Information Sheet
East West Rail project integration with High Speed Two
July 2016

Introduction
This briefing note sets out the interface between the East West Rail Phase 2 (EWR2) project and High Speed Two (HS2) and outlines how the projects will integrate.

Overview of projects
HS2 is the Government’s proposal for a new, high speed north-south railway. The proposal is being taken forward in two phases: Phase One will connect London with Birmingham and the West Midlands and Phase Two will extend the route to Manchester, Leeds and beyond.

In November 2013, HS2 Ltd deposited a hybrid Bill with Parliament to seek powers for the construction and operation of Phase One of HS2. The hybrid Bill contains the necessary powers to accommodate both HS2 and all necessary realignments to the EWR2 lines and is expected to receive Royal Assent by December 2016.

The EWR2 project has been promoted by the East West Rail Consortium (a consortium of local authorities and strategic partners) and subsequently adopted by the Department for Transport for delivery by Network Rail. The project involves the reconstruction and upgrading of currently mothballed or underused railway lines between Bedford and Oxford, and Milton Keynes and Aylesbury in order to introduce passenger and freight services between Bedford, Oxford, Milton Keynes and Aylesbury and beyond.

The railway included in the EWR2 route was authorised when the route was first constructed in the 19th Century through a number of separate Acts of Parliament. Network Rail will therefore use its permitted development powers where appropriate. However, where sections of railway were built outside of the Limits of Deviation of the authorising acts a Transport and Works Act Order (TWAO) will be sought to authorise these sections. This TWAO will also pick up ancillary works that cannot be completed under permitted development or by agreement (e.g. level crossing closures, where alternative, safer methods of crossing the railway will be introduced wherever possible).
Interfaces
HS2’s hybrid Bill seeks powers to use the present alignment of a section of the Claydon to Aylesbury line and pass under the Oxford to Bletchley route. This intersection requires the current Claydon to Aylesbury line to be realigned towards the East and for the Oxford to Bletchley route to be raised in order to provide the necessary vertical clearance for the HS2 route to pass beneath it.

Claydon is also the planned location of a major construction depot, which would later become the principal Infrastructure Maintenance Depot (IMD) for HS2 South.

Near Little Kimble the HS2 alignment will pass beneath the Aylesbury to Princes Risborough branch.

Previous strategy
EWR2 has to date developed a standalone proposal to HS2 where its designs did not include HS2’s proposal. This approach was adopted at a time when EWR2 needed to obtain a Transport and Works Act Order (TWAO) in timescales to allow delivery by March 2019. This standalone approach would have enabled this to be done, and would have also protected EWR2 from any delays to HS2’s the hybrid Bill.

Following the recent review carried out by Sir Peter Hendy into Network Rail’s Enhancements Portfolio, EWR2’s timescales have changed, and the project is now set for delivery in the five-year control period for rail investments (CP6) from 2019 to 24, although subject to the availability of funding construction could start before 2019. By contrast, HS2’s hybrid Bill has progressed to schedule and remains set to be granted Royal Assent in December 2016.

Benefits of integration
In 2015, HS2 commissioned Network Rail to conduct an integration study, reviewing the options for integration of the two projects and this study produced a report which was completed in January 2016. This study involved a review of the requirements of each project, their current programmes, designs and construction plans and highlighted that a range of benefits existed in integrating the two schemes such as:

- Cost savings through avoiding duplicated works
- Construction efficiencies and reduced construction durations
- Reduced environmental impact
- Reduced construction impact on local communities
- Safety benefits through integrated design and construction
Next steps

As a result of the identification of the benefits set out above and recent revisions to EWR2’s timescales, EWR2 has revised its strategy and will no longer seek authorisation for a standalone EWR2 scheme for the section of route being authorised by the HS2 Bill.

The next phase of the HS2 / EWR design development is now underway and will provide further clarification on what programme opportunities and construction cost efficiencies exist. This will be set out in a report which is due in Autumn 2016. Future stages of this work will see further design work leading towards the eventual construction of both projects.

The second round of EWR2’s TWAO consultation will include information on the HS2 proposal (albeit making clear that this is not being authorised as part of the EWR2 TWAO) as it will effectively form part of the overall EWR2 scheme as well as information on powers that are required for the EWR project outside of this area.

If the hybrid Bill receives Royal Assent in December 2016 as expected, this will result in the legal powers to construct EWR2 in this area being received, since these legal powers to construct the EWR2 upgrade in this area are contained in the hybrid Bill. Should any further funding be made available for EWR2 to accelerate its construction work, legal powers would exist to carry out the work in this area.

Further information

Please visit
www.eastwestrail.org.uk
www.networkrail.co.uk/east-west-rail
www.gov.uk/government/organisations/high-speed-two-limited

For any further queries on the two schemes, please contact:

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