



Buckinghamshire Council

Transport, Environment & Climate Change Select Committee

Minutes

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE TRANSPORT, ENVIRONMENT & CLIMATE CHANGE SELECT COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY 2 FEBRUARY 2023 IN THE OCULUS, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNCIL, GATEHOUSE ROAD, AYLESBURY HP19 8FF, COMMENCING AT 10.00 AM AND CONCLUDING AT 12.30 PM

MEMBERS PRESENT

B Chapple OBE, R Carington, P Brazier, M Caffrey, M Collins, P Cooper, C Cornell, E Culverhouse, E Gemmell, M Rand, L Sullivan, D Watson and A Wood

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE

S Broadbent, G Williams, D King and P Martin

Agenda Item

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors M Knight and A Poland-Goodyer. Councillor P Cooper had substituted in for Councillor A Poland-Goodyer.

Councillor M Knight had replaced Councillor S Guy as a Member of the Committee.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor S Broadbent declared a personal interest in Item 5 as the Chairman of the East West Main Line Partnership.

3 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 November 2022 were confirmed as an accurate record.

4 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

Two public questions were considered at the meeting as attached to the agenda, and verbal responses were provided by the Cabinet Member for Transport and the Cabinet Member for Environment. The questions and the responses are appended to the minutes.

5 EAST WEST RAIL

The Chairman welcomed Mark Cuzner (East West Rail Alliance) and Peter Hume (Network Rail) to the meeting and invited the Cabinet Member for Transport, Councillor Steven Broadbent, to introduce the item. The Cabinet Member noted that activities on the project had increased over

the last year which was heavily impacting local communities (e.g. road conditions and closures, and traffic management). A team of officers was in continual dialogue to manage road closure applications and community engagement, and the Council was supporting residents where possible. The work of the Deputy Cabinet Member for Transport, Councillor Peter Martin, was acknowledged as was the work of local Ward Members to support their communities.

The Cabinet Member announced that the Council had secured an agreement with EWR to carry out permanent repairs to 12 roads in the north of the county over the next 12 months. The first road in the programme, Queen Catherine Road, had already been repaired. The Cabinet Member hoped the programme reassured residents and that EWR would effectively communicate the closures required for the repairs to occur. The plans are appended to the minutes.

Prior to the presentation given by East West Rail, Mark Cuzner noted apologies from Jez Baldock and Kate Campbell. The following points were highlighted during the presentation:-

- The Alliance acknowledged the disruption the project caused residents and businesses and apologized for this impact. The Alliance had tried to mitigate the disruption and thanked Members and the community for its engagement.
- The infrastructure ready date was on target for its scheduled delivery of July 2024. Currently, work was underway on Sections 2A and 2B which involved HS2 carrying out the civil works.
- 54% of track laying was complete and materials were brought in via the rail network. Substantial work at Bletchley Station had completed whilst Winslow Station was underway. 9 footbridges (7 in Bucks) had been completed which aimed to reconnect community footpaths over the railway. 5 new bridges (3 in Bucks) were completed and open to traffic.
- The Alliance briefed HGV drivers on routes and expected behaviours (e.g. wheel-washing) in order to alleviate pressures caused by traffic movements to and from EWR compounds. Winter had been particularly challenging. Acoustic barriers had also been installed to protect the community during construction.
- There were three discussion workstreams with HS2 on traffic management which aimed to coordinate road closures and avoid joint-closures.
- EWR's 10% biodiversity net gain commitment required the provision of compensation sites adjacent to the railway. The intention was to minimise removal and protect vegetation where possible. The Alliance worked with Natural England on environmental mitigations and key species e.g. badgers and great crested newts. One example of vegetation retention was a cutting west of Salden Wood Bridge.
- The project considered climate resilience by being built to withstand a 40% rainfall increase and 65-70% river flow increase.
- Upcoming future works had a RAG rating to measure its impact on the community. Notable red items were 'Compound & Temporary Land Reinstatement' and Permanent Highway Repairs & Reinstatements' which would require traffic management and use of HGVs.

The following points were made during the Select Committee's discussion:-

- Road repairs were carried out by EWR and were inspected by the Council. During the handover process, officers assessed the repair prior to being returned to Highways. The repairs were covered by a defect period of 12 months.
- Members were disappointed to note that mud on the roads was still an issue having been raised last year. The Alliance reiterated the measures in place to monitor and

control the problem (e.g. use of road sweepers) and reassured that areas of concern were followed-up by onsite inspections.

- The Alliance followed design standards for work to bridges and their associated signage. There were historic issues related to Sandhill Road bridge. The completed footbridges were located in rural areas did not have step-free access but did have handrails and tactile paving. The Chairman reminded the Alliance of the importance of accessibility for all Buckinghamshire residents.
- One Member raised concern regarding the height of the Marsh Gibbon railway bridge which was causing problems for local business. EWR advised they had replaced the bridge to the agreed specifications and understood there was a signage issue however the Council was actively challenging this position.
- The Alliance was confident in delivering the project on time however this was subject to the risk of HS2 suffering delays. An example of recent joint work was HS2 handing over the western fringe of an integration area of 3km. EWR did have ability to recover time in its programme if required.
- Members expressed significant concerns regarding the plans for the usage of diesel rolling stock on the line. Members also noted that electrifying the line would likely be more cost-effective during construction rather than retrofitting and requested figures on these estimated costs.

Action: EWR Alliance / Network Rail

- The legacy Buckinghamshire County and Aylesbury Vale District councils had supported the project's initial electrification plans. Network Rail advised that electrifying was de-scoped by Government before consent was granted for the project and that Government policy was to investigate decarbonising options which may use battery, hydrogen, or hybrid technologies in future rather than electricity. However, none of these options would be available until after the line was scheduled to open. Due to commercial sensitivities, an end date for the 'short-term' use of diesel rolling stock could not be provided however Network Rail would share information on this in future once publicly available.

Action: Network Rail

- EWR would also share information regarding the evaluation of different rolling stock options within the timescales which had considered capital outlay vs running costs e.g. engine maintenance and fuel.

Action: EWR Alliance / Network Rail

- The line would be closed daily between 12:30am – 5am for engineering works. The demand for freight, running at one per hour in accordance with the planning permission, would be better understood over the next 12 months when the new timetable would be created. It was estimated each freight train contained around 20 wagons.
- Network Rail viewed the Aylesbury Spur as a priority however it currently did not pass the central Government affordability test. The Cabinet Member for Transport continued working towards achieving the line's link to Aylesbury and all Members reiterated the importance of working together to this goal.
- Buckinghamshire Council held its £15m towards the project and release funds for works in agreement with EWR. One example was funding allocation towards the car park at Winslow which would enable access to the railway.
- Non-statutory consultation had been carried out 18 months ago regarding the line's development between Milton Keynes and Cambridge. Statutory consultation was planned this year with planning permission applications to follow.
- Areas of site access were on the list of reinstatement works but would be carried out last. The Spinney, Winslow, was one such area and aimed to be reinstated later this year.
- The Alliance's biodiversity 10% net gain would be supported by third parties and the supply chain, and currently the project was at parity for vegetation removal vs

replacement due to the number of compensation sites. The Strategy had been shared with the Council and further information on its implementation would be circulated to the Select Committee.

Action: EWR Alliance

- Over 150,000 trees and plants had been planted however Members would be advised of the number of trees lost to the project.

Action: EWR Alliance

- EWR had no requirement to produce an assessment of the project's carbon emissions however work was underway to look at its impact.
- The Cabinet Member for Transport reiterated the importance of the 12 road repairs over the next 12 months to impacted communities and the need to clearly communicate the timetable of works.

The Chairman thanked Mark Cuzner and Peter Hume for their attendance and reiterated the importance of the project's annual attendance at the TECC Select Committee due to its public interest and impact to Buckinghamshire residents. A follow-up letter from the Chairman would be drafted and circulated to members of the Committee.

6 PUBLIC TRANSPORT

The Cabinet Member for Transport introduced the report and highlighted the following points:-

- There were 60 schools accredited by Modeshift Stars in Buckinghamshire which made the county the top performing large local authority nationally.
- 28 out of the 95 bus services in Buckinghamshire were entirely supported by the Council.
- By May 2022, passenger numbers had returned to 80% of pre-covid figures.
- The national £2 bus fare cap scheme would cease at the end of March. The Enhanced Partnership was considering replacement schemes to maintain passenger numbers.
- The Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) offer in High Wycombe was performing well with up to 250 journeys taking place daily from between 700-800 'virtual' bus stops.
- There was evidence of repeat DRT use with 20% of users having done so 5+ times. Reviews were vastly positive with most negative reviews referring to wanting greater geographical coverage. This had been fed back to Department for Transport (DfT) who had funded and outlined the DRT area.
- After one year of usage, consideration may be given to developing the offering to cover evenings and weekends.

The following points were noted during the Committee's discussion:-

- One Member expressed interest in the High Wycombe DRT scheme being extended to Flackwell Heath and Little Marlow, whilst another Member encouraged a DRT in the Ivers following the trialling of a dial-a-ride scheme and the opening of the Elizabeth Line.
- The DRT scheme in Aylesbury may assist in the rural bus offering once it commenced later in the year.
- It was statutory for the Council to provide a concessionary fare offer which the Council chose to commence from 9am.
- Members considered the overall quality of bus services including engine quality. This would be addressed through the Enhanced Partnership and fleet upgrades in service contracts. Through the Enhanced Partnership, one operator in Ivinghoe would soon be expanding its timetable to include a last bus returning from Cheddington at 7pm.
- The High Wycombe DRT was not used for school buses but children aged 13+ could use the service. The DRT's operating area was based on a bid from 2020 that considered destinations such as the hospital and business parks with the intention of being reliable.

Terriers and Hazlemere had not been included due to this requirement and current usage-data supported this decision. Expanding the service times beyond 7pm or including weekends would need to consider its costs against demand.

The Chairman thanked the Cabinet Member and officers for the report.

7 WASTE OPTIONS APPRAISAL & STRATEGY

The Cabinet Member for Climate Change & Environment introduced the report and advised that this was an update on the Council's activities regarding the waste strategy. Currently waste collection in the north was in-house and outsourced in the south at a total annual operational cost of around £18.2m (£7.2m north, £11m south). The southern waste collection service had improved since last coming to TECC.

All options for the service provision were open and any decision would be subject to the decision-making process and timelines, and would factor in costs, customer experience and the climate change agenda. Clarity was also required on the proposed Government schemes, such as packaging waste and free garden waste, which could add variance to future service provision.

The following points were noted in the Committee's discussion:-

- The Cabinet Member agreed with the principal of a gully clearance being followed by a street sweeper however town centres had a key focus for street sweepers.
- Members noted that satisfaction of residents by the waste collection service may be more important than cost due to the reputational harm of a poor service. The in-house service in the north ran effectively and was highly valued by Members.
- The outsourced Veolia contract had a five-year contract break clause which was being explored as part of the overall options appraisal.
- The Government's scheme regarding producer responsibilities for packaging waste varied between devolved nations e.g. glass would not be included in England. The update from Government on 20 January 2023 was being assessed by Local Authorities who had raised inconsistencies. The commencement of the scheme in England had been delayed until October 2025.

The Chairman thanked the Cabinet Member and officers for the report and welcomed a future update on the development of the strategy.

8 WORK PROGRAMME

One Member requested that the Select Committee consider the Cycle Ways Strategy in its future work programme.

9 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Thursday 30 March at 10am.

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Transport, Environment & Climate Change Select Committee – 2 February 2023

Agenda Item 4 – Public Questions

Question One

I am concerned about the removal of evening bus services: for instance, the 280 between Oxford and Aylesbury used to offer late-night services beyond midnight on Fridays and Saturdays pre-pandemic, which have now been removed. These changes clearly run counter to the aim of encouraging people out of their cars and have targeted services that used to be comparatively well used. What information does Bucks Council hold about the removal of evening services across the county's bus network and what steps is it taking to encourage a reversal of the trend, whilst recognising the economic difficulties being faced by the companies and the fact that the council has no direct control over them.

Answer

Thank you for raising this matter with us. The late-night services between Oxford and Aylesbury, via Thame and Haddenham, were not subsidised by Buckinghamshire Council. Unfortunately, these journeys ceased during the pandemic, when leisure destinations themselves would've been required to close. As of yet these journeys have not restarted and Arriva have indicated to the Council that there are no current plans to do so. To subsidise these services would not, regrettably, be something that would be affordable from Council budgets at present.

Information provided by Arriva indicates that an average of 8-12 passengers per journey used these services, approximately 40 per day in total. A number of these would have been wholly within Oxfordshire.

The bus industry has faced a number of challenges since the start of the pandemic and now, with usage recovering into the 80%, there have been sharp cost increases for operators to bear including fuel and staffing costs, driven partly by a shortage of drivers in the industry over the past year-18 months. We are working with operators to support them through maintaining our subsidy budgets, through continuing to pay our concessionary fares reimbursement based on pre-COVID usage and through promoting bus services alongside operators. We have some schemes in planning for 23/24 that we'll be able to confirm shortly.

All of the above is intended to provide certainty to operators so that they can plan their services and maximise the resources at their disposal. It ultimately comes down to where is each of the vehicles in the fleet best utilised and we do understand the need for operators to be focussing resources on core daytime and early evening services.

Our Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP), which is available on the website, sets out aspirations to improve evening services, although not specifically late night services such as these. We were disappointed not to receive funding for our BSIP that means we cannot deliver on many of our aspirations at this time. However, the Council will be keeping its BSIP up to date and ensuring the Department for Transport has access to up to date

versions of the document, so that Buckinghamshire can be in their considerations if any future funding related to the BSIP becomes available.

Question Two

The education of the public to be more careful on recycling waste would be effective in burning less waste at Greatmoor. There are indications from the Welsh experience that a 10% reduction in waste is achievable in Buckinghamshire. This would produce a corresponding drop in CO² emissions. What improved methods of education could be effective in defining exactly what can and cannot be recycled and the requirement of cleanliness of items?

Answer

Buckinghamshire Council sent less than 0.2% of waste to landfill last year (21/22). It achieved this through a combination of recycling and composting 49% of its waste and sending the remainder to Greatmoor Energy from Waste facility (EfW). Landfilling waste creates around 20x more greenhouse gas emissions than incineration, so by only sending 0.2% of waste to landfill Buckinghamshire Council is avoiding a significant amount of greenhouse gas emissions which would have been emitted. There is also no incentive for the council to send more waste to Greatmoor than necessary. FCC, the contractor that runs the plant, are tasked with finding other waste sources if Buckinghamshire Council reduces how much waste it sends.

Welsh Authorities have very different methods of collecting recycling involving funding from the devolved administration which is not in place here in England. This makes it hard to draw fair comparisons between Welsh and English authorities.

However, we know the preventing materials becoming waste in the first place is important in reducing carbon emissions, saving taxpayers money and making sure natural resources are not depleted. We have a Waste Prevention Team who run public campaigns and projects to help residents prevent waste like;

- Delivering over 150 educational sessions to schools, community groups and local residents on Waste Prevention. These reached over 2,500 people, 1,300 of which were children.
- Managing the Waste Wizard and Zero Waste Map which had over 150,000 users combined in 2022. The Waste Wizard allows resident to get tailored recycling information on thousands of items and the Zero Waste Map helps residents find local businesses and projects that supply zero waste products or services.
- Launching new initiatives like the Cloth Nappy Discount scheme helping local residents choose reusable nappies instead of disposables saving waste going to Greatmoor and reducing costs for householders. Over 500 applications have been received in the first year.
- Working with our HRC contractor to increase how much waste was donated for reuse at the Charity shops at Aston Clinton & High Wycombe. We achieved the biggest percentage of reuse last year at the HRCs than ever before.

We will continue to deliver project like these and more to help reduce the amount of waste produce by Buckinghamshire homes.



Transport, Environment and Climate Change Select Committee

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2 February 2023

Minute Item 5



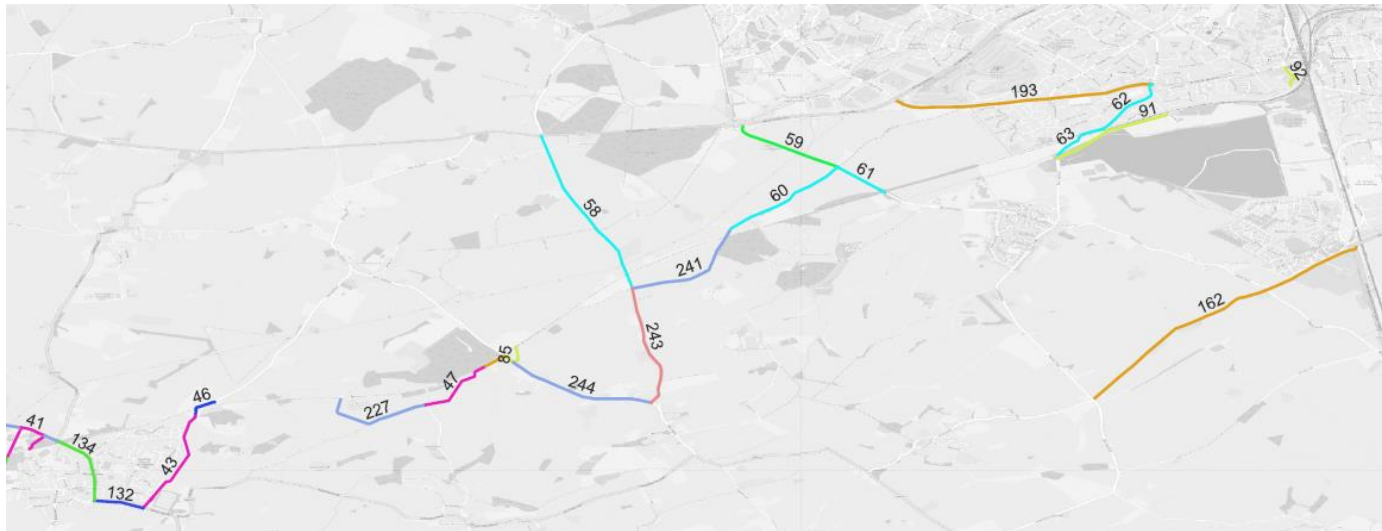
East West Rail (EWR) TWAO Construction Traffic Management Plans (CTMP) Permanent Road Repairs North Buckinghamshire

Batch 1 Agreement - 12 Construction Routes in 12 Months

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Ref	Construction Route Road Name	Route/ Link Number	Route/ Link Length	Party to undertake works	Programme (estimated)
1	Queen Catherine Road, Steeple Claydon	35	1 km	EWR Alliance	Oct 2022 <i>completed</i>
2	Whaddon Road (Newton Approach), Newton Longville	59	1 km	EWR Alliance	Nov 2022 <i>completed</i>
3	Whaddon Road, Newton Longville	61	0.52km	EWR Alliance	Nov 2022 <i>completed</i>
4	Verney Road (East of Addington)	40	1 km	EWR Alliance	Q1 2023
5	Little Horwood Road/Winslow Road	43	1.5 km	EWR Alliance	Q1 2023
6	Little Horwood Road	46	0.3 km	EWR Alliance	Q1 2023
7	Buckingham Road/Herds Hill	148	2 km	EWR Alliance	Q2/Q3 2023
8	Herds Hill	34	2.2 km	EWR Alliance	Q2/Q3 2023
9	Sandhill Road	99	0.32km	EWR Alliance	Q3 2023
10	Sandhill Road	37	1.75km	EWR Alliance	Q3 2023
11	Ox Lane & Lenborough Road	212	2 km	EWR Alliance	Q3 2023
12	Sandhill Road	217	0.21km	EWR Alliance	Q3 2023

East West Rail Alliance Construction Route Link Maps 1 & 2



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EWR Alliance

Connecting People

EWR2 Update

Buckinghamshire Council

TECC Select Committee

Mark Cuzner, Alliance Director

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Appendix

2022 Achievements



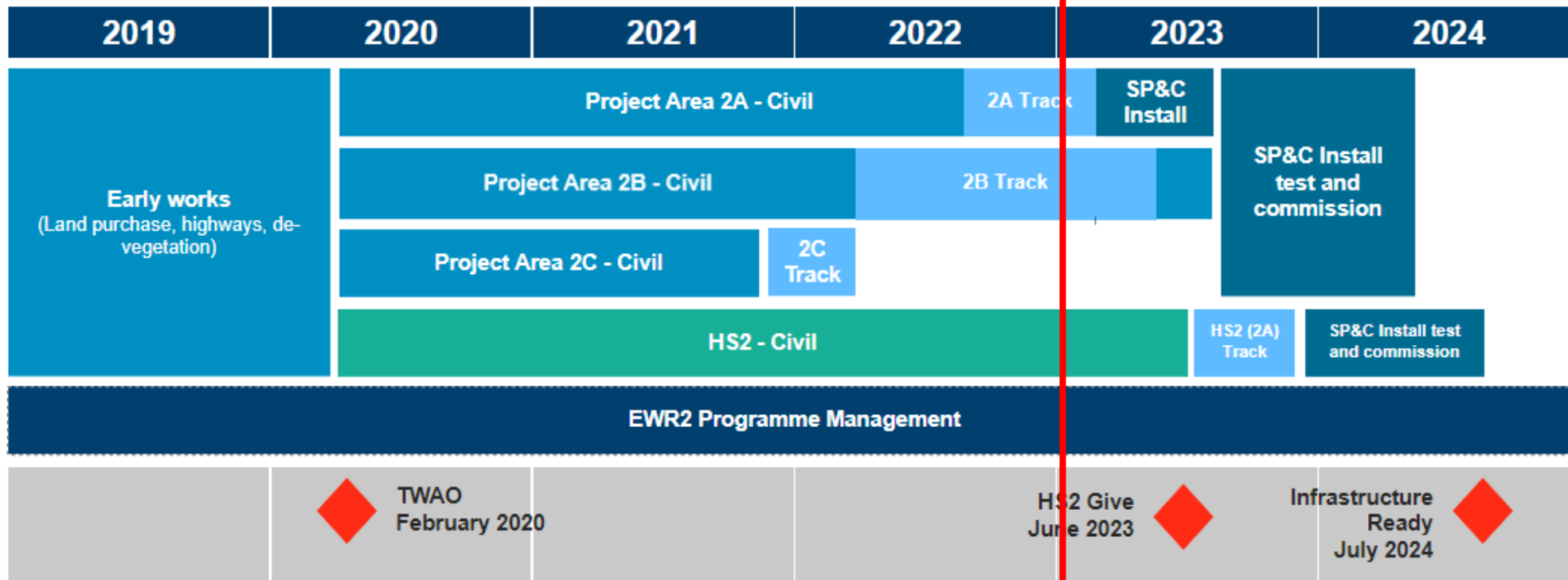
- Earthworks & drainage complete
- 50% Track laying complete
- 10 new footbridges installed
- 5 new roads/bridges completed
- 2 of 10 compounds reinstated
- Winslow & Bletchley Stations underway

- Permanent road repairs commenced
- Ecological compensation sites maturing
- 5 Awards for Environment & Sustainability
- National Rail Awards – 2 Highly Commended
- Institute of Collaborative Working Award

EWR2 Project Programme Summary – Jan'22



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Entry into Service Activities

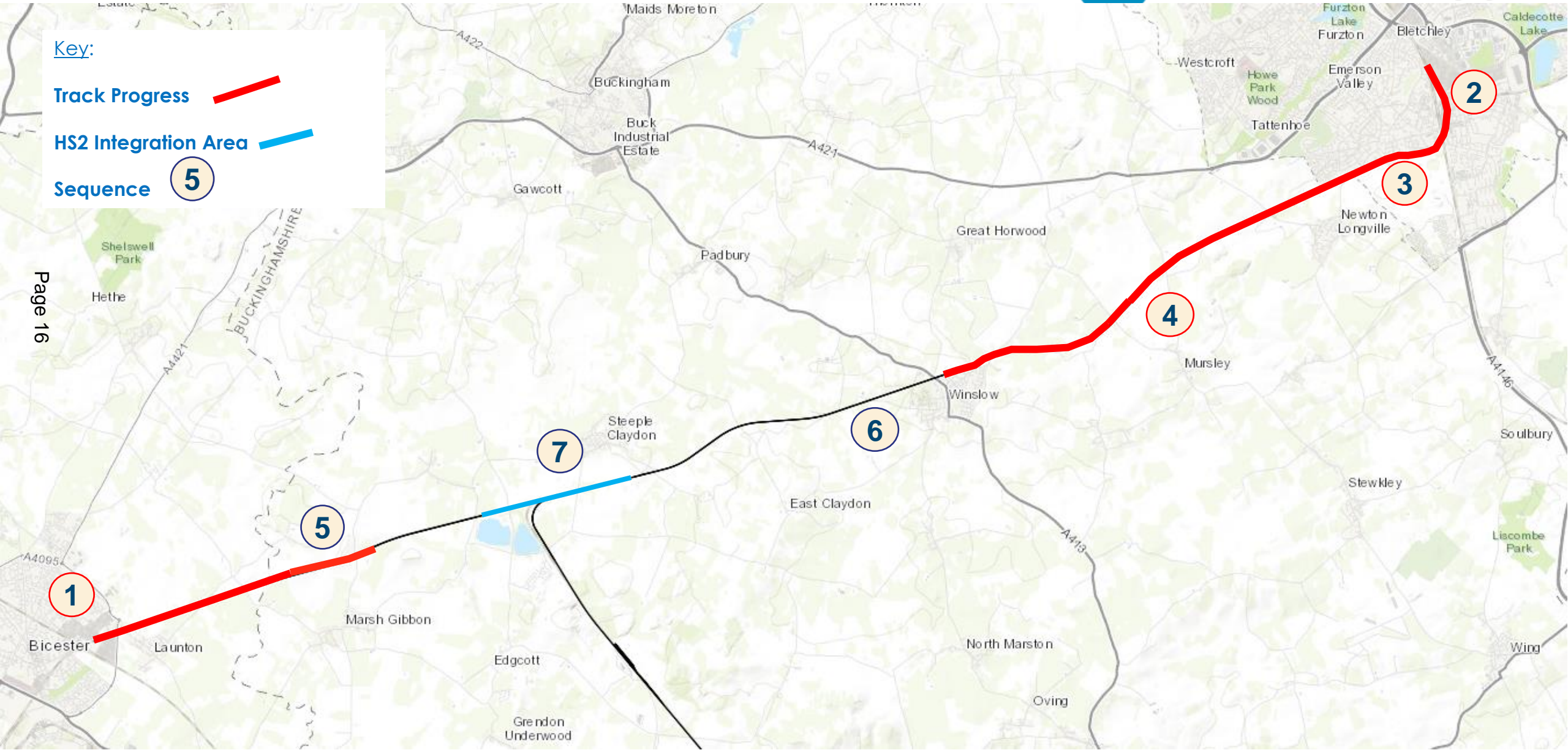



Track Construction Sequence



Key:

- Track Progress 
- HS2 Integration Area 
- Sequence 



Track Laying Progress



Rail Train



Winslow

- Total 66km track
- 53% complete



Cable Troughing



Swanborne



Installation Train (NTC)

Stations Progress



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Bletchley Station



Winslow Station

Footbridges (scheme wide)



OXD13A



OXD19



OXD32A

7 out of 10 new footbridges now open to the public

Buckinghamshire:

- OXD33A Marsh Gibbon – Opening 2023
- OXD32A Poundon No.2 – Opening 2023
- OXD29A Twyford No.2 – Opened
- OXD26A Middle Claydon No.8 – Opened
- OXD25A Middle Claydon No.4 & 6 - 2023
- OXD19 Winslow No.6 – Opened
- OXD13A Moco Farm No.2 – Opened
- OXD12A Swans Way - Opened

Oxfordshire:

- OXD36A Jarvis Lane – Opened
- OXD35A Grange Farm – Opened

New Bridges (scheme wide)

Salden Wood – impact minimised

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Chainage

84948

12-09-2022

5 out of 5 new bridges completed and open to traffic

Buckinghamshire:

- Queen Catherine Rd – Steeple Claydon
- Salden Lane - Mursley
- Verney Junction

Oxfordshire:

- Charbridge Lane – Bicester
- Station Road – Launton

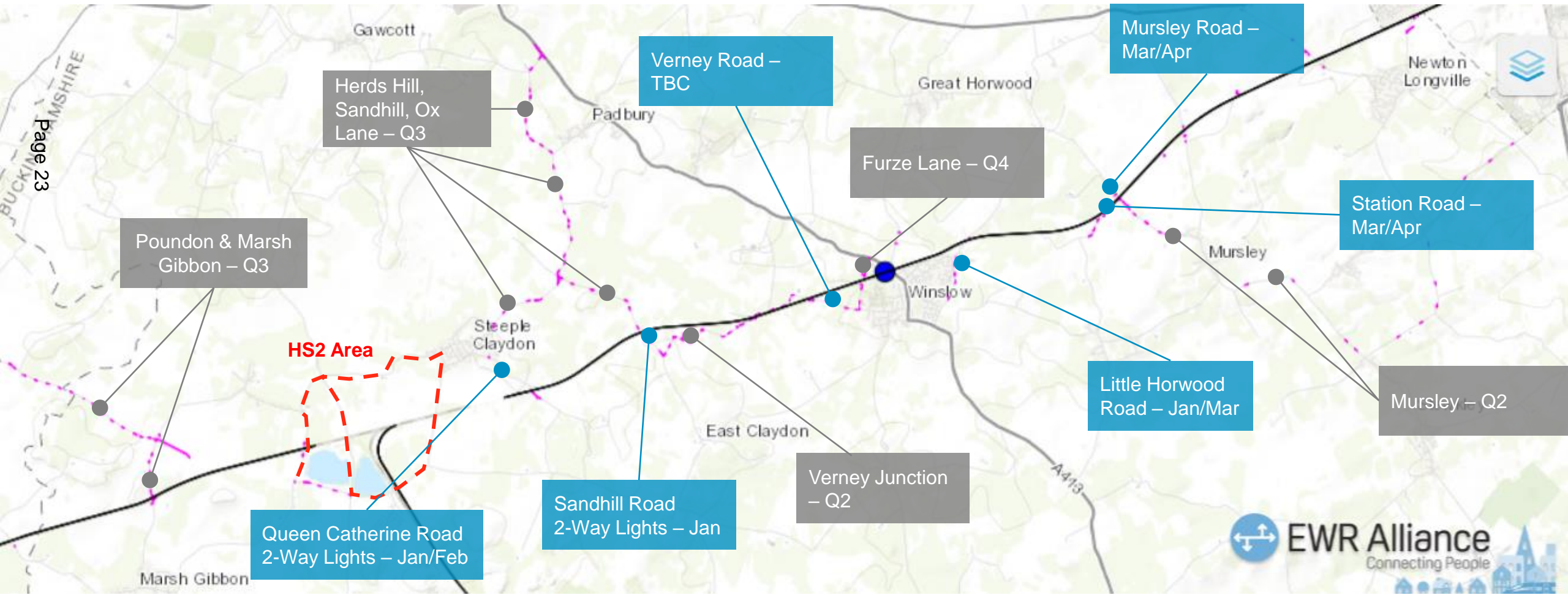
Project Challenges & Mitigation

Challenge	Mitigation
Required road closures and traffic management	Coordination of disruptive traffic management with the Council, HS2 and others to minimise impact on residents.
Construction traffic on rural road network	Past: Passing bays and advance repairs completed. Current: Deploying traffic ambassadors for monitoring Current/future: Planned programme of road repairs in 2023
Mud and dust impacts	Innovative track ballast dust suppression system installed. Wheel & jet washers deployed and some community car washing.
Keeping the local community informed	Quarterly Newsletters. Disruptive works notified. Community drop-in events held in Newton Longville, Winslow, Steeple Claydon and Launton in 2022.
Ecological Impact	Increased retained vegetation route wide and rurally sympathetic landscaping of 150,000 trees and plants. Delivering 10% Biodiversity net gain
Noise	Installation of permanent acoustic barriers early in our programme.
Legacy	Project completed 41 community engagements in Buckinghamshire including 16 school events

- *Planned* temporary repairs:
 - Some repairs completed on Ox Lane, Verney Road and Sandhill Road late 2022
 - Further planned temporary repairs identified and to be agreed with BC: Focus on Verney Road & Herds Hill.
- Final permanent repairs:
 - Forward repair programme following compound demobilisation being agreed with BC
 - Planed to complete by the end of 2023
 - Repairs completed on Queen Catherine Road and Whaddon Road

Traffic Management & HS2 2023

- Road closures and traffic lights required to complete final works, utilities, demobilisations, reinstatements & road repairs.
- Q1 Works (blue) fully planned. Aim to work through the detail of future (grey) road closures by quarter with BC in early 2023.
- Road Closures unless stated





- 18 of 20 ECS Sites complete (100 Hectares). 30-year monitoring ongoing.
- Over 150,000 trees and plants
- Bats: 27% occupancy in bat roosts, up from 17% in 2021. 680 surveys in 2022. Reduced collision risk since 2018.
- Barn Owls: 12 boxes installed 2020, 6 now with young. 25 more installed in 2022
- Otter: Evidence of activity in 2 ECS sites
- Reptiles and GCN: Ongoing monitoring
- 10% Net Gain projects still in development. Planned sites within NR land, within Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire.

Retained Vegetation



Climate Resilience

- 8 Compensatory Flood Storage Areas created (CFSA)
- Climate change allowances of 40% for rainfall increase and 65-70% for river flow increase on 1:100 year event

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All railway drainage has been renewed throughout the route and is sized to maintain existing outfall rates.

- Electrical equipment located outside flood zones and specified to operate at higher temperatures



Post Apr 2019

225 Engagements

663 Volunteers

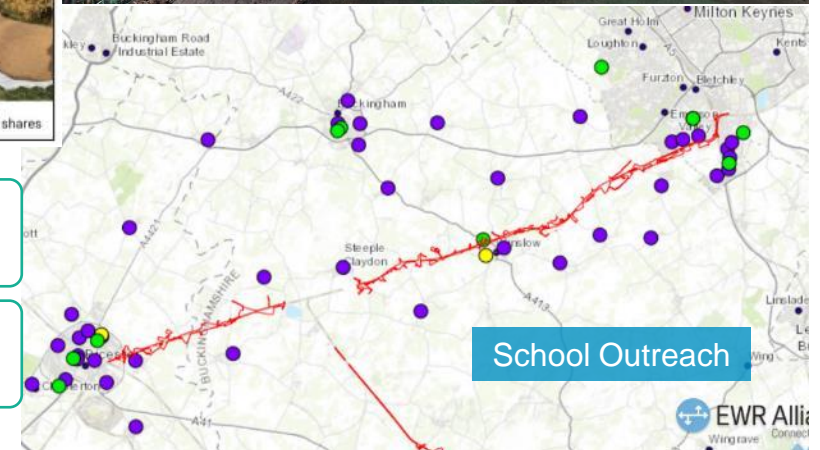
Volunteer hours 2,620.3

Engagement hours 692

Volunteer cost £40,911.16

Donations £21,549.71

SROI £2,384,266.2



33 Apprenticeships Commenced

26% SME spend on project



Selected Future Physical Works

- *Selected* summary of future physical works & RAG impact on the community:

Item	Current Completion	Forecast Date	HGVs	TM Required	RAG Impact
Track Installation	53%	Sep'23	Minimal	No	Yellow
Utilities (Connections & Disconnections)	43%	Jul'24	Moderate	Yes	Yellow
Footpaths Completion	12 of 26	Aug'23	Minimal	Yes	Green
Fencing & Landscaping	Ongoing	Oct'23	Moderate	Yes	Yellow
Bridges with Highway interfaces	18 of 20	Jun'23	Minimal	Yes	Yellow
Winslow Station	Commenced	Jul'23	Moderate	Yes	Yellow
Winslow Station Car Park	Not started	Mar'24	Moderate	No	Yellow
Ancillary Civils for Signalling	c.80%	May'23	Minimal	No	Yellow
Compound & Temporary Land Reinstatement	2 of 10	Jul'24	High	No	Red
Reinstatement of haul roads (15) & accesses	11 of 15	Jul'23	Moderate	Yes	Yellow
Permanent Highway Repairs & Reinstatements	2.5 of 34km	Dec'23	High	Yes	Red

Any Questions?



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Little Horwood / Winslow Ecological Compensation Site (ECS)

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Councillor for Aston Clinton & Berton
 Buckinghamshire Council
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The East West Rail Alliance

6 March 2023

Dear Mark Cuzner and Peter Hume,

EWR Attending Select Committee

I am writing to thank you for attending Buckinghamshire Council's Transport, Environment & Climate Change Select Committee on Thursday 2 February 2023. Members of the Committee found it useful to hear how progress was being made with the works but did have a number of concerns regarding disruption to Highways and its impact on residents and businesses, uncertainty over the Aylesbury spur and the use of diesel rolling stock. I hope comments from the Select Committee on these topics will be taken into consideration as the project progresses.

As you will recall, there were lines of questioning that were unable to be answered and you undertook to provide written responses to the Select Committee. Additionally, Members had a number of further questions that were unable to be asked due to time constraints. Therefore, the Committee await your response via return letter on the following:

Roads & Highways

1. Damage to highways and mud on the roads are recurring issues that were raised last year. What have you done additionally to rectify this and when can we expect improvement?

Ecology & Environment

2. Please share more information on the commencement and implementation of the Biodiversity 10% Net Gain Strategy. Also, considering areas needing to reach maturity, what is the target date to achieve the 10% net gain in Buckinghamshire?
3. How many trees have been removed by the project so far and how many more are expected to be cut down? We note that this was asked last year but not answered.
4. Last year we were advised 150,000 trees had been planted and note the figure is the same this year. Please clarify: does this mean 300,000 trees have been planted so far or has the figure not changed in 12 months? How many of the planted trees have since died and been replaced? How many trees will be planted by the end of construction?
5. What have been the carbon emissions so far and what is the overall emission expectation? We note that assessment work was being carried out on this last year but have not seen any signs of progress.

6. Members note the construction is futureproofing to consider climate change but how robust will this be? What precautions are being taken during construction to ensure a higher toleration to extreme temperatures?

Rail Line & Rolling Stock

7. What are the indicative costs of electrifying the line during construction rather than retrospectively?
8. Appreciating the commercial sensitivities, what is the end date for the 'short-term' use of diesel rolling stock? If this cannot be shared yet, then when can we be advised?
9. Please provide information regarding the evaluation of different rolling stock options.

Please ensure that your response to the questions and further information to be circulated to the Select Committee are sent to Chris Ward (Senior Scrutiny Officer) so that this can be shared with Members. A copy of this letter and your reply will be appended to the minutes of the meeting which will be available here:

<https://buckinghamshire.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=343&MId=17616>

Once again, I thank you for attending our Select Committee meeting and look forward to welcoming you and your colleagues again for an update on the project in 2024.

Yours sincerely,

Councillor Bill Chapple OBE
Chairman of Transport, Environment & Climate Change Select Committee
Buckinghamshire Council