

Roxton to East St Neots Enhanced LRG

-Meeting note

Meeting #2

Date: 21/10/2025

Time: 6:00pm

Type of meeting: Online on MS Teams

Key discussion points and outcomes

1. Introduction, overview, and housekeeping

- 1.1 Sarah Jacobs (SJ) welcomed everyone to the meeting, introduced herself and the EWR Co attendees on the call, then ran through the agenda and housekeeping.
- 1.2 Olu Solola (OS) introduced himself as the Development Program Manager for the Course Section (from Clapham Green to Hoxton).

2. Project updates

- 2.1 SJ shared project and engagement updates since the last round of LRG meetings.
- 2.2 SJ shared the planned engagement activities, from November 2025 to January 2026 (*See slide deck for the full list of all actions*).
- 2.3 SJ gave an update on the landowner engagement that EWR Co have been doing – EWR Co are writing to people across the route whose land or property could be affected by the proposals.
- 2.4 Gordon Johnston (GJ) asked clarification on how many Development Program Managers are currently working, mentioning Stephen Christian (SC) and Robert Milner (RM), and asking why RM has not taken part in the latest meetings.
- 2.5 OS explained that he is currently taking over this role from SC, and that RM still works on the project but has not been required for this set of meetings as OS and SC are covering.

This is a controlled document; once printed or downloaded, this document is uncontrolled.

3. Planning and Infrastructure Bill (PIB)

- 3.1 SJ provided an update on the Planning and Infrastructure Bill (PIB), noting that it presents an opportunity to modernise and enhance engagement outside of formal consultation periods. When EWR Co have more information, they will come back to the ELRGs on this matter.

4. Environmental Update

- 4.1 Fiona Man (FM) gave an environment update, noting that initial environmental information was shared in the non-statutory consultation 2024 Environmental Update Report. Since then, EWR Co have been reviewing feedback, engaging with stakeholders and undertaking surveys to inform design development.
- 4.2 Tracey Wye (TW) enquired which people from the Environment Agency (EA) and Internal Drainage Board (IDB) the project team is working with; as, when she communicates with people from the EA and IDB, none of them appear to be informed. TW clarified that she is a member of the RFCC (flooding and coastal management), and none of the other members, especially those involved in the modelling, appear to be informed.
- 4.3 FM said that she did not take part in those meetings herself, but that she will take away as an action to confirm who from the EA and IDB attended meetings or was in contact with the project team.

Post Meeting Note:

EWR have engaged with the following members of the EA and IDB

Environment Agency

- Ben Corne, FCRM Senior Advisor, Growth and Regulations
- Neville Benn, Planning Specialist, Sustainable Places, East Anglia Area (West)
- Sarah Adeney, Senior Technical Advisor, Flood Risk Modelling, Data Digital and Evidence (FCERM)
- Katherine Dalton, Strategic Environmental Planning Manager, Oxford to Cambridge Team
- Daniel Curtis, Integrated Water Management Delivery Manager, Oxford-Cambridge Team

Internal Drainage Board

- Trevor Skelding

5. Route Section Update

- 5.1 Stephen Christian (SC) explained the specific design decisions related to the Roxton to East of St Neots route section.

This is a controlled document; once printed or downloaded, this document is uncontrolled.

5.2 TW asked confirmation on whether the area highlighted in blue on the map of slide 20 is a temporary acquisition. TW enquired whether the project team will be providing details on how people can access that area of interest.

5.3 SC confirmed that the blue highlighted area is a temporary acquisition and explained that the project team is currently working on identifying possible active travel routes and highway connections. SC informed that the project team is currently taking a study with Highways England on another exit off the A428, which is at preliminary stage.

5.4 Gordon Johnston (GJ), related to slide 21, enquired whether the additional underpass showcased for the A421 is currently part of a National Highways plan, or if it is planned for a later stage.

Post Meeting Note:

The underpass directly to the west of the East Coast Main Line at Tempsford Station (A421 underpass) will be constructed by EWR as part the station.

5.5 SC said that he will confirm the answer to the question and communicate it in the meeting minutes.

5.6 Tony Hyde (TH) asked for clarification regarding the state of separation between the EWR station and the mainline station.

5.7 SC explained that, although separated, the stations are interchangeable, with escalators and lifts down from the source rail onto the platform, which will ensure accessibility.

5.8 TW enquired whether there are any changes planned which would impact Sandy Station, enquiring specifically whether the station would be closed.

5.9 SC confirmed that there are certainly no plans to shut Sandy Station, but he offered to double check that information with EWR.

5.10 James Catmur (JC) asked in the meeting chat for confirmation regarding the shallow gradient east of Wintringham, which would allow a station to be built in the far future.

5.11 SC confirmed that the team has so far identified three locations near Wintringham which could host a station. However, no further work has been taken up on this matter.

6. Accessibility Panel

6.1 Georgina Taylor (GT) explained that EWR Co have been doing a lot of work to embed inclusion and accessibility into proposals and design.

This is a controlled document; once printed or downloaded, this document is uncontrolled.

- 6.2 In the meeting chat, JC raised the issue of Bedford station being difficult to access without a companion.
- 6.3 GT expanded on that matter and shared with the meeting participants an occurrence during a panel member visit to Bedford station. GT explained that the current accessible entrance at Bedford station is not at the front of the building, which caused one panel member distress.

7. Discussion, Questions & Answers (Q&A)

- 7.1 TW asked in the meeting chat if the team could provide the planned dates for the public consultation related to this stage of the project.
- 7.2 SJ explained that, because of the PIB, the consultation plan is currently under review but planned for 2026. SJ explained that the engagement process could be different because of the PIB, but with opportunities to assess new designs and provide feedback.
- 7.3 In the meeting chat, TW asked whether the route has already been set in stone, and whether the feedback provided will make a difference.
- 7.4 SJ answered that there has already been a lot of feedback from previous consultations which has been implemented, and there will be further opportunities for further feedback to be considered.
- 7.5 TH referenced the A428 upgrades, and the impact they had on the Abbotsley area, asking how EWR will propose to cross the new roads, and whether they will be doing so using a tunnel.
- 7.6 SC explained that, when such situations arise, the project team might consider diversion or road deconstruction, but in most cases not tunnelling.
- 7.7 TH expressed concern over the lack of information regarding this matter, and the potential disruption which EWR might cause to residents which have just recovered from the disturbance caused by the A428 works.
- 7.8 TH asked why the project team cannot tunnel under the new roads.
- 7.9 SJ explained that further information regarding road closures will be shared in the 2026 planned consultation, and that opportunities such as the LRG's provide a good example of where this can be discussed and considered further.

This is a controlled document; once printed or downloaded, this document is uncontrolled.

- 7.10 SJ reiterated that feedback will be taken onboard during future engagement, and that the current project details are not finalised.
- 7.11 In the meeting chat, JC commented that Abbotsley's connection to St Neots is TH's primary concern.
- 7.12 TH clarified that Abbotsley's connection to St Neots is one concern, but he also has other routes of concern which are off the existing A428 heading northwards.
- 7.13 TH asked whether it is possible to move the boundary for the Roxton – St Neots group to include the whole of the Abbotsley Parish.
- 7.14 SJ took away as an action to reassign Abbotsley Parish members to one group only.

Post Meeting Note:

This action has been taken after the meeting, and an email sent to the Abbotsley Parish Councillors asking to confirm the move.

8. Closing remarks

- 8.1 SJ thanked the attendees for their contributions during the session and advised that further information is available on the [EWR website](#).
- 8.2 SJ advised that if any attendees have any further questions, these can be sent to localrepresentativesgroups@eastwestrail.co.uk.

Summary of Actions

ACTION 1: FM to confirm and refer back to Tracey Wye on who from the EA and IDB attended meetings with the project team.

ACTION 2: Stephen Christian to confirm in the meeting minutes whether the additional underpass showcased for the A421 is currently part of a National Highways plan, or if it is planned for a later stage.

ACTION 3: Stephen Christian to confirm with EWR whether there are any plans in place for Sandy Station.

ACTION 4: Abbotsley Parish Council members to be moved to one group only.

This is a controlled document; once printed or downloaded, this document is uncontrolled.

Attendees

EWR Co attendees

- Sarah Jacobs (SJ) - Senior Stakeholder Manager
- Fiona Man (FM) - Environmental Area Manager
- Stephen Christian (SC) – Development Program Manager
- Georgina Taylor (GT) – Accessibility Manager
- Lavinia Popa (LP) – LRG Support

Local authority councillors

- James Catmur (JC) - Huntingdonshire District Council
- Tracey Wye (TW) – Central Bedfordshire Council

Parish Councillors

- Sam Smith (SS) – St Neots CP
- Justin Griffiths (JG) – Roxton CP
- Martin Ley (ML) - Wyboston, Chawston and Colesden CP
- Tony Hyde (TH) – Abbotsley CP
- Gordon Johnston (GJ) - Wyboston, Chawston and Colesden CP

Other

- Nav Panesar (NP)- Cambridgeshire County Council

Apologies

- George Gurney (GG) - Oxfordshire County Council

This is a controlled document; once printed or downloaded, this document is uncontrolled.