

Cambridge Enhanced LRG-Meeting note

Meeting #1

Date: 05/06/2025

Time: 6:00pm

Type of meeting: In person

Key discussion points and outcomes

1. Introduction, overview, and housekeeping

- 1.1 Sarah Jacobs (SJ) welcomed attendees to the meeting and ran through the housekeeping and agenda. SJ highlighted that although only the parishes in the Enhanced LRGs are statutory consultees, with regards to these meetings, EWR Co have taken the view also to regard ward councillors as statutory consultees as this will allow EWR Co to have more meaningful discussions and provide more information.
- 1.2 Naomi Bennett (NB) mentioned that engagement with East West Rail (EWR) among residents in the Cambridge City area has been very low. SJ highlighted that the consultation events in Cambridge were well attended, with more attendees than expected.

Project updates

Universal theme park

- 1.3 SJ explained that EWR Co is engaging with Universal to determine the potential implications of the theme park for Bedford and the wider network. It has not yet been confirmed what the park may mean for EWR Co, but they are committed to maintaining close contact with all relevant parties, such as Universal, Network Rail and the Department for Transport (DfT) to ensure accessibility and connectivity are core elements of the planning process.
- 1.4 NB highlighted that Universal may present a good opportunity for tourists to visit the area for longer periods of time, also being able to visit Woburn Safari Park nearby.

Chiltern Railways

- 1.5 SJ explained that Chiltern Railways has been announced as the operator for the first stage of EWR.
- 1.6 SJ clarified that 'MVL' on the slides refers to the Marston Vale Line. Ed Leech (EL) confirmed that this line is not currently well used, with one train running per hour. Work is therefore being done to upgrade the line to enable it to support faster and more frequent services.

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- 1.7 NB asked if there were plans to directly link Bletchley and Milton Keynes via train, as this would be favourable. SJ confirmed that feedback relating to this was received at the last non-statutory consultation and is being taken into consideration, but it is currently out of EWR Co's scope. SJ highlighted that EWR Co are currently considering the impacts of the Universal proposals and whether this may create a greater demand for this connection in the future.

Ground Investigation (GI) Works

- 1.8 SJ ran through the ground investigation (GI) works slide, highlighting that GI works had not yet started in Cambridge city centre, but had in some rural areas along the line. SJ confirmed that posters will be provided to nearby properties and businesses to notify them of any upcoming works in their area.
- 1.9 SJ also discussed the video available on the EWR Co website that provides more information about the GI works and highlighted that fossils had been found along the route as part of these works.

Surveys

- 1.10 SJ provided an update on the range of surveys and any future anticipated timelines. These include noise and vibration, water resources, air quality, traffic and transport, water, cultural heritage and community, as well as intrusive surveys.
- 1.11 Darren Green (DG) asked for clarification on whether noise surveys referred to construction noise. SJ clarified that this referred to traffic noise, e.g. monitoring traffic in peak times to understand current noise levels and what the potential impacts from EWR could be.
- 1.12 SJ also discussed that there were some more intrusive surveys planned in the future, expected to often be carried out alongside an external organisation such as National Highways. SJ confirmed that stakeholders will be notified about these before they begin.

2. Non-statutory consultation (NSC) next steps

- 2.1 SJ provided an update on the non-statutory consultation (NSC) – a NSC summary document was published in May 2025, detailing high-level themes from the non-statutory consultation. A more comprehensive 'You Said, We Did' report will be published at statutory consultation.
- 2.2 SJ ran through some of the emerging themes, including growth opportunities, environment and sustainability and construction and logistics. All themes were detailed on the slides. SJ also read the slide detailing the most common themes from the Cambridge area.
- 2.3 NB stated that one of the Green Party's priorities relating to EWR Co is ensuring that as much freight is taken off the A14 as possible (and moved onto rail), as there are severe accidents on this road on a daily basis.

- 2.4 NB highlighted that she would like to see a station at Cherry Hinton, as this would help support the local airport, new developments and commuters. Many people in the area would like to see this.
- 2.5 Jon Cornwell (JC) explained the current reasoning behind the turnbacks proposed at Cherry Hinton. JC confirmed that this was highlighted many times in the non-statutory consultation, and whilst it is currently outside of EWR's scope, regular conversations are being held with external companies that could potentially bring the station into scope in the future.
- 2.6 NB asked what would happen with the disused station between Cambridge and Cherry Hinton (Barnwell Junction). JC confirmed this would remain unused.

3. Development Consent Order (DCO) Process

- 3.1 SJ shared the Development Consent Order (DCO) process timeline on the slides, stating that they are currently in the pre-application stage of the process.

4. Revised Local Representative Groups (LRGs)

- 4.1 SJ discussed the revised group structure for LRGs and explained that all parishes and wards within the red line boundary have been placed into the 'Enhanced' LRGs, whereas those outside this boundary are part of the 'Community LRGs'.
- 4.2 SJ explained that the decision lies with the enhanced group regarding whether anyone else can join their group (if there are any requests). This can be highlighted in the Terms of Reference (ToR).


5. Terms of Reference and request to join LRG

- 5.1 SJ stated that the Terms of Reference (ToR) had some minor changes and that she would share these with the group after the meeting. She stated that feedback was required from attendees on the ToRs. SJ said that if resident groups had questions for EWR Co, they should ask their councillors to bring them to the LRG meetings on their behalf.

6. Route section: Cambridge

- 6.1 JC ran through the slides and detailed maps focused on the Cambridge section of the route with the two attendees. A high level overview of this discussion is provided below.
- 6.2 NB highlighted several points, including: the positive impact of a Cherry Hinton station to increase the employment catchment of Cambridge, and the proposed eastern entrance of Cambridge station, potentially reducing congestion and providing a significant difference to those commuting and travelling east from the station.

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- 6.3 DG asked whether EWR Co had met the new Mayor of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority and if they could share details of his sentiment towards the project. EL confirmed that a meeting had recently been held with the Mayor and described it as productive.
- 6.4 NB stated that it was understood that the particular route was chosen to avoid flooding issues, but that the majority of Cambridge suffered with flooding, and therefore asked what was being done to manage this. JC confirmed that EWR Co have undertaken significant flood monitoring and are carrying out flood risk assessments to understand the likely impact of flooding in the areas surrounding the route, and to enable mitigation measures to be developed where required.
- 6.5 NB mentioned that there was a cross-regional EWR Green Party Group who are keen to meet EWR Co. EL confirmed that they would investigate the possibility of this, but that there are challenges with engaging with groups covering the entire route, as these conversations tend to be more high level due to the difficulties of focusing in on specific areas.
- 6.6 NB asked how secure the funding of EWR was. EL confirmed that it was as secure as it can be at this stage of the DCO process.
- 6.7 NB stated that there have previously been difficulties in Cambridge with last-mile delivery, as there is a larger focus on Research and Development (R&D). NB therefore stated that EWR Co would need to push and encourage the councils to spend more time considering the last-mile delivery strategy.
- 6.8 SJ stated that the attendees were welcome to suggest a topic or discussion points for the next meeting. SJ closed the meeting, thanking the attendees for joining.

Summary of Actions

- **ACTION 1:** EWR Co to share link of detailed maps with attendees

Attendees

EWR Co attendees

- Sarah Jacobs (SJ) - Senior Engagement Manager (EWR Co)
- Jonathan Cornwell (JC) – Development Programme Manager (EWR Co)
- Ed Leech (EL) – Head of Political Relations (EWR Co)

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Local authority councillors

- Cllr Darren Green (DG) – Councillor for Romsey division, Cambridgeshire County Council
- Cllr Naomi Bennett (NB) – Councillor for Abbey ward, Cambridge City Council

Apologies

- Abbey division, Cambridgeshire County Council
- Cherry Hinton division, Cambridgeshire County Council
- Cherry Hinton ward, Cambridge City Council
- Chesterton division, Cambridgeshire County Council
- Coleridge ward, Cambridge City Council
- East Chesterton ward, Cambridge City Council
- Fen Ditton & Fulbourn ward, South Cambridgeshire District Council
- Fulbourn division, Cambridgeshire County Council
- Fulbourn Parish Council
- King's Hedges division, Cambridgeshire County Council
- Milton Parish Council
- Milton & Waterbeach ward, South Cambridgeshire District Council
- Petersfield division, Cambridgeshire County Council
- Petersfield ward, Cambridge City Council
- Queen Edith's ward, Cambridge City Council
- Queen Edith's division, Cambridgeshire County Council
- Romsey ward, Cambridge City Council
- Teversham Parish Council
- Trumpington division, Cambridgeshire County Council
- Trumpington ward, Cambridge City Council
- Waterbeach division, Cambridgeshire County Council