



Comberton to Haslingfield

Enhanced Local Representative Groups (ELRGs) Round #1 Meetings

Tuesday 3 June 2025

Agenda

- 1 Housekeeping
- 2 Actions from the last meeting
- 3 Project updates
- 4 Revised groups
- 5 Terms of Reference & request to join LRG
- 6 NSC summary- Area manager
- 7 Discussion, Q&A

Housekeeping

- In case of a fire, follow the EWR Co team to the muster point
- Please use a name badge
- Before speaking for the first time, please introduce yourself with your full name and who you're representing
- A copy of the slides and notes will be available on the community hub following this meeting



Review of Actions From Previous Meeting

Completed actions

Action ID	Action detail	Outcome / Status
Action 1	EWR Co to share links to various documents after the meeting: Transport update report, EWR southern approach factsheet	EWR's factsheet on the southern approach into Cambridge was shared during the meeting via Teams.
Action 2	EWR Co to respond to the comment on the Section 106 payments that should be made to the community given the disruption during construction and the permanent changes afterwards	The terms of any s.106 agreement, including any financial contribution to be made by EWR, would be a matter to be negotiated between EWR Co and the local planning authority (South Cambridgeshire). Any such negotiations would take place once the proposals for the DCO application are more developed, and it is too early at this stage to confirm whether a s.106 agreement will be required and, if so, what its terms would be. Any obligations secured by a s.106 agreement (including financial contributions) would need to meet the legal tests that apply to such obligations, i.e. that they are: (a) necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms; (b) directly related to the development; and (c) fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.
Action 3	EWR Co to confirm the age of trees to be planted in the woodland section	The specifics of tree planting at each proposed location have not been considered at this stage of design (in terms of species, size class or management requirements). It is currently assumed that planting will predominantly comprise of whips (i.e. young trees around 1m in height). However, where planting has specific mitigation objectives (such as habitat connectivity for bats) then the planting design will be designed to meet those objectives, which may include planting larger trees in certain locations.

Completed actions

Action ID	Action detail	Outcome / Status
Action 4	EWRCo to provide more information about what the bat mitigations and green tunnel would look like once it has been covered and reconnected to the roads.	The cut and cover tunnel will retain any identified bat crossing points once constructed, but there is no proposed bat specific structure. The proposed bat crossing shown on the NSC plan at Highfields Road is to ensure that a potential bat flightline is retained during and after construction. The bat crossing point is likely to comprise specific planting, although the requirement for and, design of this, is subject to more developing design in this location.
Action 5	EWRCo to provide an indication about the duration of the construction next to Comberton Village College (+500m to the N and S)	EWRC are still developing the construction programme and more detail on this will be presented at Statutory Consultation. For this type of project we would typically expect the full construction period to be around 6-7 years. However, the start of the programme is likely to be focused on setting up construction sites and utility works with the final few years used for installing Railway systems and testing and commissioning of the trains. Construction of the bridges and embankments/ cuttings is expected to take 2-3 years following on from site establishment.
Action 6	EWRCo to look into environmental survey timelines.	It's important that we have fully reviewed and checked all survey data before publishing this and we're looking at how best we make data available to communities and organisations. This will likely occur during our statutory consultation or when we submit our Development Consent Order. Some data won't be made public, in line with best practice relating to protected species – for example, we won't identify the location of badger setts.

Project Updates

Project Updates

Multi-billion-pound investment secured as Universal theme park and resort set to be built in Bedford, bringing thousands of jobs

- We are engaging with Universal to determine the potential implications of the park for EWR's proposals and for the wider network.
- It has yet to be confirmed what the park/resort may mean for service levels on the MVL or for individual stations.
- We are committed to maintaining close contact with all involved parties including Universal, Network Rail and the Department for Transport to ensure accessibility and connectivity is a core element of the planning process.



Project Updates

Chiltern Railways announced as operator for the first stage of East West Rail.

The Transport Secretary has announced the operator for a new set of rail services along the Oxford-Cambridge Growth Corridor.

- A total of 45 apprentice train drivers have been hired and trained by Chiltern Railways.
- Additional facilities for driver accommodation at Bletchley have been delivered where a new driver depot will be based.
- An additional 30 employees have been hired by Chiltern Railways to support the delivery of the project.

Chiltern Railways will launch services later this year which will connect Oxford, Oxford Parkway, Bicester, Winslow, Bletchley and Milton Keynes Central.



Project Updates – Ground Investigations

- Phase 1 ground investigations for East West Rail started in February and are well underway.
- It's expected to take around four or five months to complete.
- To find out important information about the soil, rock and groundwater; design EWR in a responsible and environmentally sustainable way; and reduce project costs, construction risks and land take.
- Work ranges from boreholes dug using a drilling rig (typically to a depth of 10m) to trial trenches dug using an excavator (typically to a depth of 5m).
- We are keeping MPs, local authorities and parish councils updated about when we will be in their area.
- A poster provides communities with a link to information on our website and contact details for queries.
- We're working hard to make sure any possible disturbance is kept to a minimum and our contractors follow robust health and safety procedures.
- Working hours are 8am to 6pm, Monday to Friday.

Following feedback from the **LA Forum and ELRG** meetings we took away the suggestion to liaise directly with any residents who are in close proximity to the sites where we are carrying out ground investigations for East West Rail

We will now be putting a leaflet through the door of any properties immediately adjacent to these sites, or who could be impacted in some way by any GI works

In addition, we will continue to email all parish/ward/town councillors as per our usual channels, providing regular updates and a poster to share with communities to provide contact details and a link to our website for more information [East West Rail | Ground Investigations](#)

Work happening in your area

You may see our contractors in the area as we continue ground investigations for East West Rail (EWR). This work is crucial to help us understand the soil, rock and groundwater below the surface so that we can design the railway in a responsible and environmentally sustainable way.

The team will be adhering to robust health and safety procedures and will work hard to minimise any disruption to communities.

Get in touch
If you have any questions about ground investigations in your area, please contact a member of the EWR team:

✉ contact@eastwestrail.co.uk

☎ 0330 134 0067



You can find out more about the type of work happening here and watch our video all about ground investigations at: eastwestrail.co.uk/GI2025



Project Updates – Ground Investigations



To further increase awareness of our ground investigations we issued a press release with details of some of the interesting finds that have been discovered so far during our works including fossils and shark teeth

This generated a lot of media coverage in both local and national news outlets

In addition, we published a video on our website with our Geotechnical Engineering Specialist explaining the ground investigations process




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England | Local News | Cambridgeshire

Jurassic fossils found during East West Rail works



Nature Notes

Jurassic shark is found by railway

Shark's teeth dating back at least 145 million years have been discovered during rail work investigations.

East West Railway Company has begun the first phase of ground work between Cambridge and Oxford for the new railway.


Soil samples taken along the route unearthed the teeth which were over 145 million years ago as well as ammonites – marine creatures from as far back as the Jurassic era.

The Jurassic period – which was famously brought to life in cinemas with the series of *Jurassic Park* films about a safari park – spanned from approximately 201.4 to 145 million years ago.

Other fossils discovered from that era include ammonites, an extinct animal which scientists think resembled a shelled form of squid.

To place the discovery in context, homo sapiens are estimated to have appeared only 300,000 years ago.

Fossils found on railway route



Habitats

UKHAB/ INNS

April - September



Hedgerow Surveys

April - September

Natural Vegetation
Classification

April - July



Ancient woodland

April - May
August - SeptemberBadgers

Badgers – Bait marking February - April

Badgers – Initial
Assessment surveys All year roundRiparian MammalsRiparian mammals -
Otter All year roundRiparian Mammals –
Water vole April - SeptemberTerrestrial InvertebratesTerrestrial
Invertebrates April - October

Biodiversity

BatsBat structures – Ground
Based Habitat
Assessment

All year round

Bat structures -
Hibernation

December - February

Bat structures –
Emergence/ Re-entry

May - October

Bat Trees - Habitat
Assessment GLTA

All year round

Bat trees – Climbing
(active season)

April - October

Bat trees – Climbing
(hibernation)

December - February

Bat trees – Emergence
(NVA)

April - October

Bat crossing points – IR/
Thermal imaging

April - October



Bat Summer statics

May - October

AquaticsPond predictive system
or multimetrics (PSYM)

June - August



Macrophyte

June - August



Fish

All year round



White clawed crayfish

April - October



Macrovertebrate

April - November

Birds

Kingfisher

All year round



Breeding birds

February - August



Non-breeding Birds

October - March

Barn owls – Stages 1 &
2

All year round



Barn owls – stage 3

June - September

Arboriculture & Agriculture



Agriculture – Farm business Interviews

All year round



Arboriculture – Veteran tree surveys

All year round



Arboriculture – BS5837 Surveys

All year round

Air Quality



Air Quality – Diffusion Tube monitoring

All year round

Cultural Heritage



Cultural Heritage – non-intrusive surveys

All year round

Community



Community Open Space Surveys

All year round

Noise & Vibration



Attended noise monitoring

All year round



Unattended noise monitoring

All year round



Unattended Vibration Monitoring

All year round

Traffic & Transport



Non-motorized user surveys (NMU)

**March – July
September - November**



Automatic Traffic counts (ATC's)

**March – July
September - November**



Manual classified turning counts (MCTCs)

**March – July
September - November**



Car Parking surveys

**March – July
September - November**



Station questionnaires

**March – July
September - November**



Levels crossing surveys

**March – July
September - November**

Water resources



Groundwater Dependent terrestrial ecosystems

**June – August
December - February**



Private water supplies

**June – August
December - February**

Water Framework Directive



WFD – Recon Survey

All year round



Fluvial Geomorphology Surveys

All year round



Ditch Condition Assessment

All year round



Modular River Surveys (MoRPh)

March - April

Landscape



Summer Visuals

June - September



Winter Visuals

November - February

Intrusive Surveys



Cable percussion borehole

All year round



Rotary borehole

All year round



Sonic borehole

All year round



Dynamic sampling

All year round



Cone penetration testing

All year round



Dynamic probing

All year round



Trial pit

All year round



Groundwater monitoring

All year round



**Cultural Heritage – Intrusive Trial
Trenching**

All year round



**Agriculture – Intrusive soil resource
surveys (SRS)**

All year round



**Agriculture – Intrusive agricultural
land classification (ALC)**

All year round



Laboratory testing

All year round

Engineering



Topographical Surveys

All year round



Walkover Surveys

All year round



**Utilities - Ground Penetrating
Radar surveys**

All year round

Non-statutory consultation (NSC) next steps

- Feedback analysis is currently being carried out and being considered as part of design development, where possible.
- A **NSC summary document** was published on 16th May and provides a summary of how we delivered the consultation, who we heard from and the emerging themes from consultation feedback.
- This is a public-facing overview that updates stakeholders and the public about the facts of the consultation, providing a summary of how we delivered the consultation and who we heard from.
- The document is high-level, and it will not discuss outcomes or provide a response to the matters raised. Outcomes from how we have considered feedback will be provided in the **You Said, We Did** report published at statutory consultation.



You Said, We Did report

- We will be publishing a 'You Said, We Did' report at our statutory consultation
- This will:
 - summarise feedback received to closed and open-ended questions in themes
 - evidence how the project has considered or is considering this feedback as part of design development, including reference to areas where feedback has influenced changes

Emerging themes (route-wide matters)

Growth opportunities



Respondents supported the project’s potential to boost economic growth, create job opportunities, and enhance regional accessibility.

Comments indicated that the railway is seen as a vital investment that will drive sustainable economic development and support the UK’s long-term prosperity. Community benefits and impacts.

Community benefits and impacts



There was support for the potential community benefits that EWR would bring once in operation, noting better access to jobs, healthcare, education and recreational amenities by making it more convenient to travel between Oxford and Cambridge.

However, concerns were raised about potential disruption during construction, making it harder to access essential services and amenities and causing the loss of green spaces.

Environment and sustainability



Respondents recognised our proactive approach to sustainable practices during the construction and operation of EWR. They supported our commitment to delivering a sustainable travel option, including our electrification plans, which aim to minimise our carbon footprint.

Concerns were raised about long-term environmental impacts, including the loss of green spaces and damage to the landscape and natural ecosystems.

Some comments urged us to continue exploring ways to further reduce environmental impacts, including eco-friendly construction methods and materials, wildlife corridors and tree planting to benefit the environment and screen the railway.

Construction and logistics



Comments highlighted support for our commitment to minimising disruption during construction. This included our strategies for managing traffic and transport disruption, the use of dust suppression techniques and noise reduction measures.

Concerns were raised about the potential for prolonged disruption due to the length of the construction phase, including worries about noise, dust and pollution, as well as long-term damage to local infrastructure.

Additionally, there were concerns about the impacts on property values and local businesses during construction. Respondents emphasised the importance of using the railway for delivery of construction materials to reduce road congestion and related carbon emissions.

Emerging themes (route-wide matters)

Safety and accessibility



We received comments asking us to continue prioritising the safety and accessibility of local communities as our plans develop.

This included consideration for emergency access provision, first aid facilities, and clear channels for reporting problems during construction – as well as access and safety more generally for those who live close to line of route.

Our consultation



Respondents supported our efforts to engage with local communities and other stakeholders. They appreciated the accessibility of the consultation, noting the various ways they could learn about our proposals and provide feedback.

They also highlighted the value of the online and in-person events for open communication and discussion.

Suggestions for improving the clarity and detail of our consultation material were shared and feedback noted that interactive elements and visual aids like maps, diagrams, and models were useful in helping people better understand our proposals.

Respondents also highlighted the importance of transparency in how consultation feedback is used. They requested clear communication on how feedback informs the decision-making process and timely updates on the changes influenced by this feedback.

Traffic and transport



Responses highlighted EWR's benefits to regional connectivity between Oxford and Cambridge.

Respondents also recognised the benefits of EWR for transporting freight, particularly within the section of line from Oxford to Bletchley, emphasising the reduction in road congestion and pollution by moving freight from lorries to trains.

The importance of integrating public transport networks to access stations and for onward travel was emphasised, such as enhancing pedestrian and cycling infrastructure. Concerns were raised about traffic disruption and the impact on public rights of way during construction.

Land and property



Feedback acknowledged that EWR could drive up local property values, especially in areas like Bicester and Cambourne thanks to improved connectivity and better access to public transport.

The potential for new housing developments near railway stations was also mentioned, which could address local housing shortages and stimulate economic growth.

Other responses raised concerns about the demolition of homes and the visual impact of EWR. Specific concerns about demolitions were raised in areas such as the Poets area in Bedford, Highfields Caldecote and villages along the route such as Clapham, Ravensden and Wilden.

Emerging themes (route sections)

Roxton to east of St Neots

Respondents felt that the new rail line should serve St Neots directly to benefit its residents and reduce car travel. Concerns were raised about impact on the environment, including noise pollution and the visual impact of the proposed rail line, especially elevated sections and viaducts.

Croxton to Toft

Concerns were raised about the impact on legally protected species such as Barbastelle bats. Concerns also highlighted the impact on local communities, including the potential for increased traffic, noise and disruption to daily life.

Comments were made about the proposed location of the Cambourne station, with suggestions for better integration with existing transport infrastructure and improved accessibility for residents; there were concerns that the proposed station would be too far from the center of Cambourne.

Comberton to Shelford

Comments were made about the proposed tunnel through Chapel Hill, which people felt are disruptive to the landscape and local wildlife in Haslingfield, as well as the embankment height and visual impacts. Concerns were also raised about disruption in villages in the area from increased traffic and level crossing closures.

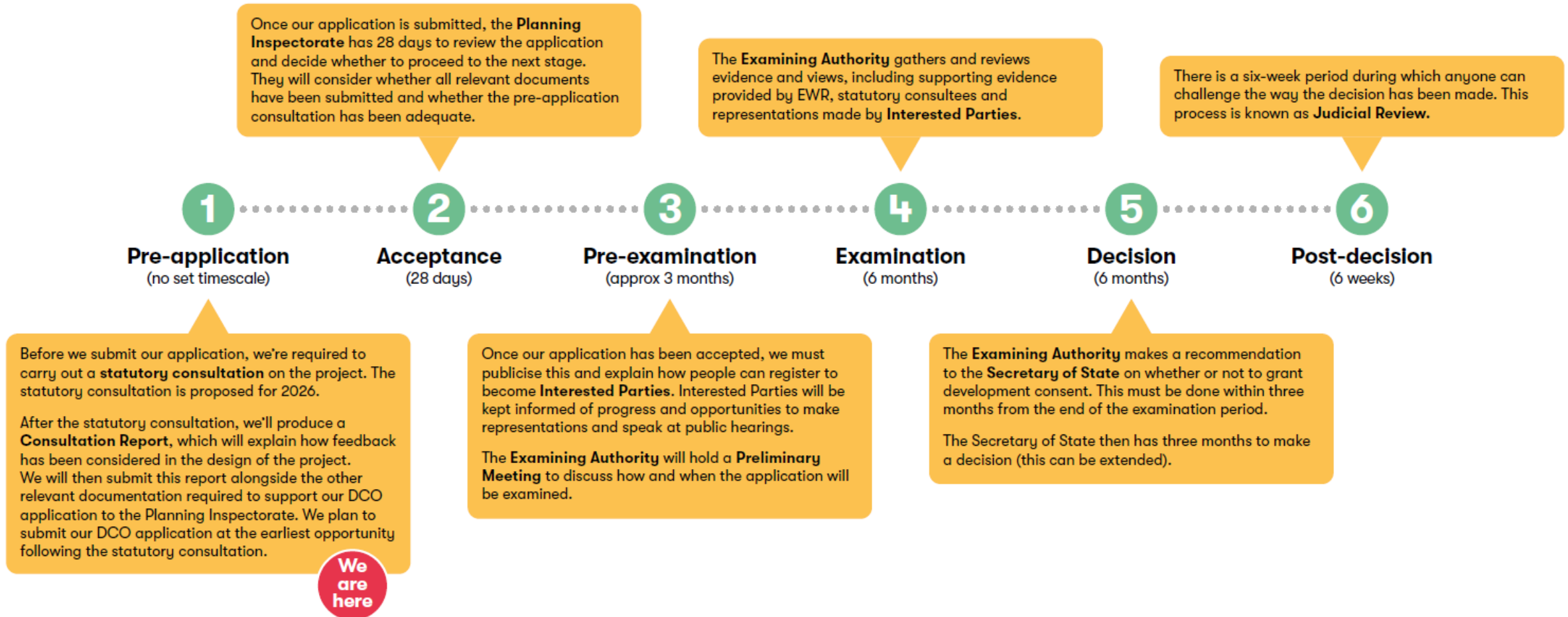
Cambridge

Responses highlighted that additional tracks would be essential to accommodate increased rail traffic and improve service efficiency.

There was sentiment that services should always include Cambridge North to avoid unnecessary work on the Newmarket line and to potentially expand turnback facilities.

The turnback facility at Cherry Hinton was seen as beneficial to the East of Cambridge. Concerns were raised about the reconstruction of Long Road bridge, while some residents opposed the proposal, viewing it as primarily benefiting freight trains rather than enhancing the science and technology economy between Oxford and Cambridge.

The DCO Process: Timeline



Revised Groups – Comberton to Haslingfield

Revised groups-Comberton to Haslingfield

This area covers Comberton to Haslingfield, and the Group will have the opportunity to discuss the proposals to construct two new tracks between Comberton and Hauxton Junction, as well as the construction of passing loops, a tunnel at Chapel Hill, bridges and crossings so that roads and footpaths can cross the railway.

Parishes and wards – Comberton to Haslingfield

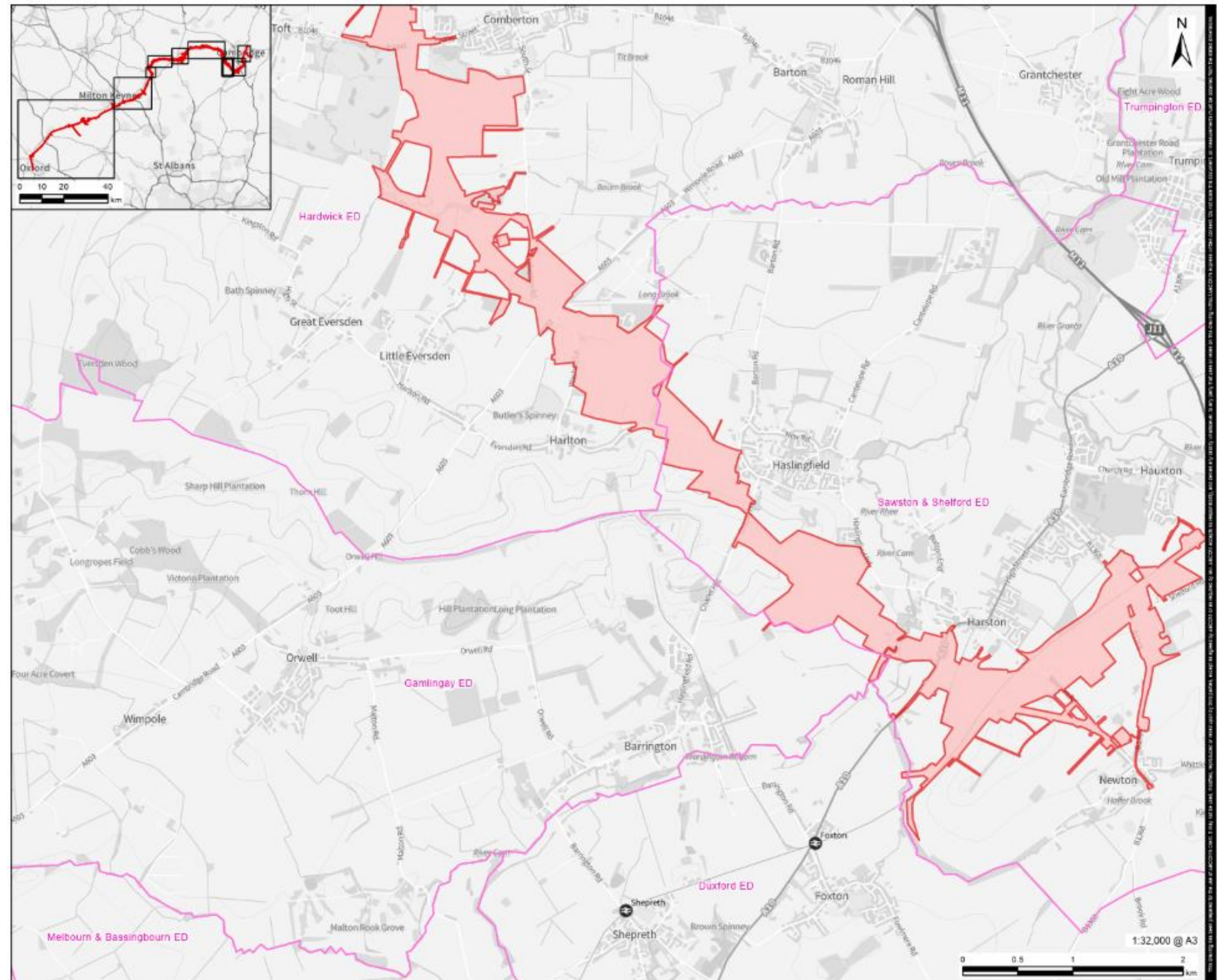
Parishes represented

- Barrington
- Comberton
- Harlton
- Haslingfield
- Little & Great Eversden
- Toft

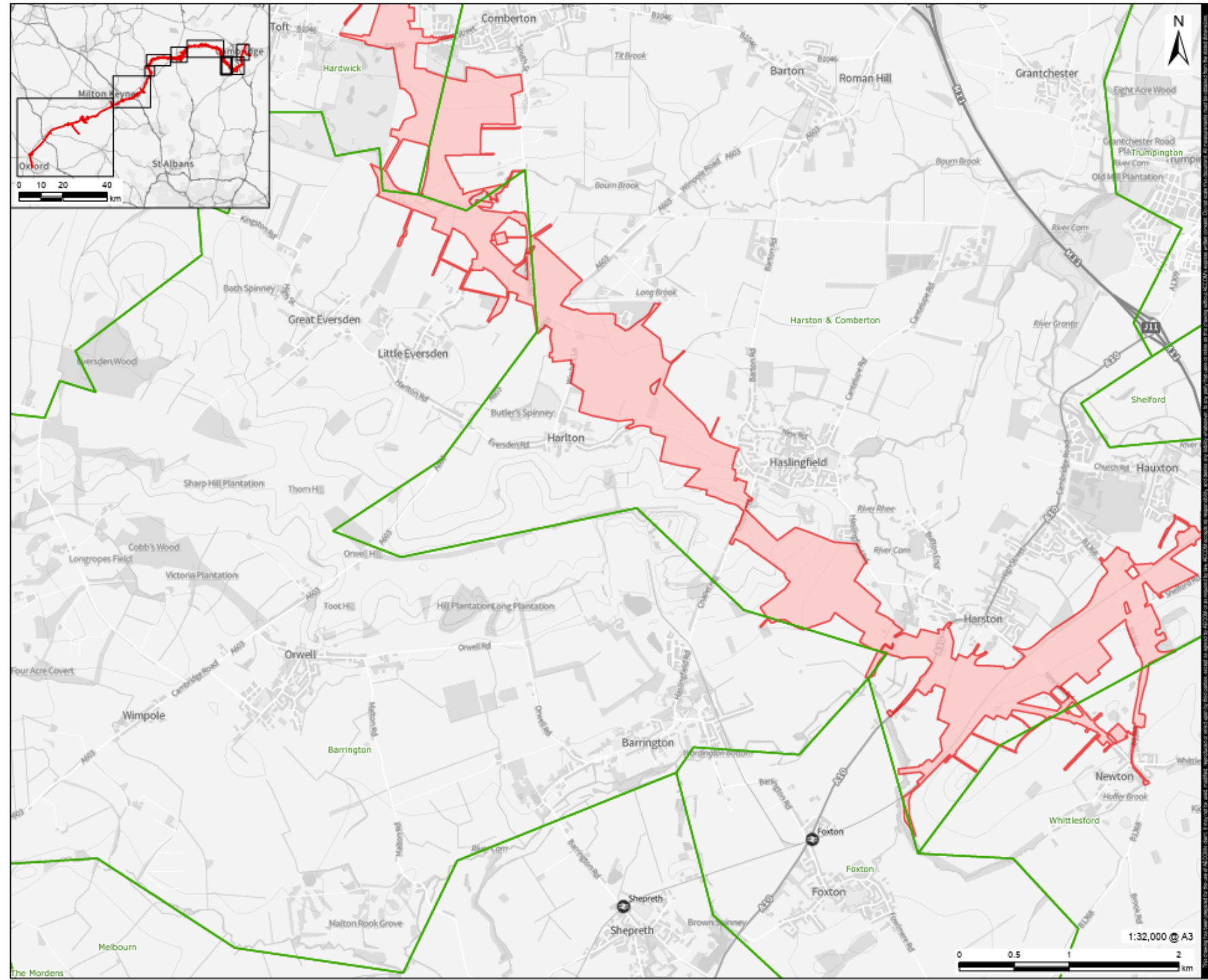
Wards represented

- Barrington in South Cambridgeshire Council
- Gamlingay in Cambridgeshire County Council
- Hardwick in Cambridgeshire County Council
- Hardwick in South Cambridgeshire County Council
- Harston & Comberton in South Cambridgeshire District Council
- Sawston & Shelford in Cambridgeshire County Council

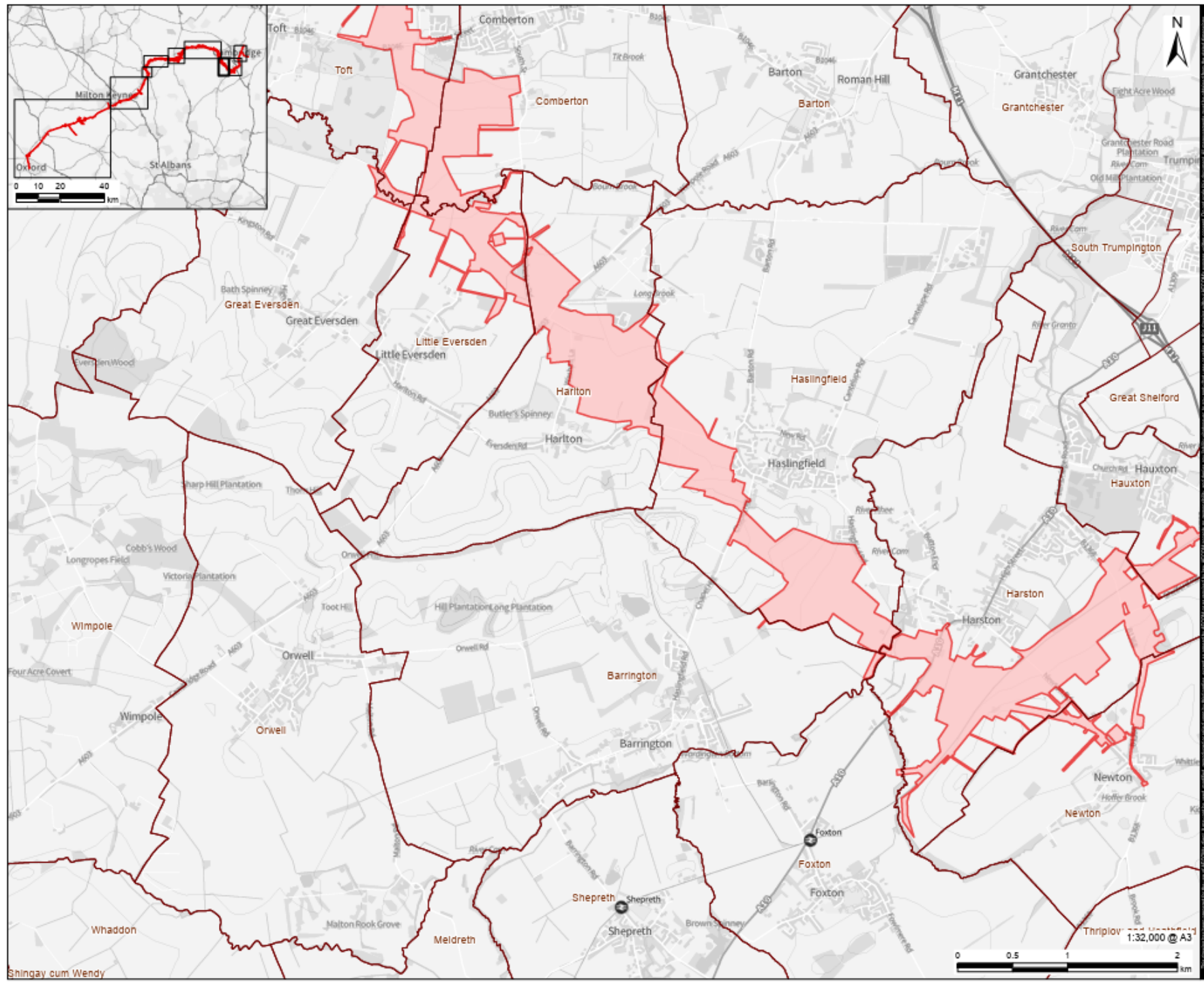
County map – Comberton to Haslingfield



Ward map- Comberton to Haslingfield



Parish map- Comberton to Haslingfield



Terms of Reference

Terms of reference

What are Enhanced Local Representative Groups?

- As part of our commitment to effective community engagement and communication, we have recently restructured the LRGs to more closely reflect the section areas presented at the most recent consultation. As a result, there are now Enhanced LRGs and a Community LRG.
- The Enhanced LRGs are made up of those wards and parishes which fall within the red line boundary (the draft Order Limits) and will allow for more focused and effective communication and collaboration between EWR Co and local stakeholders.
- The Group will meet throughout the planning, building, and running of the new railway and will offer an open forum for discussions – a place to share information and have two-way conversations about any issues affecting the local community.
- EWR Co will listen and carefully consider all opinions and as well as answering questions, we will bring any supporting information that will help the conversation.

Who can join this Group?

- Parish and Town Councils – One representative from each Parish or Town Council.
- Local Authority councillors – Representatives of the Wards and Electoral Divisions.
- EWR Co – We will provide relevant specialists and representatives to attend meetings. We will also open and close meetings and ensure they run effectively.
- We will also be keeping the following people informed about the Group and send them the agenda and other supporting materials
 - Members of Parliament (MPs)
 - Leaders of unitary councils/county councils/district councils
 - CEOs of unitary councils/county councils/district councils

How many Local Representative Groups are there?

- There are nine Enhanced Local Representatives Groups across the route, stretching from Oxford to Cambridge. You can find more information about the Comberton to Haslingfield Enhanced LRG Group [here](#), including a map and the Parish and Ward Membership list.

Terms of reference

How often will we meet and through what format?

- The Group will meet four times a year. The frequency of additional meetings will be dependent on the topics and information needed to be discussed.
- Meetings will be held in-person where possible.
- Meetings will start at 5:30pm/6:00pm/7:00pm where possible.
- Dates will avoid public holidays, school holidays and half terms, as well as local elections or Council's meeting dates where possible.
- Meetings will start with standing items followed by more in-depth discussions on selected topics.

Who will manage the Group?

- East West Rail will provide administrative support. This will include organising meetings, providing agendas and materials, as well as compiling all meeting notes.

Is there a code of conduct?

- Yes, it is important that the Group always treat each other with courtesy and respect. We want everyone to be able to speak freely and honestly.
- We encourage all members to disclose any roles, employment, memberships or affiliations to other organisations, charities or groups that could result in a conflict of interest for them.
- Members should not act, in or out of the meetings, in a way which could disrupt the running of the Group— or restrict attendance by any members.
- If anyone does not follow these guidelines, they may be suspended from the Group or removed. This decision would not be taken lightly and would have to be agreed by the Group, or by the agreement of EWR Co.

How will any disputes be resolved?

- If an issue arises resulting in disrespectful behaviour, or if discussions are not making headway, the EWR Co Manager may call for the meeting to move on or end. They will then look to resolve any outstanding issues in another forum.

Where can I find information about the meetings?

- We will keep details of meetings on a dedicated section on our website— [Community Hub](#). There, you will find everything – including agendas, approved meeting notes and presentation materials for this Group and others.

NSC Summary, Discussion, Q&A

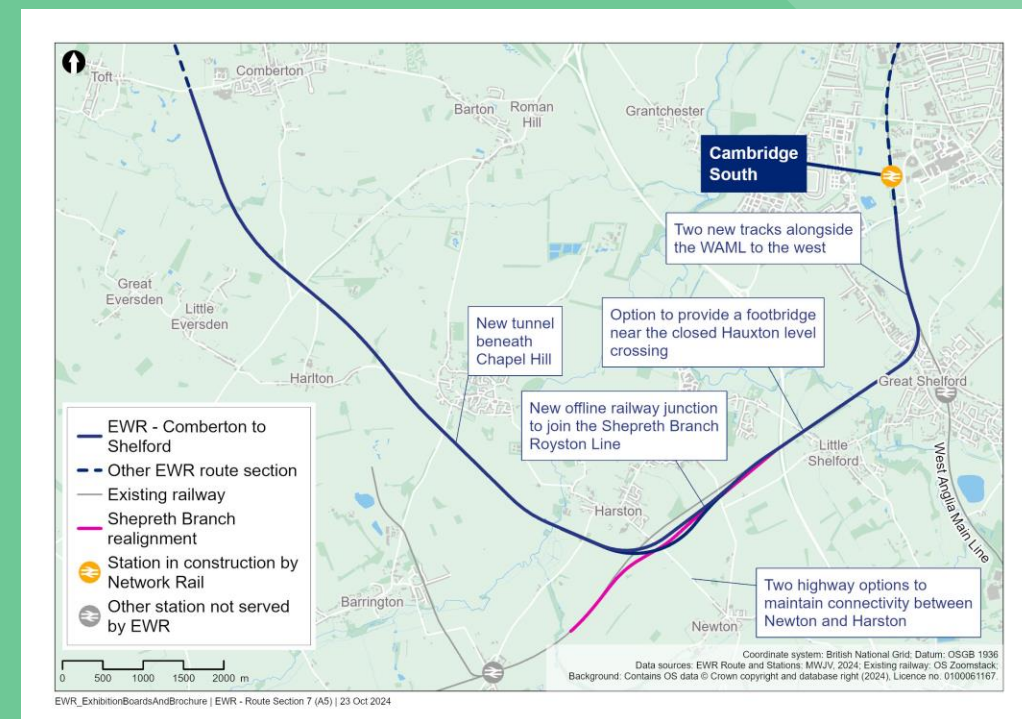
Route section: Comberton to Haslingfield

Route section: Comberton to Haslingfield

This section of the route runs from the B1046 Comberton Road to just south of the southern portal of Chapel Hill tunnel where the railway crosses the river Rhee.

A summary of works being undertaken include construction of:

- twin track railway
- tunnel at Chapel Hill
- series of bridges and crossings so that roads and footpaths can cross the railway.
- two new viaducts over Bourn Brook to the south of Comberton and the River Rhee to the west of Harston.
- balancing ponds and divert utilities including overhead electricity transmission lines.



Route section 4: Clapham Green to Colesden

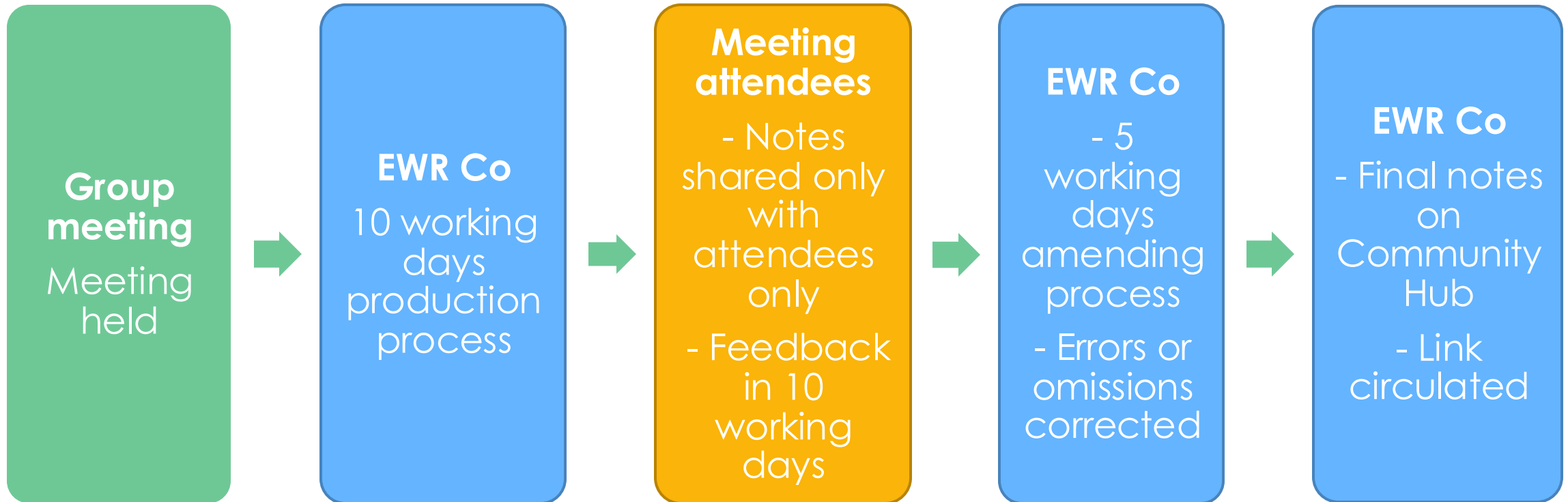
Questions and Answers

Question	Answer
Can you tell me about the length of Chapel Hill tunnel, and plans for maintenance access roads?	<p>The tunnel has been extended to go under Money Hill. However, confirmation of the precise location and extent of Money Hill is required. A further survey will be undertaken after harvest, and bat flight paths and the construction methodology will also shape final tunnel configuration.</p> <p>Maintenance access roads have also been reconfigured and simplified. One track from Harlton Road (west) and one track from Haslingfield Road (east) will be in place.</p>
What about the tunnel option from the A428 to Great Shelford?	Following Non-Statutory Consultation, a review of all potential tunnels across the route is being undertaken. This will include reviewing a tunnel from A428 to Shelford.
Construction sites and housing are in close proximity. What are the impacts of this?	Construction compounds and stockpiles are being reviewed in this area.

Issues currently being considered as part of the design

Example Theme	Example Feedback
Is there a possibility of EWR passing beneath the A603?	The design has been developed and includes EWR going under the A603.
What are the noise and visual impacts of the track level to the north and east of Harlton?	Alignment of the track has been generally lowered across this area, but constraints still exist, including getting over water courses and maintaining bat flight paths.
How does the height of the Bourn Brook viaduct impact bat crossings, given the height of embankments at either end?	<p>Height is driven by the need for this to be a safe bat crossing. The embankments are not an issue, as bats tend to follow natural features (water, Eversden 26, Tributary of Bourn Brook).</p> <p>Height has been reduced slightly, by half a metre. Track level is between 6.6 to 8.8m with Slew to the west slightly, in order to avoid the flood plain.</p>
What are the depth cuttings north of Comberton?	Design development has reduced the gradient. Across the core area, the target has been 1:120, with 1:100 in some places. Cutting heights have also been reduced.

Creating meeting summary notes





Thank you

www.eastwestrail.co.uk