to serve a blight notice on us asking us to buy your property before we need it to build the railway.

We introduced our discretionary Need to Sell (NTS) Property Scheme at the route update announcement in 2023. This provides support for those property owners who have a compelling need to sell but are unable to sell their property, other than at a substantially reduced value, because of our proposals.

Owner-occupiers who are not eligible to serve a Blight Notice may be able to apply under the NTS Property Scheme. Your property does not need to be within the safeguarded area for you to be eligible to apply under the scheme.

Information on statutory blight and the NTS Property Scheme is available on the Land and Property section of the website: eastwestrail.co.uk/land-and-property

This includes full eligibility criteria for each and details of the process.

What compensation is available to me if my land and property is needed for your proposals?

Compensation will be assessed in accordance with the 'Compensation Code.' The Compensation Code is a collective term for principles derived from Acts of Parliament and case law relating to compensation for compulsory acquisition.

The overriding principle of compulsory purchase compensation is equivalence. This is the principle that people whose land or property is acquired compulsorily should be left neither better nor worse financially as a result of their land being acquired and are entitled to compensation which is neither more nor less than the value of their loss.

The compensation may be for:

- Land required permanently for the railway.
- Land required temporarily for uses such as contractor compounds during construction.
- Loss in value of land that is affected but not required for the project.
- Associated disturbance costs.
- Statutory loss payments (if eligible).

There are guides to help explain how the compensation process works. These are available on the Land and Property section of our website at: eastwestrail.co.uk/land-and-property

Compensation is a complex area of law and surveying practice. You are advised to appoint a suitably qualified Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) chartered surveyor to negotiate any claim.

Who can I contact to discuss the proposals and how they will impact my land and property? How can I arrange a meeting to discuss this further?

We are hosting a number of in-person consultation events where you can see maps, plans and other consultation materials and speak to our Land and Property team, and other specialists in the project team. We will also be holding three online events. More information on these, including the dates, is available here: eastwestrail.co.uk/consultation2026

As your land and property is included in the draft Order Limits our Land and Property team would like to meet you and/or your agent to discuss how our proposals may potentially affect



your land. Where possible we will have already been in touch with you to arrange this. If we have not been able to contact you, please contact our Land and Property team to arrange a meeting to introduce yourself or discuss any concerns.

You can:

Call us on **0330 838 7583** (this phone line is answered between 9am and 5:30pm, so please leave us a message if you call outside this time and we will call you back as soon as possible) or email us at **land@eastwestrail.co.uk** or contact us by post at Freepost **EAST WEST RAIL LAND**.

If you want to speak to us about the Need to Sell (NTS) Property Scheme, please contact our dedicated Need to Sell team by phone on **0330 838 7583**, or email us at **needtosell@eastwestrail.co.uk**

If you want to speak to us about Statutory Blight, please contact our dedicated Blight team by phone on **0330 838 7583**, or email us at **blight@eastwestrail.co.uk**

Can I seek professional advice to assist me through this process?

We want to talk to you about our proposals. Please contact the Land and Property team to discuss individual concerns and to arrange a meeting to discuss how our proposals affect your land and property.

You should also consider taking independent professional advice as your land or property is potentially required for our proposals. We recommend you appoint a RICS qualified Chartered Surveyor with experience of compulsory purchase.

If you have appointed a RICS surveyor to represent you, please ask them to contact the Land and Property team to agree the basis for which fees will be reimbursed, including for an initial meeting.

For further advice and assistance, RICS has a helpline scheme which enables landowners to contact a regulated member firm (listed on their website) for an initial 30-minute free consultation: **[ricsfirms.com/helplines/compulsory-purchase](https://www.ricsfirms.com/helplines/compulsory-purchase)**

Please contact the Land and Property team if you have any questions on how you can get independent professional advice and what costs we can reimburse. Further information is available in our Guide to Reimbursement of Agents Fees on the Land and Property section of our website: **www.eastwestrail.co.uk/land-and-property**

Where can I get more information on land and property matters?

We have also produced a range of guides which can be found in the Land and Property section of our website: www.eastwestrail.co.uk/land-and-property

- Guide to Compulsory Acquisition and Compensation.
- Guide to Part 1 Claims.
- Guide to Reimbursement of Agents Fees

Information on statutory blight including what to do if you need to serve a blight notice is available at eastwestrail.co.uk/safeguarding

Information on the Need to Sell (NTS) Property Scheme is available at eastwestrail.co.uk/needtosell

Please sign up to the East West Rail newsletter to stay informed with updates. You can do this here: eastwestrail.co.uk/get-in-touch