

East West Rail and the Development Consent Order (DCO) Process: What it means for landowners

East West Rail will move through a number of development stages and approvals before we start the next phase of works to improve the railway between Oxford and Cambridge and to construct the new railway between Bedford and Cambridge.

At every step we seek to engage with landowners and occupiers to understand how the project impacts on their land and homes.

This Factsheet sets out what processes and approvals are involved at each stage of the project's development and what they will mean for land and homeowners.

→ Stage 01

Choosing the Preferred Route Option

- Environmental survey access
- First non-statutory public consultation (2019)
- Public Information Event for selection of Route E (non-statutory public consultation)

Landowner engagement started with environmental surveys across the proposed route to help inform the next stage and Public Information Events were held for the selection of Route E.

✓ Completed

→ Stage 02

Developing Route Alignment Options and identifying extra infrastructure between Oxford and Cambridge

- Environmental survey access
- Second non-statutory public consultation (2021)
- Individual meetings held with landowners to discuss consultation on route options
- Guide to the proposed Need to Sell Scheme published for consultation feedback

Landowner engagement continued with environmental survey access across Route E.

In March 2021 a non-statutory consultation was held and landowners and homeowners across all route options were contacted with outline designs showing the potential impact of our proposals on their land and/or home. In order to help provide consultation feedback, landowners were invited to individual meetings with our Team where our proposals were explained.

We consulted on a proposed Need to Sell Scheme to support landowners and homeowners at the same time as we consulted on the infrastructure proposals and route alignment options.

✓ Completed

→ Stage 03

Choosing a Preferred Route Alignment and additional infrastructure

- Ongoing environmental survey access
- Ground investigation and archaeological surveys start
- Need to Sell Property Scheme launched at Route Update Announcement
- Statutory Consultation (anticipated first half of 2024)
- Landowner engagement on agreements, mitigation and accommodation works

Environmental survey access is ongoing and access will be sought for ground investigation and archaeological surveys along the preferred route.

Following review of consultation feedback we have published the selection of our Preferred Route Alignment between Bedford and Cambridge as part of our route update with Public Information Events held. We have also launched the Need to Sell Property Scheme.

Ahead of Statutory Consultation we will contact directly affected homeowners, occupiers and landowners. At Statutory Consultation, we will consult on our proposals and continue to engage with landowners and homeowners to discuss our proposals, and seek to acquire land and rights over land by agreement. We will also seek to agree measures to reduce the impacts of our proposals, including accommodation works.

→ In progress

→ Stage 04

Securing a Development Consent Order

- Ongoing environmental, ground investigation and archaeological survey access
- Ongoing negotiations to acquire land and property by agreement
- Continuing discussions on design updates, mitigation measures and accommodation works
- Notify landowners when application submitted for DCO and land requirements determined
- NTS Property Scheme ongoing and Statutory Blight provisions

Negotiations to acquire the necessary land and rights over land will continue, with a preference to acquire land and rights over land by agreement rather than using compulsory purchase powers. Landowners and homeowners will be notified once the DCO application has been submitted and will have the opportunity to submit representations and attend hearings as part of the Examination process. Throughout this process we will seek to resolve issues raised in representations.

Statutory Blight provisions become available after the DCO application is submitted and eligible home and property owners within the limits of the line of the railway could then ask us to buy their property.

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→ Stage 05

Post Development Consent Order

- Ongoing environmental and ground investigation and archaeological survey access
- Ongoing landowner meetings before and during construction
- Take possession of the land required to construct, either by agreement or using compulsory purchase powers
- With land acquired, compensation claims can be submitted
- Need to Sell Property Scheme ongoing
- Part 1 compensation becomes available a year and one day after the new or altered railway first comes into public use

Surveys continue to inform the construction works. We will continue to try and agree land acquisition before the use of compulsory purchase powers. When the land is required by the project, we will trigger the clause allowing possession within any formal written agreement, or where there is no agreement in place, compulsory powers will be used. Landowners and homeowners can then submit compensation claims for land acquired under compulsion. Part 1 claims can be submitted a year and a day after the new or altered railway first comes into public use. This applies for claims by owner-occupiers of homes which have been reduced in value by physical factors caused by the use of a new or altered railway.

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