



Welcome!

Welcome to the Autumn issue of the East West Rail Alliance project newsletter.

I wanted to start by thanking everyone who took the time to read and share the last issue of the newsletter. We have seen an increase in the readership of the newsletter and have received feedback on the format with the level of information in the local update sections we introduced in issue two being positive.

As you'll read below, perhaps the most obvious progress we have made since the last newsletter can be seen in Bletchley, where our team has dismantled sections of the Bletchley Flyover ready for it to be rebuilt to modern standards.

The dismantling has demanded a meticulous amount of planning from our team, Network Rail operations, the train operating companies, local authorities and environment agencies and I'm delighted to report all the lifts were safely completed in line with our programme. We are now in the process of removing the final elements of the structure that need to be removed before we can start the rebuild process in November/later this year.

Away from the flyover, we have continued to prepare much of the project footprint for our main construction activities to begin. We have also started work on Charbridge Lane overbridge – one of the most significant construction activities in the East West Rail Phase 2 project. You can read more on this in the content below.

In addition to the challenges Covid-19 presents from an operational perspective, it also presents us with a number of challenges when it comes to keeping residents informed of our progress. This newsletter will therefore become an increasingly important tool as we move through the pandemic, however I am pleased to report that in spite of the challenges, we have continued to engage with key project stakeholders, whether that be via our virtual supply chain engagement events, our socially distanced pop up community engagement event in Bletchley, or working with local charities to help the elderly and vulnerable who have been severely impacted by lockdown restrictions. I am also delighted to welcome our new Community Liaison Advisors, Thaina Sa'id and Vernon Loo, who will play a key role in keeping local communities engaged with the project.

Thank you for your continued interest in the project.

Kind regards

Mark Cuzner, EWR Alliance Director

Enabling works underway



Since the last issue of our newsletter, the Alliance has been preparing many areas across the project footprint for our main construction activities to begin. Highways improvements have been made, with roads widened, passing bays on narrow roads put in place, and access points for our site compounds installed. In addition, we have been constructing 'haul roads', which will enable construction traffic to travel between certain areas of the project without needing to use local roads.

We have also carried out vegetation clearance and drained areas of the old varsity line which have become overgrown and flooded since the line closed in the 1960s. In the Winslow area, in the cutting where the new station will be built, we have been busy installing new drainage, to ensure the line does not flood in future.

As reported in our last newsletter, our archaeology teams have carried out 'strip map and sample' works on a number of sites to ensure there are no archaeologically significant artefacts in the area.

Our Bicester compound is now fully operational, which will be our main compound in the area. This will be the headquarters for our teams in the Bicester area.

We have also started a number of main works activities, in particular, carrying out bridge repairs that need to be made on several existing structures.

Finally, we have begun work on one of the most significant construction activities on the project – the construction of a new road bridge on Charbridge Lane. We have been preparing the site for the construction of a new temporary road which will direct traffic away from the site so the new bridge can be built.

Lift off in Bletchley



A span is lifted from Bletchley Flyover



New Overhead Line Equipment (OLE) is installed



ALO (Any Line Open) protective hoarding is piled and installed

The EWR Alliance has successfully removed 14 spans from the Bletchley Flyover which needed to be dismantled ready for the structure to be rebuilt to modern standards later this year.

The spans previously crossed over the West Coast Mainline and Buckingham Road, and were removed during overnight shifts over consecutive weekends to ensure the West Coast Main Line could remain operational throughout.

The complex lifts have been carried out with the help of three of the largest mobile cranes in the UK - the largest capable of lifting 1200 tonnes! Once the spans were removed from the structure, they were taken to the Alliance compound off Water Eaton Road where they were crushed, with the majority of the stone set to be re-used elsewhere on the project.

With the spans now removed, the team move onto removing the remaining 'piers' which held the spans in place. These will be lifted over similar overnight weekend possessions, following which the process of rebuilding will start in November/later this year.

We are sorry that some of our works in Bletchley have had an unavoidable impact on local residents, particularly those in close proximity to the flyover, with overnight piling works taking place over the weekends and some in the midweek. It is essential we carry out these piling works to erect ALO (Any Line Open) hoardings which are needed to allow our teams safe access to the flyover to complete the rebuild whilst the railway remains open. This overnight piling activity will be complete in November and will mean we no longer need as many weekend overnight possessions. This will speed up the construction and mean less inconvenience for local residents.



To complete the work on the flyover, it has been necessary to close Buckingham Road to road traffic. The current road closure will be in place until early December. During this time a diversion will remain in operation, however pedestrian access has been maintained. On occasions where this has not been possible, the Alliance has provided a free shuttle bus to escort pedestrians around the diversion.

To read more about upcoming works in Bletchley, please refer to the Bletchley section of the local updates below.

Left: one of the spans is transported from Buckingham Road to Water Eaton Road

Introducing our new Community Liaison Advisors



Since the last issue of our newsletter, we have recruited two dedicated Community Liaison Advisors who will be responsible for engaging with key stakeholders, including members of the public across the project to keep you up to date on our progress and respond to your queries and feedback.

Vernon Loo will be covering the area between Bletchley and Little Horwood, including Newton Longville, Swanbourne, Winslow, and Mursley. Thaina Sa'id will be responsible for the areas between Bicester and Verney Junction, including Launton, Stratton Audley, Poundon, Marsh Gibbon, Charndon, Twyford, Edgcott, Calvert, Steeple and Middle Claydon.

The easiest way to get in touch with the team should you have any queries or feedback would be to email

us at publicinformation@ewralliance.co.uk, or contact us via the 24/7 Network Rail helpline on 03457 11 41 41 or www.networkrail.co.uk/contactus.

Pop up community engagement event held in Bletchley



When lockdown measures were introduced in March 2020, our plans for hosting regular community engagement events were naturally put on hold. However, we believe it is vital for us to engage with the communities in which we are working to help keep local residents and businesses up to date and informed about project progress and so we are visible and approachable as a team.

In late September, the Alliance held two trial pop up community engagement events near our Bletchley site. The team erected a gazebo behind the site barriers at the top of Buckingham Road, with members of the team available between the hours of 10am and 3pm on Tuesday and 3pm and 7pm on Thursday to talk to members of the public about the project.

Clearly, all social distancing measures were followed at all times, with members of the public standing on markers a safe distance from the project team, and only a certain number of people allowed into the area at any one time.

Jeff Booth, Project Leader for our Bletchley works said: “the trial event was a great success and it was really beneficial for us and the people that visited us to talk directly with the team to find out more about the works. We spoke to around 30-40 people on each day and it was great to see so many people interested to learn more about what it is we’re doing.”

We will carry out further events as soon as restrictions permit us to do so, as we are aware people appreciate a face to face chat to discuss the project.

In the meantime, if you’d like to talk to us directly please contact our Community Liaison Advisors Vernon or Thaina at publicinformation@ewralliance.co.uk

Virtual supply chain engagement held

On Wednesday 7 October, the Alliance hosted an online supply chain engagement event aimed at existing supply chain partners as well as prospective suppliers who may be interested in working with the Alliance.

The event was promoted via the Alliance’s [CompeteFor procurement portal](#), and via Buckinghamshire Business First, and with over 200 registrations for the event from 177 different companies, it’s clear there is a lot of interest in the project from across the supply chain.

The event was a chance to bring suppliers up to speed with the status of the project and the progress that has been made and to provide some information on the opportunities that will be available through the project, and share details on our procurement and onboarding processes.

The Procurement & Commercial teams will be hosting similar supply chain engagement events on a quarterly basis.

If you are interested to learn how your business may be able to get involved in the project, be sure to [visit our CompeteFor portal](#) and sign up for alerts. You can also contact the procurement team via email at procurement@ewralliance.co.uk.

Alliance lends a helping hand in community gardening project



Over the summer, 20 members of the Alliance team took part in a number of voluntary gardening projects organised by local charity, Community Impact Bucks.

The teams visited elderly and vulnerable residents - many of whom had been severely impacted by coronavirus lockdown restrictions - to lend a helping hand in their gardens – observing social distancing measures at all times.

Samantha Hardy, from Community Impact Bucks said: “We are extremely grateful to East West Rail Alliance for providing us with 23 of your team members to assist us on our Gardening and Befriending project. Over the 4 days the Alliance team tackled 10 overgrown gardens in Aylesbury, Waddesdon, Quainton and Steeple Claydon which benefited 16 vulnerable elderly/disabled residents.

“The Alliance’s offer of help could not have come at a better time for us and our clients because we were behind on our gardening visits due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. The team’s hard work has really helped towards getting us back on track.”

Bicester

1. Jarvis Lane railway works and footbridge works

Description: We will be reconstructing the old railway line in this area and a new footbridge is to be constructed which will allow people to safely cross the railway. We will reopen footpaths as soon as it is safe to do so.

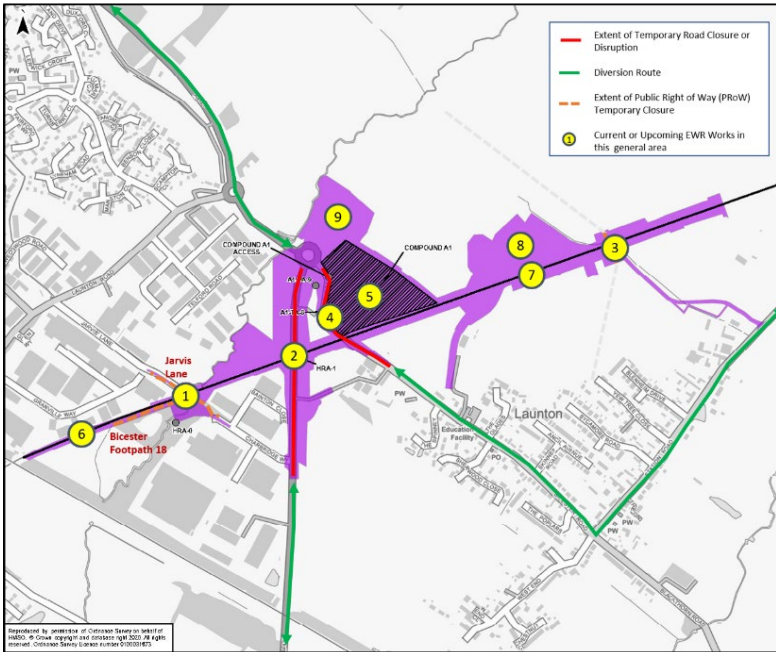
Duration: Work began in spring 2020 and is due for completion late 2021.

Disruption: Footpath closure/diversions will be in place at various points during this time.

Recent Progress: We have recently completed vegetation clearance in the area and a new access from Charbridge Way has been formed. This involved installing a temporary bridge to allow us to transport our construction equipment to site in order to construct the piled foundations for the new footbridge.

Upcoming Activity: Piling works for the new footbridge will start in autumn 2020 and continue into the winter. The new footbridge will be installed in early 2021 and this will allow the re-opening of the footpath in mid-2021.

In addition, we will begin preparing the ground in the area for the construction of the new railway in autumn 2020. This will take approximately three months to complete.



2. Charbridge Lane works

Description: One of the most significant construction activities in the area will be the new road bridge on Charbridge lane, which we will construct using multiple temporary road diversions to minimise disruption to the local community.

Duration: Work started in early summer 2020 and is due for completion in the summer of 2022.

Disruption: There will be partial and full road closures of Bicester Road during this period, as well as the temporary closure of public rights of way in the area. Residents will also see increased construction traffic during this time. All closures will be publicised on [one.network](#) and appropriate signage will be displayed.

Upcoming activity: Work over the next three months will include preparing the site for the construction of the new road bridge in the Mill Meadow area. This will involve the construction of a new temporary road which will direct traffic away from the site so the new bridge can be constructed. In the coming weeks, the construction of the temporary road will begin. Traffic will be diverted onto this temporary road in late 2020. Whilst the temporary road is in place, we will maintain access to Tythe Barn and local allotments.

Recent Progress: We have begun archaeology, earthworks and roadworks in the Tythe Barn area and to the rear of the allotments. These works will be on going for the next three months.

3. Grange Farm footbridge

Description: Along the temporary haul road that we're constructing between Bicester Road and Station Road Launton, a new footbridge will be constructed in the Grange Farm area to allow safe crossing of the new railway.

Duration: Work will begin in autumn 2020 and is due for completion in winter 2021.

Disruption: There will be continued public rights of way closures in place whilst the new footbridge is constructed, and whilst the haul road between Bicester Road and Station Road Launton is used for construction traffic serving other areas of the project.

Upcoming activity: Over the next three months the project will begin construction of the footbridge foundations once the access to the site and working area has been constructed. The haul road along the railway corridor will also continue be used to facilitate the construction of the overbridge.

4. Bicester Road over bridge works

Description: There will be full and partial road closures in this area as we refurbish the existing bridge and construct a new entrance for the local allotments. All lane and road closures will be publicised via [one.network](#) and appropriate signage will be displayed.

5. Main Bicester Compound construction

Description: A small compound was constructed in late 2019 with a view to establish our main Bicester compound just off the roundabout on Bicester Road. This will be the main hub for work in this area and will include site offices, storage for materials, maintenance, parking provision, together with welfare facilities for construction staff.

Duration: The compound is now fully operational and will be in place until work in the area is complete in late 2022. The land will then be re-instated to its former condition.

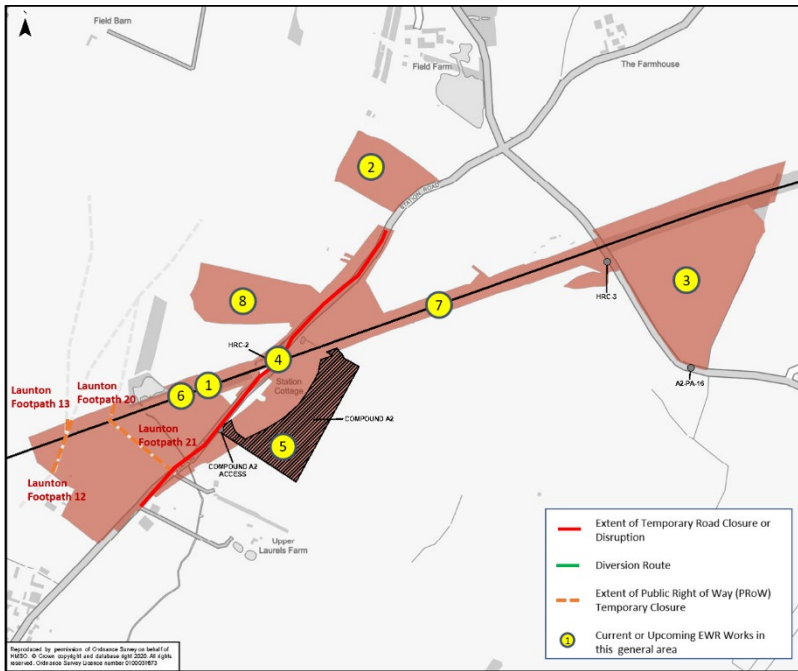
Disruption: There will be an increase in construction traffic into the site throughout the duration of our works in the area.

6 & 7. Railway works and haul road construction

In spring 2021 we will begin preparing the ground for the new railway to be constructed in these areas. The installation of the track is due to begin summer of 2022. In addition, we are currently constructing new haul roads for our construction traffic to use in these areas to minimise our use of public highways.

8 & 9. Environmental Compensation Sites

These sites have been established to mitigate our impact on the local ecology and will include features to allow local species to flourish. They include the creation of aquatic habitat features like river back waters, grasslands, scrub and woodland with specific species and features for badger, otter, reptiles, great crested newts, bats, butterflies etc.



Launton

1. Castleman's underbridge repair

Description: The existing bridge structure will be upgraded to strengthen the bridge for the new railway. This will include carrying out brickwork repairs to the structure.

Duration: The work will begin in early 2021 and is due for completion in the summer of 2021.

Disruption: During the work there will be some restrictions to the access under the bridge.

Upcoming Activity: No activity is planned in the next three months.

2 & 3. Environmental Compensation Sites

These sites have been established to mitigate our impact on the local ecology. They include the creation of aquatic habitat features like river back waters, grasslands, scrub and woodland with specific species and features for badger, otter, reptiles, great crested newts, bats, butterflies etc.

4. Station Road crossing and overbridge

Description: As part of our works, the existing level crossing at Station Road will be replaced with a road bridge, providing road users with a bridge over the new railway.

Duration: The construction of the bridge started in summer 2020 and is due for completion in summer of 2022.

Disruption: There will, at times, be full and partial closures of Station Road whilst we construct the new road bridge. All closures will be publicised on [one.network](#) and appropriate signage will be displayed.

Upcoming Activity: Work over the next three months will include vegetation clearance and archaeology, and we will begin to construct the sub structure for the new overbridge. Following this, the superstructure for the new overbridge will begin.

5. Station Road, Launton Compound construction

Description: We are building a construction compound to help with the construction of the road bridge on Station Road. The compound will be used to provide materials storage as well as welfare facilities for construction staff.

Duration: We started the compound construction in summer 2020 and it is due for completion in late 2020.

Disruption: There will, at times, be full and partial closures of Station Road whilst we construct the new road bridge. All closures will be publicised on [one.network](#) and appropriate signage will be displayed.

Upcoming Activity: Work over the next three months will include archaeology studies, laying stone for working areas, drainage works and the installation of site welfare units for our workforce.

6. Haul road construction

Description: We have constructed a new haul road in this area for our construction traffic to use in order to minimise our use of public highways.

7. Railway works

In spring 2021 we will begin preparing the ground for the new railway to be constructed in these areas. The installation of the track is due to begin summer of 2022. In addition, we are currently constructing new haul roads for our construction traffic to use in these areas to minimise our use of public highways.

More Information

This newsletter has been published as a summary of works in the Bicester & Launton area. If you would like more information on the entire East West Rail Phase Two project, scan the QR Code opposite to read our project-wide newsletter.

