



BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

Report

AGENDA ITEM 7

Date: 13th July 2022

Title: East West Rail [EWR]

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Members will be aware the EWR project is under construction and the team are working with Network Rail for them to 'hand back' PROW which have either been temporarily closed or permanently diverted under the Transport and Works Act Order powers. We are also working through any snagging issues before signing-off and taking back responsibility for the routes.

In total, there are 16 PROWs to be diverted and 1 dead-end PROW to be permanently stopped-up [Footpath No.3 Middle Claydon]. Out of the 16, we have started to discuss 'hand backs' with EWR on 11 of the crossings. All of these are at various stages of discussion, with the majority seem to be as initially agreed with EWR and as per the TWA0.

One route [Footpath No.2 Twyford] has now been handed back and formally signed-off, but there is some ongoing discussions with EWR with regard to the creation of the footpath leading up to the bridge and away from it. There will be 8 new PROW footbridges [2 are currently built: at Twyford (PICTURE 1) and WINSLOW (PICTURES 2 & 3)], 1 new accommodation bridge [farm access with shared PROW] and 2 routes being diverted to existing bridges.

- New bridges = 8;
- New road bridges carrying pedestrians = 1;
- Diversions in the current programme = 16 with 1 stopping-up;
- Bridges constructed = 1;
- Temporary closures in place = 36; &
- Routes to be 'handed back' to the council over the next 2-3 months = 8 - 10.



PICTURE 1 – *new footbridge on Footpath No.2 Twyford [TWY/2/2]*



PICTURE 2 - *New bridge at Winslow [WIS/6/1]*



PICTURE 3 - New bridge at Winslow [WIS/6/1]

In addition to the permanent PROW changes, there are a number of temporary closures for routes which have been acquired for EWR haulage and materials storage. These routes need to be returned to the authority and closely monitored to make sure they are reinstated appropriately and are safe to reopen to the public.

There are currently 36 temporary closures. These closures are set to be in effect until summer 2023, but there is a commitment from EWR that if the route can be reopened before the formal end date, they will do so.

As it stands, there are no major issues, only a snagging list. It is anticipated this can be overcome by further discussions with EWR. There are no formal complaints from the public or local communities regarding the project, or at least none sitting with the council's rights of way team. A busy summer is envisaged with possibly 8-10 routes being handed back.

Phil Turner has been heading-up the EWR project from a PROW perspective but retired on 14th June 2022. Phil will have undoubtedly left a huge void in the world of EWR, however, after some reprioritisation of workload within the Definitive Map team and the ROW Operations team, we are confident we can continue with the good work that Phil has started. We are also hopeful to recruit a new Officer to the Definitive Map team, whose main responsibility will be the major infrastructure schemes and development.

The East West Rail Company are resuming face-to-face engagement with communities across the East West Rail route and will be hosting eight further events between June and July 2022. The events are designed to give the public an opportunity to better

understand the project and anticipated timescales. The nearest event to Buckinghamshire is as follows and the council would be grateful if someone could attend to represent the Local Access Forum:

2pm - 8pm Monday 4 July 2022

John Paul II Centre

The Causeway

BICESTER

OX26 6AW

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