

## **TRANSPORT AND WORKS ACT 1992**

### **Transport and Works (Applications and Objections Procedure) (England and Wales) Rules 2006**

## **THE NETWORK RAIL (EAST WEST RAIL WESTERN SECTION PHASE 2) ORDER**

### **DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT**

#### ***CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION***

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## Draft Environmental Statement

### 1. INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 General

- 1.1.1 This Draft Environmental Statement (Draft ES) has been prepared on behalf of Network Rail Infrastructure Limited (NR) to support the Round Two Consultation for the Network Rail (East West Rail Western Section Phase 2) Transport and Works Act Order (TWAO). Following this consultation, NR intends to apply for a TWAO to seek powers to authorise the construction and maintenance of an operational railway between Bedford and Bicester, and via that line between Milton Keynes to Princes Risborough, together with the construction or augmentation of stations at Winslow, Bletchley and Aylesbury Vale Parkway. Parts of the proposed route will facilitate the operation of direct railway services between London Marylebone/Oxford and Milton Keynes Central/Bedford stations.
- 1.1.2 The works proposed under the TWAO (referred to as the TWAO Scheme) form part of the wider East West Rail (EWR) programme of railway development to reintroduce rail services between Oxford and East Anglia. EWR has three sections: Western, Central and Eastern. The Western section of EWR has two phases.
- 1.1.3 The first phase (referred to as EWR Phase 1) consists of a line between Bicester and Oxford, promoted by Chiltern Railways under The Chiltern Railways (Bicester to Oxford Improvements) Order 2012. These works were completed in December 2016.
- 1.1.4 The second phase of the western section of EWR, known as EWR2, will upgrade and reinstate existing and mothballed sections of line that link Bicester with Bedford, and Milton Keynes with Princes Risborough. EWR2 will be authorised under a number of consenting regimes, including the TWAO, permitted development, planning permission and the High Speed Rail (London – West Midlands) Act 2017 (the HS2 Phase One Act).
- 1.1.5 This Draft ES refers to ‘the Project’ as being those elements of EWR2 which have not already been environmentally assessed. There are some elements of EWR2 for which authorisation will be sought outside the TWAO

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Scheme, as described in the paragraph above. In some cases those non-TWAO elements of EWR2 have already been the subject of environmental assessment; in other cases they have not. Where some of these elements have not been the subject of environmental assessment, this Draft ES reports on them, as well as the TWAO Scheme. Chapter 2 (Project Description) describes the elements of the Project and the TWAO Scheme in more detail. Table 1.1 sets out the parts of EWR2 which will be authorised under each consenting regime.

**Table 1.1 Consenting regimes for EWR2**

Consenting Regime	Parts of EWR2 to be authorised	Parts to be covered in this Draft ES i.e. the Project
<b>TWAO</b>	Works within the TWAO Scheme Boundary	Construction and operation of works within the TWAO Scheme Boundary
<b>HS2 Phase One Act</b>	EWR2 Infrastructure within the HS2 Area (between Grebe Lake to the west, Queen Catherine Road to the east, and Station Road, Quanton to the south).	Operation of the EWR2 infrastructure in the HS2 Area *
<b>Permitted Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Platform extension at Princes Risborough Station</li> <li>New platforms and footbridge at Aylesbury Vale Parkway Station</li> </ul>	Construction and operation of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Platform extension at Princes Risborough Station</li> <li>New platforms and footbridge at Aylesbury Vale Parkway Station</li> </ul>
<b>Planning Permission</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A new station at Winslow</li> <li>A new footbridge at Woburn Sands School Crossing</li> <li>Advanced ecology mitigation works</li> </ul>	Construction and operation of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A new station at Winslow</li> <li>A new footbridge at Woburn Sands School Crossing</li> <li>Advanced ecology mitigation works</li> </ul>

\* construction of EWR2 infrastructure in the HS2 Area has already been assessed in the HS2 ES and is not considered within the Draft ES

1.1.6 In addition to the assessment of the operation of EWR2 within the HS2 Area, this Draft ES will also set out how the cumulative effects of HS2 and EWR2, as interacting schemes, will be assessed, relating to both their construction and operation.

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1.1.7 The purpose of this Draft ES is to inform consultation. It documents and reflects the current stage of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) undertaken to date for the Project. The Draft ES describes the likely significant effects arising from the construction and operation of the Project alone and cumulatively, the methodology used to identify and assess these, as well as the current proposed mitigation measures to avoid, reduce or remedy these effects.

1.1.8 It should be noted that on-going design development, as well as consultation comments, will affect the EIA and its findings. Therefore, any assessments, conclusions or mitigation proposals presented within this Draft ES are provisional and subject to change. A final ES will be submitted with the TWAO Application.

## **1.2 The Requirement for an Environmental Statement**

1.2.1 The procedures for applications for an order made under the Transport and Works Act 1992 are described in The Transport and Works (Applications and Objections Procedure) (England and Wales) Rules 2006 (referred to as the Applications Rules). The Applications Rules require an application for an Order to be accompanied by an ES if that project is of a type that falls within Annex I of the EIA Directive, European Council Directive 2011/92/EU, as amended, (the Directive), or for a project which falls within Annex II of the Directive and is expected to give rise to significant environmental effects.

1.2.2 The Project involves the promotion of an operational railway that is nearly 100km in length, and so may fall within Annex I as being the construction of a line for long-distance railway traffic. Even if the Project were not to fall within Annex I, then it would fall within Annex II as it involves the construction of a railway which is likely to have significant effects upon the environment.

## **1.3 The requirement for a TWAO**

1.3.1 The proposed operational railway promoted by EWR2 will be located almost entirely within existing operational railway land. Therefore, it does not meet

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the requirements for a Development Consent Order (DCO) under the Planning Act 2008. Railway development is only dealt with under the Planning Act 2008 where it consists of or includes the construction or alteration of railway track of a continuous length of more than two route kilometres *all situated outside existing railway operational land*. For this reason, consent for EWR2, and those supporting elements of work falling outside of existing railway operational land, will be sought under a TWAO.

#### **1.4 The Promoter**

1.4.1 NR is the infrastructure owner and operator of the railway in England, Scotland and Wales, and delivers projects that provide a safer, more reliable, and higher capacity railway. EWR2, for which NR is the promoter of the TWAO, is part of the delivery of this investment.

1.4.2 EWR2 will be designed and constructed by the EWR Alliance, which is made up of NR, Atkins, Laing O'Rourke and VolkerRail working under a 'pure alliance' agreement.

1.4.3 WSP is a partner supplier, to the EWR Alliance, in the delivery of the EIA on behalf of NR.

#### **1.5 Background**

##### EWR

1.5.1 The EWR programme of works aims to establish a strategic railway connecting East Anglia with Central, Southern and Western England. Once operational, EWR will link the strategic growth areas along the M1 corridor (Milton Keynes, Aylesbury, Bedford and Oxford) and support the growing hi-tech, digital economic sectors by connecting the key hubs between Oxford and Cambridge. It will, via connections with the Great Eastern, East Coast, Midland, West Coast and Great Western Main Lines, connect to the ports of Felixstowe and Harwich, avoiding the need for passenger or freight travel on congested tracks around North London, and could provide an additional route for north-south freight traffic from the port of Southampton.

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1.5.2 This aspiration has been supported and developed since 1995 by the East West Rail Consortium (EWR Consortium) – a group of local authorities and strategic partners with an interest in improving access to and from East Anglia and the Milton Keynes South Midlands growth area.

1.5.3 From East to West, the following local authorities are members of the EWR Consortium:

- Ipswich Borough Council;
- Suffolk County Council;
- Norfolk County Council;
- Norwich City Council;
- Cambridgeshire County Council;
- Bedford Borough Council;
- Central Bedfordshire Council;
- Luton Borough Council;
- Milton Keynes Council;
- Hertfordshire County Council;
- Stevenage District Council;
- Buckinghamshire County Council;
- Aylesbury Vale District Council;
- Wycombe District Council;
- Oxfordshire County Council;
- Cherwell District Council, and
- Oxford City Council.

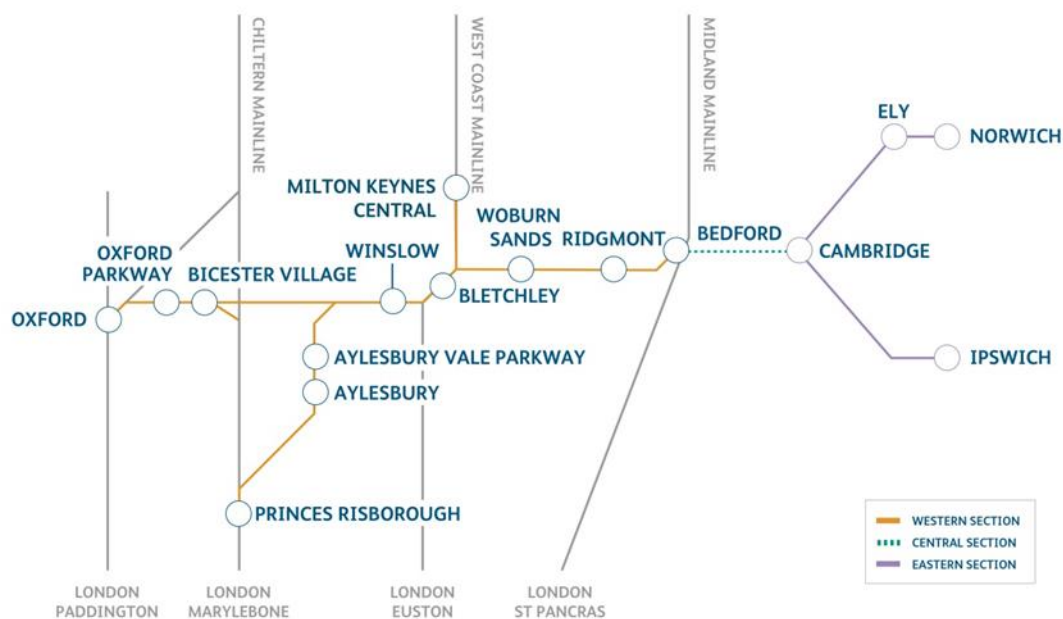
1.5.4 In addition, the Department for Transport (DfT), NR and the South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership (SEMLEP) are represented on the Consortium.

1.5.5 EWR falls into three geographically distinct sections (see Insert 1.1):

- Western - the route of the Western Section follows existing lines between Bedford and Oxford, Milton Keynes and Princes Risborough;
- Central – the original rail link between Bedford and Cambridge was closed in the 1960s, dismantled and the land disposed of; EWR Central Section would reintroduce a rail link between the two locations; and
- Eastern - this route links Cambridge and East Anglia.

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Insert 1.1 Diagram of EWR Sections

1.5.6 Further information on Central and Eastern Sections can be found at <https://www.networkrail.co.uk/our-railway-upgrade-plan/key-projects/east-west-rail/>

#### EWR Western Section

1.5.7 The EWR Western Section is the most advanced in terms of design and funding. Development of this part of the railway will result in the introduction of direct rail passenger services as follows: Bedford to Oxford, Milton Keynes to Oxford and Milton Keynes to London via Princes Risborough. This will require upgrading and reinstating the Oxford–Bicester–Bletchley–Bedford and Aylesbury–Claydon Junction railway lines.

1.5.8 The development also provides opportunities for additional services, over and above that already described, which could deliver wider benefits for passenger travel and freight markets.

1.5.9 Within the Western Section there are two distinct phases of work described above, known as EWR Phase 1 and EWR2 (see Insert 1.2):

- EWR Phase 1 was completed in December 2016 and involved the upgrade of the Oxford-to-Bicester railway line and new section of track to link Oxford and Bicester Village (formerly Bicester Town) stations directly to the Chiltern Main Line (CML) allowing new direct passenger

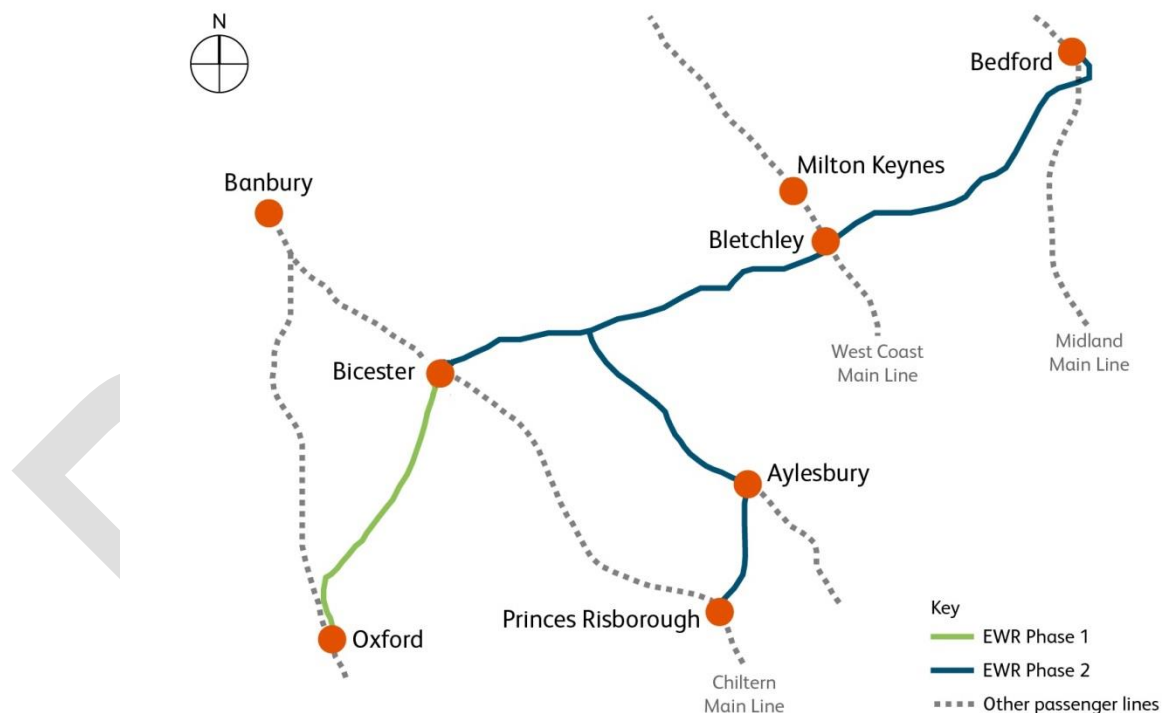


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services from Oxford to London Marylebone. It also involved widening the existing track bed; doubling over 18km of track; increasing the line speed to 100mph; constructing new overbridges, underbridges and footbridges; closing 37 level crossings; building the new Oxford Parkway Station at Water Eaton; upgrading Islip Station and installing a new signalling system; and

- EWR2 requires upgrading and reinstating the Bicester–Bletchley–Bedford, and Aylesbury–Claydon Junction railway lines. The key proposals for EWR2 include alterations to or replacement of a number of overbridges and underbridges along the route; improvement of facilities at or closure of a number of highway, private roads and public rights of way (PRoW) level crossings; provision of replacement footbridges or diversions at closed level crossings; a new station and ancillary facilities at Winslow, new platforms at Aylesbury Vale Parkway and Bletchley stations and platform extensions at Woburn Sands, Ridgmont and Princes Risborough stations to support the proposed new train services and increased passenger numbers.



Insert 1.2 Layout of EWR Western Section comprising EWR Phase 1 and EWR2

### EWR2 Benefits

1.5.10 EWR2 has five main benefits:

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- Support Local Authorities' ambitions for substantial economic growth based on the creation of new private sector jobs and the development of major areas of new housing;
- Positively contribute to tackling climate change by minimising the potential adverse impacts of growth by providing a more sustainable means of travel;
- Provide a connection between existing radial routes out of London meaning passengers won't have to interchange through London;
- Enhance the rail network capacity and flexibility by creating opportunities for alternative routes of passenger and freight services; and
- Realise the opportunity offered by an upgraded and re-instated rail link

### The Project

1.5.11 The Project comprises construction and operation of railway infrastructure between Bicester, Denbigh Hall South Junction (Bletchley), Bedford and Princes Risborough, and is delineated by the Project Boundary. The physical extent of the permanent works, together with land required temporarily to construct the works and the NR Managed Infrastructure (NRMI) between them, is known as the Project Area. The boundary around this physical extent is the Project Boundary. The land within the Project Boundary is referred to as the Project Area in this Draft ES. The Project Area extends to approximately 740ha.

1.5.12 A description of the Project is described in Chapter 2 (Project Description). The EIA assesses the effects arising from construction and operation of the Project, alone and cumulatively with other proposed developments.

1.5.13 Figure 1.1, in Volume 4, shows the Project Boundary, Project Area and TWAO Scheme Boundary. The Project Area passes through the following Local Authority Reporting Areas:

- Cherwell District Council (CDC);
- Aylesbury Vale – Claydon/Quainton (CQU);
- Aylesbury Vale – Aylesbury (AYL);
- Aylesbury Vale - Winslow/Swanbourne (WIS);
- Milton Keynes Council (MKC);
- Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC);

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- Bedford Borough Council (BBC), and
- Wycombe District Council (WDC).

#### The TWAO Scheme

1.5.14 The TWAO Scheme comprises the elements of the Project for which NR is seeking authorisation under the TWAO. The extent of the works being authorised under the TWAO is referred to as the TWAO Scheme Area. The boundary of the area being authorised under the TWAO is referred to as the TWAO Scheme Boundary.

## **1.6 Structure of the Draft ES**

1.6.1 This Draft ES comprises:

- Volume 1: A Non-Technical Summary;
- Volume 2: A Main Statement;
- Volume 3: Technical appendices; and
- Volume 4: Supporting figures, plans and photographs.

1.6.2 The content and the structure of this Draft ES has been developed and agreed through the scoping process and consultation. Further information on scoping and consultation can be found in Chapter 4 (EIA Methodology) and within each of the technical chapters (Chapters 6-16).

1.6.3 The structure of the Draft ES Main Statement (Volume 2) is as follows:

- Chapter 1 - Introduction;
- Chapter 2 - Project Description;
- Chapter 3 - Consideration of Alternatives (and Design Evolution);
- Chapter 4 - EIA Methodology;
- Chapter 5 - Planning Policy;
- Chapter 6 - Land Use and Agriculture;
- Chapter 7 - Cultural Heritage;
- Chapter 8 - Air Quality;
- Chapter 9 - Ecology;
- Chapter 10 - Noise and Vibration;
- Chapter 11 - Geology, Soil and Land Contamination;
- Chapter 12 - Landscape and Visual Impacts;

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- Chapter 13 - Water Quality and Flood Risk;
- Chapter 14 - Traffic and Transport;
- Chapter 15 - Cumulative Effects; and
- Chapter 16 - Summary of Mitigation.

1.6.4 The following general format has been adopted for the reporting of each technical chapter:

- Introduction;
- Limitations and Assumptions;
- Legislation, Policy and Guidance;
- Approach and Methodology;
- Baseline;
- Effects;
- Mitigation; and
- Residual Effects.

1.6.5 The following topics have been scoped out of this assessment, as set out in the Scoping Report (Appendix 1.1, Volume 3):

- Socio-economics:
  - The Project will bring many social and economic benefits, both locally and at an inter-regional level. The Statement of Aims accompanying the TWAO Application will summarise the social and economic aims of the Project. A series of business cases for the Project have been commissioned by the EWR Consortium, which conclude that the Project will deliver significant benefits for the region and sub region;
  - The assessment of likely significant effects on local communities and their assets, travellers and businesses (including agriculture) is set out in Chapters 6 (Land Use and Agriculture) and 14 (Traffic and Transport) of this Draft ES. Some aspects of this topic are also considered in Chapter 12 (Landscape and Visual Impacts) and Chapter 8 (Air Quality); and
  - Therefore this topic is scoped out of further consideration as part of this Draft ES.
- Climate change:
  - Climate change adaption has already and will continue to be considered as part of the Project design. Climate change resilience is considered in the following aspects of design: track and line-side

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equipment resilience with respect to extreme temperatures, higher wind speeds and increased risk of lightning strike; drainage capacity and bridges for watercourses crossings in relation to greater rainfall and higher risk of flooding/flood levels; and earthworks in relation to higher rainfall and drought;

- The Project itself will contribute strategically to reducing factors that lead to climate change. Specifically, the Project is intended to achieve a modal shift away from private car journeys. It is initially estimated that the Project will lead to the removal of 370,000 car journeys annually (based on preliminary modelling undertaken by the DfT), thereby directly reducing a contributing factor to climate change i.e. greenhouse gases released by road vehicles. The modelling used to provide this provisional figure will be subject of on-going refinement and will be updated for the final ES; and
- Climatic factors are also considered as part of Chapters 8 (Air Quality) and 13 (Water Quality and Flood Risk) of this Draft ES.
- Human health:
  - Human Health is not assessed as a separate topic chapter in this Draft ES. Chapters 8 (Air Quality), 10 (Noise and Vibration) and 11 (Geology, Soil and Land Contamination) all consider aspects of environmental impacts on health.
- Natural resources, waste and materials:
  - The design of the Project has and will continue, in line with the mitigation hierarchy and NR sustainability policies, sought to avoid and reduce the use of natural resources and maximise the use of materials with recycled content through the application of sustainability tools and decision making to the design process. These sustainability approaches are discussed further in Chapter 3 (Consideration of Alternatives and Design Evolution) and include the application of such principles as retention or recycling of existing infrastructure wherever safe and practicable to do so to reduce the need for natural resources. The draft Code of Construction Practice (CoCP) (see Appendix 1.4, Volume 3) provides further detail on how construction will be undertaken in relation to Resource Use and Waste Management. As part of this document, a Materials Management Plan and a Site Waste Management Plan will be prepared for the Project and will be used to implement these resource and waste efficiency measures during detailed design and construction.

1.6.6 In addition, decommissioning is not assessed within the individual topic areas. NR's Environmental Management Systems and Sustainable Development Strategy (2013-2024) states that even if the Project ceased

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to be in operational use in the future, it is not the intention of NR to remove the rail corridor and associated infrastructure.

1.6.7 Since the Scoping Report was issued, the Project design has been amended so that electrification is no longer proposed as part of the Project. It is therefore considered that the topic, Electromagnetic Interference, originally scoped into the assessment in response to the proposed electrification of the railway between Bicester and Bletchley, is no longer required as part of the EIA.

1.6.8 Chapter 4 (EIA Methodology) provides more details on the EIA Directive and the relevance of the revised EIA Directive (2017) to the TWAO application.

1.6.9 The Draft ES is supported by the following appendices (found in Volume 3):

- Appendix 1.1: Scoping Report;
- Appendix 1.2: Scoping Opinion;
- Appendix 1.3: Glossary and Abbreviations;
- Appendix 1.4: Draft Code of Construction Practice;
- Appendix 6.1: Land Use Assessment;
- Appendix 7.1: Desk Based [Heritage] Assessment;
- Appendices 8.1 – 8.6: relating to air quality;
- Ecological appendices:
  - Appendix 9.1: Field Survey Standards;
  - Appendix 9.2: Designated Sites;
  - Appendix 9.3: Habitats;
  - Appendix 9.4: Aquatic Ecology;
  - Appendix 9.5: Badger (confidential);
  - Appendix 9.6: Bats (not available for this Draft ES);
  - Appendix 9.7: Black Hairstreak Butterfly;
  - Appendix 9.8: Ornithology;
  - Appendix 9.9: Barn Owl (confidential);
  - Appendix 9.10: Dormouse;

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- Appendix 9.11: Great Crested Newts;
  - Appendix 9.12: Hedgerow;
  - Appendix 9.13: Otter and Water Vole;
  - Appendix 9.14: Ponds;
  - Appendix 9.15: Reptiles;
  - Appendix 9.16: Terrestrial Invertebrates;
  - Appendix 9.17: Principles of Ecological Mitigation;
  - Appendix 9.18: Ecology Assessment Methodology (not presented for this Draft ES);
  - Appendix 9.19: Biodiversity Net Positive;
  - Appendix 9.20 Ecological Consultation Responses (not presented for this Draft ES);
  - Appendix 9.21: Ecological Impact Assessment Spreadsheet and Register of Local/Parish Level Effects;
  - Appendices 10.1-10.9: relating to noise;
  - Appendix 11.1: Geotechnical Desk Study;
  - Appendix 11.2: Risk Estimation Definitions;
  - Appendix 12.1: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) Methodology and Baseline;
  - Appendix 12.2: Photomontages (not available for this Draft ES);
  - Appendix 13.1: Flood Risk Assessment;
  - Appendix 14.1: Transport Assessment; and
  - Appendix 15.1: Cumulative Effects Appendix.
- 1.6.10 Appendices 9.5 and 9.9 are confidential and will be made available upon request to approved stakeholders only.
- 1.6.11 As set out in Section 1.2, the governing legislation under which this Draft ES is provided is the Transport and Works (Applications and Objections Procedure) (England and Wales) Rules 2006 (referred to as the Applications Rules). Table 1.2 contains a summary of the information provided within the Draft ES in accordance with Schedule 1 of the Applications Rules.

**Table 1.2 Information provided under the Applications Rules**

<b>Summary of Requirements</b>	<b>Document Reference</b>
Description of the proposed project	Draft ES Volume 2 (Chapter 2)
Outline of main alternatives	Draft ES Volume 2 (Chapter 3)
Description of aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected	Draft ES Volume 2 (Chapters 6 – 16)
Description of likely significant effects and forecasting methods	Draft ES Volume 2 (Chapters 6 – 16)
Measures envisaged in relation to significant adverse effects	Draft ES Volume 2 (Chapters 6 – 16)
Non-technical summary	Draft ES Volume 1
Indication of difficulties in compiling the required information (technical or knowledge based)	Draft ES Volume 2 (Chapters 6 – 16)

Reporting Sub-sections

- 1.6.12 All technical chapters report the findings of the EIA with reference to eight 'reporting sub-sections'. The aim of the reporting sub-sections is to ensure that locally relevant information is easily navigated by the reader. These sub-sections are used to break the reporting of information into more digestible and area-specific sections. Likely significant effects are discussed in the reporting sub-section in which the receptor experiencing the effect is located. It is important to note that the reporting sub-sections have been used for ease of interpretation only. The EIA covers the Project as a whole.
- 1.6.13 The reporting sub-sections are based on the local authority boundaries that EWR2 lies within. The Aylesbury Vale District area has been further sub-divided, due to its size, into three sub-sections. Details of the reporting sub-sections are shown in Table 1.3 (geographically from west to east and north to south) and the sub-section boundaries are shown in Figure 1.1, in Volume 4.



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Table 1.3 Eight Reporting Sub-sections

<b>Sub-section</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Cherwell District Council</b>	Relating to the Project Area located within the CDC boundary
<b>Aylesbury Vale: Claydon/Quainton</b>	Relating to the Project Area located within the AVDC boundary, between the CDC boundary to the west, the boundary of Addington Parish Council and Winslow Town Council in the east, and the boundary of the Quainton and Waddesdon Parish Councils in the south.
<b>Aylesbury Vale: Winslow/Swanbourne</b>	Relating to the Project Area located within the AVDC boundary, between the boundary of Addington Parish Council and Winslow Town Council in the west and the MKC Boundary in the east.
<b>Aylesbury Vale: Aylesbury</b>	Relating to the Project Area located within the AVDC boundary, between the boundary of the Quainton and Waddesdon Parish Councils in the north and the WDC boundary in the south.
<b>Milton Keynes Council</b>	Relating to the Project Area located within the MKC boundary.
<b>Central Bedfordshire Council</b>	Relating to the Project Area located within the CBC boundary.
<b>Bedford Borough Council</b>	Relating to the Project Area located within the BBC boundary.
<b>Wycombe District Council</b>	Relating to the Project Area located within the WDC boundary