

**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 Planning Statement 2: Aylesbury Vale  
District Council / Buckinghamshire County  
Council**

**June 2017**

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### The Network Rail (East West Rail Western Section Phase 2) Order

### Draft Planning Statement 2: Aylesbury Vale District Council / Buckinghamshire County Council

EWR Alliance

June 2017

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# Executive Summary

This draft Planning Statement is one of a suite of five being submitted as part of the Round Two Consultation for the East West Rail Western Section Phase 2 (EWR2) Project. This consultation will inform design development and an application for a Transport and Works Act Order (TWAO) to authorise the construction of EWR2 is scheduled to be submitted in Spring 2018.

This draft Planning Statement addresses development within the administrative areas of Aylesbury Vale District Council and Buckinghamshire County Council (referred to as the Aylesbury Vale sub-section). Due to the size of the Aylesbury Vale sub-section it has been divided into three further sub-areas for ease of reference. The boundary of the sub-areas follows those of parishes and are referred to in this draft Planning Statement as 'parish areas'. These parish areas are: Claydon/Quainton, Winslow/Swanbourne and Aylesbury.

The Aylesbury Vale sub-section commences at the administrative boundary of Aylesbury Vale District Council and Cherwell District Council to the east of Bicester Road and concludes at the administrative boundary of Aylesbury Vale District Council and Milton Keynes Council to the west of Bletchley Road, as well as when the route reaches Aylesbury Station. The Claydon/Quainton parish area of the Aylesbury Vale sub-section is approximately 23km in length, the Winslow/Swanbourne parish area 10km and the Aylesbury parish area 9.4km.

Proposed development within the Aylesbury sub-section would include the replacement of 18.5km of existing single track railway and 1.5km of mothballed railway with a total of 20km of new double track railway. Proposed development would include a new station at Winslow, two new platforms at Aylesbury Vale Parkway Station, along with the construction of three new highway overbridges, four accommodation overbridges and seven footbridges. A number of changes to existing vehicular and pedestrian crossings and bridges are also proposed.

Proposed development within the Aylesbury Vale sub-section will be assessed for its compliance with national planning policies provided in the National Policy Statement for National Networks (NPS) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), as well as those in the local Development Plan, which comprises the following documents:

- Aylesbury Vale District Local Plan (Saved Policies);
- Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan: Issues and Options Draft (Emerging);
- Buckinghamshire Minerals and Waste Core Strategy 2012;
- Buckinghamshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2004 – 2016 (Saved Policies);
- Quainton Neighbourhood Plan;
- Winslow Neighbourhood Plan; and
- Waddesdon Neighbourhood Plan (Emerging).

The main material considerations raised by the proposed development are considered within the context of planning policies in the above documents. The main material considerations

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relate to sustainable development, land use and agriculture, cultural heritage, air quality, ecology, noise and vibration, geology, landscape, flood risk and highways. These topics are assessed and discussed in detail in the Draft Environmental Statement (Draft ES) submitted for consultation.

In the context of the findings of the Draft ES, it is considered that, following the implementation of mitigation measures and the significance of residual impacts in relation to residential amenity, the setting of listed structures, landscape and visual impact, the scheme at this stage is in full compliance with planning policies of relevance to the main material considerations. However, it should be noted that the assessments reported in the Draft ES are not complete at this stage. Additionally, it should be noted the Draft ES assessed a project boundary that has since been superseded by the boundary shown in the drawings referenced in this Statement. The boundary assessed in the Draft ES is generally larger than that shown.

Section 38 (c) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (TCPA 1990), as well as paragraph 14 of the NPPF, confirm that planning applications should be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material circumstances indicate otherwise. Proposals which accord with the Development Plan are to be approved without delay. In this respect, the scheme within the Aylesbury Vale sub-section, and the scheme in its entirety, is, at this stage, considered to be in full accordance with national planning policies and the local Development Plan.

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Transport and Works Act Order

- 1.1.1. Network Rail Infrastructure Limited (Network Rail) is to apply for a Transport and Works Act Order (TWAO) to authorise the construction of East West Rail Western Section Phase 2 (EWR2).
- 1.1.2. This involves the construction, operation and maintenance of an upgraded and reinstated rail link between Bicester and Bedford, Milton Keynes and Princes Risborough, as well as the construction of new railway infrastructure (including new overbridges, footbridges, a new station and station platforms) and improvements to existing infrastructure (such as station platform extensions).
- 1.1.3. The scheme also includes the need for powers of compulsory land acquisition. As the scheme is beyond the scope of Network Rail's permitted development rights, a TWAO is required to authorise all proposed development. The application process for a TWAO is governed by the Transport and Works Act 1992 ('the 1992 Act') and the Transport and Works (Applications and Objections) (England and Wales) Rules 2006 ('the Application Rules').
- 1.1.4. The application under the Transport and Works Act 1992 will be determined by the Secretary of State for Transport. As part of the TWAO submission, Network Rail will also seek a direction from the Secretary of State under Section 90 (2A) of the TCPA 1990, which if given, would deem the grant of planning permission for EWR2.
- 1.1.5. On behalf of Network Rail, the East West Rail Alliance (EWR Alliance) is responsible for the design and construction of the scheme. The EWR Alliance (made up four equal parts between Network Rail, Atkins, Laing O'Rourke and VolkerRail) will prepare and make the TWAO submission.
- 1.1.6. At the time of submission, the following documents will make up the TWAO submission for EWR2:
  - Draft Order;
  - Explanatory Memorandum
  - Statement of Aims;
  - List of consents, permissions or licences required under other enactments;
  - Consultation Report;
  - Environmental Statement (ES);
  - Funding Statement;
  - Declaration of Status;
  - Order Plans;

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- Book of Reference; and
  - Formal request for Deemed Planning Permission.
- 1.1.7. In addition to the above, the following documents have also been produced in support of the Round Two Consultation and TWAO submission:
- A suite of Planning Statements;
  - A Design and Access Statement;
  - Detailed Planning Drawings; and
  - Detailed Scheme Drawings.
- 1.1.8. In parallel to the TWAO submission, Network Rail will also seek Listed Building Consents under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Area) Act 1990 for the works affecting listed structures that will be necessary to implement the scheme.

## 1.2. Deemed Consent Planning Supporting Statement

- 1.2.1. This draft Planning Statement (Statement 2) is one of a suite of five being submitted as part of the Round Two Consultation for EWR2. The proposed development would be undertaken across the following seven District, Borough and County Council administrative areas:
- Cherwell District Council;
  - Aylesbury Vale District Council;
  - Milton Keynes Council (Unitary Authority);
  - Central Bedfordshire Council (Unitary Authority);
  - Bedford Borough Council (Unitary Authority);
  - Buckinghamshire County Council; and
  - Oxfordshire County Council.
- 1.2.2. A draft Planning Statement has therefore been produced to cover the proposed development in each administrative area.
- 1.2.3. This draft Planning Statement addresses development within the administrative areas of Aylesbury Vale District Council and Buckinghamshire County Council. The other four Planning Statements consider the following:
- Draft Planning Statement 1: Development within Cherwell District Council / Oxfordshire County Council;
  - Draft Planning Statement 3: Development within Milton Keynes Council;

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- Draft Planning Statement 4: Development within Central Bedfordshire Council; and
- Draft Planning Statement 5: Development within Bedford Borough Council.

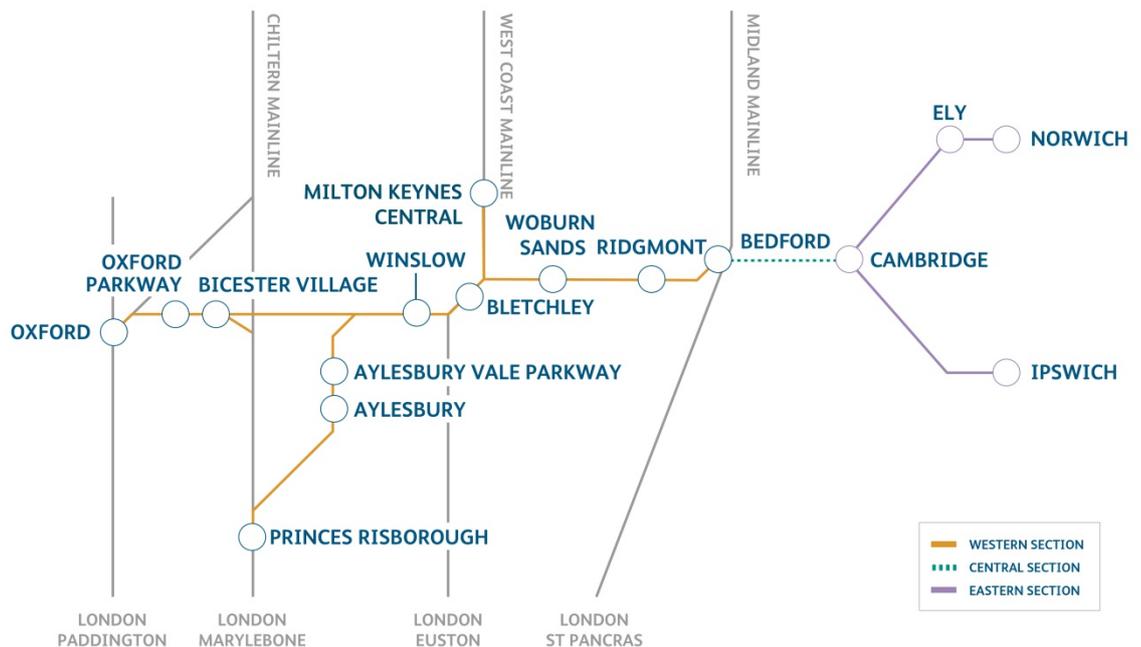
### 1.3. Background to East West Rail

1.3.1. East West Rail (EWR) aims to establish a strategic railway connecting East Anglia with Central, Southern and Western England. Once built, EWR would link the strategic growth areas along the M11 corridor, Milton Keynes, Aylesbury, Bedford and Oxford and support growing hi-tech digital economic sectors by connecting the key hubs between Oxford and Cambridge. It would, via connections with Great Eastern, East Coast, Midland, West Coast and Great Western Main Lines, connect to the ports of Felixstowe and Harwich, avoiding travel on congested tracks around north London and could provide an extra route for north-south freight traffic from the port of Southampton.

1.3.2. EWR falls into three distinct sections as illustrated in Figure 1 below.

1. Western Section (Oxford to Bedford and Milton Keynes to Princes Risborough);
2. Central Section (Bedford to Cambridge); and
3. Eastern Section (Cambridge to Norwich and Ipswich).

**Figure 1: Diagram of EWR Sections**



### 1.4. East West Rail Western Section

1.4.1. The EWR Western Section is the most advanced in terms of design and funding. Development of this section of railway would result in the introduction of direct rail passenger services as follows:

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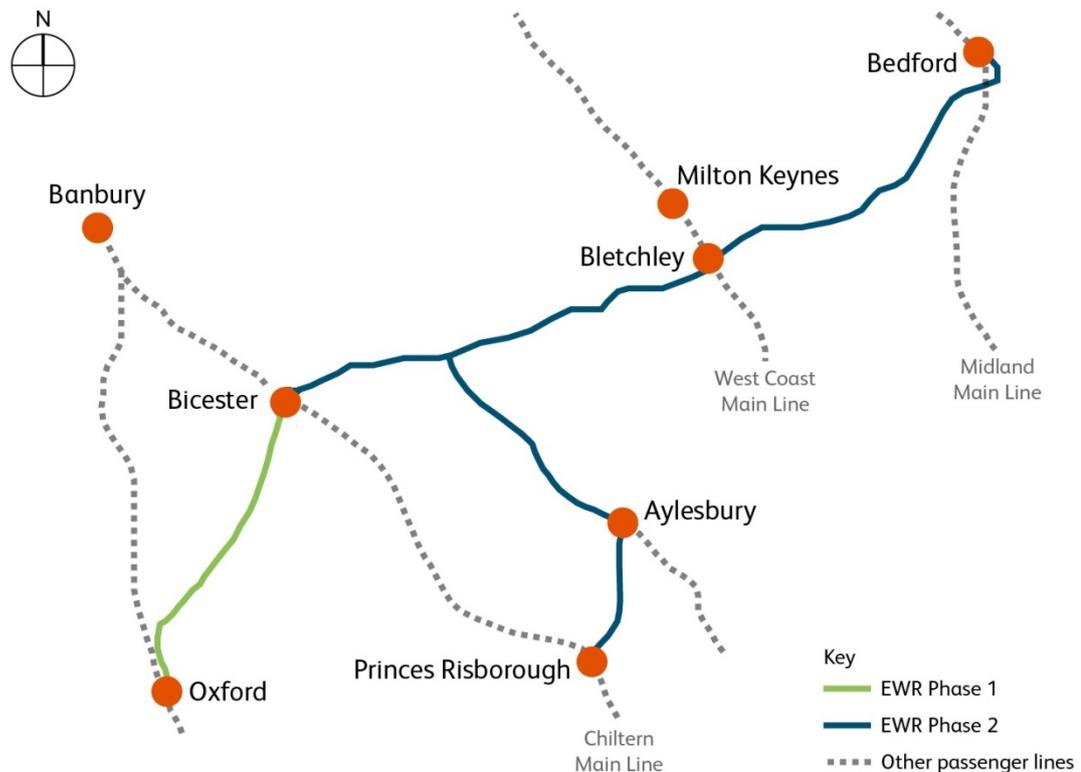
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- Bedford to Oxford;
- Milton Keynes to Oxford; and
- Milton Keynes to London via Amersham.

1.4.2. This would require upgrading and reinstating the Oxford–Bicester–Bletchley–Bedford and Princes Risborough–Aylesbury–Claydon Junction railway lines.

1.4.3. Within the Western Section, there are two distinct phases of work; EWR Phase 1 and EWR Phase 2 as illustrated in Figure 2 below.

**Figure 2: Layout of EWR Phases 1 and 2**



- 1.4.4. EWR Phase 1 was completed in December 2016 and involved the upgrade of the Oxford-to-Bicester line and new section of track to link Oxford and Bicester Village (formerly Bicester Town) stations directly to the Chiltern Main Line allowing new direct passenger 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.
- 1.4.5. 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 highway footbridges/underpasses or diversions at closed level crossings; a new railway station and ancillary facilities at Winslow Station and 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.

## **1.5. EWR2: Project Benefits**

- 1.5.1. EWR2 has five main benefits:
1. To support Local Authorities' ambition for substantial economic growth based on the creation of new private sector jobs and the development of major areas of new housing;
  2. To positively contribute to tackling climate change by providing a more sustainable means of meeting travel demands;
  3. To provide a connection between existing radial routes out of London meaning passengers won't have to interchange through London;
  4. To enhance the rail network capacity and flexibility by creating opportunities for alternative routes of passenger and freight services; and
  5. To realise the opportunity offered by an upgraded and reinstated rail link.

## **1.6. Overarching Project Description**

- 1.6.1. The majority of EWR2 is located in rural, predominantly arable, surroundings. Where the route passes through towns (Bicester, Winslow, Bletchley, Milton Keynes, Bedford, Aylesbury and Princes Risborough), surroundings comprise residential, commercial, industrial and other urban land uses.

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- 1.6.2. Between Bicester and Bletchley, the railway will be upgraded to two tracks, and will see all level crossings replaced by bridges or alternative routes. New signalling and safety systems will be installed to allow trains to operate at speeds of up to 100mph. Between the western edge of Grebe Lake to the level crossing with Queen Catherine Road, all necessary powers for the implementation of EWR2 have been authorised under the High Speed Rail (London - West Midlands) Act 2017 and will therefore not be included within the scope of the EWR2 TWAO.
- 1.6.3. Between Aylesbury and Claydon Junction the upgraded railway will have two tracks and, and all level crossings will be replaced by bridges or alternative routes. New signalling and safety systems will be installed to allow trains to operate at line speeds of up to 90mph. Between Station Road at the Buckinghamshire Railway Centre (near Quainton) to the connection with the Bicester/Bletchley railway, the majority of powers for the implementation of EWR2 have been sought under the High Speed Rail (London - West Midlands) Act and therefore only discrete areas will be included within the scope of the EWR2 TWAO.
- 1.6.4. Between Bletchley and Bedford some level crossings will be replaced by bridges or alternative routes.
- 1.6.5. To meet the operational requirements of a modern railway, it will be necessary to widen the railway corridor in many locations. In such locations earth retaining features may be installed as an appropriate means of achieving an equitable engineering solution.
- 1.6.6. A new station at Winslow will be constructed with two platforms able to accommodate trains of up to 9 carriages, step free access throughout and passenger facilities include a ticket hall, space for retail units, a transport interchange, a car park with 360 spaces (342 standard spaces and 18 restricted mobility parking); and cycle racks.
- 1.6.7. New station facilities at Bletchley and Aylesbury Vale Parkway stations will be constructed. At Bletchley Station, the new facilities will include two platforms able to accommodate trains with up to 9 carriages and there will be step free access throughout, with the new platforms connected by lifts and an underpass. At Aylesbury Vale Parkway Station, the new facilities will include two platforms able to accommodate trains with up to 9 carriages, connected by lifts and a footbridge with steps.
- 1.6.8. Platform extensions at the existing stations of Ridgmont, Woburn Sands and Princes Risborough will be built.
- 1.6.9. The waste transfer facility at Calvert will be relocated, with necessary authorisation being provided by the High Speed Rail (London - West Midlands) Act 2017.

## 2. Site and Surrounding Context

2.1.1. Due to the size of the Aylesbury Vale sub-section it has been divided into three further sub-areas in this draft Planning Statement and Draft ES for ease of reference. The boundary of the sub-areas follows those of parishes and are referred to in this draft Planning Statement as 'parish areas'. The parish areas are as follows:

- 1) **Claydon / Quainton** – covers the area between the Cherwell District Council boundary to the west, the boundary of the Addington Parish Council and Winslow Town Council to the east, and the boundary of the Quainton and Waddesdon Parish Councils to the south.
- 2) **Winslow / Swanbourne** - between the boundary of the Addington Parish Council and Winslow Town Council to the west and the Milton Keynes Council boundary in the east.
- 3) **Aylesbury** - between the boundary of the Quainton and Waddesdon Parish Councils to the north and the Wycombe District Council boundary to the south.

### 2.2. Claydon / Quainton Parish Area

2.2.1. The Aylesbury Vale sub-section commences at the administrative boundary of Aylesbury Vale District Council and Cherwell District Council to the east of Bicester Road, north west of Marsh Gibbon and concludes to the west of Winslow. The Claydon/Quainton parish area of the Aylesbury Vale sub-section is approximately 23km in length and is shown in the Scheme Drawings submitted for consultation and listed in Table 1.

2.2.2. A large section of the route within the Claydon/Quainton parish area, in the area around Claydon Junction, is located within the footprint of HS2. The extent of the route and surrounding area described below situated within the HS2 footprint is shown on Scheme Drawings:

- 133735\_2A-EWR-OXD-101580-DR-T-002013 to 133735\_2A-EWR-OXD-101580-DR-T-002014;
- 133735\_2B-EWR-OXD-100040-DR-T-002001 to 133735\_2B-EWR-OXD-098080-DR-T-002006; and
- 133735\_2E-EWR-MCJ-019900-DR-T-002001 to 133735\_2E-EWR-MCJ-032420-DR-T-002015.

2.2.3. Any proposed development within the HS2 footprint will not be included in the EWR2 TWA0 submission and are therefore excluded from this draft Planning Statement.

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- 2.2.4. The section commences to the east of Bicester Road, north west of Marsh Gibbon and proceeds eastwards to Claydon Junction, where the line divides to travel southbound towards Aylesbury and eastbound towards Winslow. There are 24 footpath, highway or working crossings within the Claydon/Quainton parish area. For the most part, the majority of roads that cross the line are minor rural roads used for the benefit of the nearby farms, with the exception of Queen Catherine Road, which provides a main route between Steeple Claydon and Middle Claydon.
- 2.2.5. Travelling eastbound from Claydon Junction, the line is adjoined by agricultural land to the north and south, with buildings associated with Shepherds Furze Farm adjacent on the south side of the line, including the Grade II listed farmhouse. The eastbound line is later intersected by Thame Road, which crosses via an overbridge. The line is further intersected by crossings used by Shepherds Furze Farm before later travelling in close proximity to Rosehill Farm. Pond Road later crosses the line via an overbridge, as do two public footpaths (Steeple Claydon No.7 and No.8).
- 2.2.6. Continuing eastbound, Queen Catherine Road and a public footpath (Middle Claydon No.8) intersect the line via a level crossing before a footbridge travels over the line accommodating two footpaths (Middle Claydon No.4 and No.6). The line continues and is intersected by Sandhill Road via an overbridge. A level crossing in use by Littleworth Farm is situated to the east of this overbridge. Further east, a level crossing accommodating a track used by Furzen Farm travels over the line. This level crossing also accommodates a pedestrian footpath travelling to residential properties at Verney Junction. A minor road, from which access is obtained to Furzen Farm, then travels under the line via an underbridge (OXD 24 Addington).
- 2.2.7. Further crossings of the line are located further to the east, accommodating a route used for the farming of agricultural land on both sides of the line via an underbridge, as well as Verney Road, also via an underbridge. Claydon Brook also intersects the line at the OXD 24 Addington underbridge, as well as at the Verney Road underbridge crossing. As the line proceeds towards Winslow it travels via an underbridge, as well as a footpath level crossing (Winslow No.5).
- 2.2.8. Travelling southbound from Claydon Junction, the line travels through a predominantly agricultural area with a number of farms located in close proximity. East of Grebe Lake the line is crossed via an overbridge by Werner Terrace before travelling to the east of Calvert. Further south, the line is also intersected by two footpath level crossings, with the first at the northern end of Sheephouse Wood and the second at the southern end (Charndon No.9). In addition, an occupation underbridge also crosses the line to the south of Sheephouse Wood and the Calvert waste site.
- 2.2.9. Continuing southbound, an overbridge crosses the line connecting Upper Greatmoor and Lower Greatmoor Farm to the west with adjacent agricultural land to the east. South of the overbridge the line is crossed by a footpath level crossing (Grendon Underwood No.31). Further south, the line is crossed by an occupation underbridge which serves Oak Tree Farm to the south west.

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- 2.2.10. The line later crosses the River Rey, as well as Lawn Hill Road via an overbridge. It is also crossed by two footpath level crossings, the first of which of Quainton footpath No.26 and the second Quainton No.24. A further level crossing is located at Upper South Farm, which is in close proximity to the west of the line. Further south, the line is crossed by Quainton Road via an overbridge (also known as the Doldershall overbridge). At the conclusion of this parish area, the line proceeds through Quainton Station, which is Grade II listed, after travelling under an overbridge accommodating Station Road.
- 2.2.11. For the most part, this part of the Aylesbury Vale sub-section does not travel through areas susceptible to flooding, with the majority of the route located within Flood Zone 1. However, the line does travel through small areas of land that are identified as being within Flood Zones 2 and 3, and is intersected by a number of watercourses. A number of waterbodies are located within or close to the application area.
- 2.2.12. The line also travels in close proximity to a number of heritage assets, with Grade II listed buildings located at Shepherds Furze Farm, Rosehill Farm, Lower Greatmoor Farm, Upper South Farm and Quainton Station. The line is adjoined by Decoypond Wood and Sheephouse Wood, which are designated Ancient Woodland (with Sheephouse Wood also identified as a Site of Special Scientific Interest).

## 2.3. Winslow / Swanbourne Parish Area

- 2.3.1. This section of the route commences to the east of Furze Lane as the line travels into Winslow from the west and concludes at the administrative boundary of Aylesbury Vale District Council and Milton Keynes Council to the west of Bletchley Road on the outskirts of Bletchley. The Winslow/Swanbourne parish area within the Aylesbury Vale sub-section is approximately 10km in length and is shown in the Scheme Drawings listed in Table 1.
- 2.3.2. There are 17 footpath, highway or working crossings within this parish area. For the most part, the majority of roads that cross the line are minor rural roads used for the benefit of nearby farms, with the exception of the A413 travelling into Winslow.
- 2.3.3. This part of the Aylesbury Vale sub-section commences as the line approaches Winslow from the west and is crossed by Furze Lane via an overbridge. As the line enters into Winslow, it adjoins land allocated for mixed use development in the Winslow Neighbourhood Plan to the north, on which the new Winslow station is proposed, as well as land to the south that is allocated for housing. The line passes under Buckingham Road adjacent to a number of residential properties. As the line exits Winslow it lies adjacent to Local Green Space designated in the Winslow Neighbourhood Plan.

- 2.3.4. East of Winslow the line is intersected by Horwood Road which crosses under the line via an underbridge. Horwood Brook also crosses under line in two locations via an underbridge to the west and east of the Horwood Road crossing. The line travels alongside Moco Farm, which benefits from two crossings between agricultural land to the north and south, with the first via a level crossing and the second via an overbridge. A footpath (Winslow No. 17) also crosses the line at Moco Farm via a level crossing. The line then proceeds to travel under an overbridge that accommodates Station Road before being intersected by Swan's Way footpath which travels over the line via a level crossing.
- 2.3.5. Further east, the line is intersected by Whaddon Road, which crosses the line via an overbridge. A large area of Ancient Woodland (Salden Wood) then adjoins the line to the south (also a Special Area of Conservation). Opposite Salden Wood, in close proximity to the north side of the line, is a farmhouse and outbuildings associated with Lower Salden Farm. The farmhouse, which is a Grade II listed building, as well as the outbuildings, are accessed by a minor rural road, which crosses over the line via an overbridge. A level crossing, which accommodates access to the farm between agricultural land on both sides of the line, is located further to the east. As the line continues, an overbridge crosses over the line, over which Whaddon Road travels.
- 2.3.6. The line proceeds into Bletchley and travels through a large residential area. To the south of the line it is adjoined by a natural gas reception centre. An underbridge travels under the line between the natural gas reception centre and a public park. The line is also intersected at this point by a trench underbridge (OXD 08).
- 2.3.7. For the most part the line is located within Flood Zone 1 with the exception of a couple of acute areas within Flood Zones 2 and 3 located around the Horwood Brook crossing. This section of the line also benefits from being directly located outside of any statutory land designations.

## 2.4. Aylesbury Parish Area

- 2.4.1. The Aylesbury parish area of the Aylesbury Vale sub-section commences as the line progresses from the south of Quainton Road Station and travels into Aylesbury Station. This parish area is approximately 9.4km in length and is shown in the Scheme Drawings listed in Table 1.
- 2.4.2. There are fifteen footpath, highway and working crossing points within this parish area. Highway crossings primarily relate to busy routes travelling to and from Aylesbury, such as the A41 and A418, along with a number of residential roads within the town.

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- 2.4.3. This parish area commences south of Quinton Road Station where it is crossed by North Bucks Way PRoW before being crossed by an overbridge accommodating Blackgrove Road. As it continues it travels in close proximity to Lower Blackgrove Farm, which benefits from a level crossing. The line is also crossed by an overbridge accommodating a track between agricultural land to the north and south. The line later travels over a level crossing supporting Fleet Marston Farm. It is later crossed by the A41 via an underbridge, an occupation underbridge and a tributary of the River Thame, as it approaches Aylesbury Vale Parkway Station. Beyond Aylesbury Vale Parkway Station, the line is crossed by an overbridge accommodating a footpath before being intersected by two occupation underbridges. Prior to entering into Aylesbury, the line crosses over the River Thames.
- 2.4.4. As the line approaches Aylesbury Station it travels through the Rabans Lane industrial area, where it is crossed by an overbridge accommodating Rabans Lane, before travelling adjacent to a large residential area to the south. The line later crosses under an overbridge accommodating Griffin Lane whilst also travelling over the Bear Brook. Upon entering into Aylesbury Station, a footbridge crosses over the line.
- 2.4.5. This parish area travels through a number of areas identified as being susceptible to flooding and within Flood Zones 2 and 3. Such areas are mainly located to the west of Aylesbury as the line approaches Aylesbury Station, as well as within the town where the Bear Brook and California Brook intersect and travel alongside the line.
- 2.4.6. This parish area benefits from being located outside of any statutory land designations. However, the line does travel within the setting of a Grade II\* (St. Mary's Church) and two Grade II (farmhouse at Fleet Marston Farm and Berryfield Farmhouse) listed buildings as it approaches Aylesbury from the west.

## 3. Proposed Development

### 3.1. Railway Works

- 3.1.1. Proposed works within the Aylesbury Vale sub-section would commence as the railway line crosses through the western boundary of Aylesbury Vale District Council near Marsh Gibbon. This section would see a continuation of the double track railway from Cherwell District Council and would proceed eastbound to the boundary of Aylesbury Vale District Council and Milton Keynes Council. Development along this section would comprise the replacement of 18.5km of existing single track railway and 1.5km of mothballed railway with a total of 20km (including a section covered by the area of HS2) of new double track railway, centred about the existing railway corridor. Also included in the proposed scheme are railway loops at Newton Longville to be situated immediately north and south of the main double track.
- 3.1.2. This section of the route also diverts southbound to Aylesbury Vale Parkway Station from Claydon Junction and would see the continuation of the double track railway line. Proposed works along the southbound section of the route from Calvert would comprise the replacement of 11km of existing single track railway and 1km of existing double track railway with a total of 12km of new double track railway, centred about the existing railway corridor.
- 3.1.3. Works would involve the widening of the existing railway corridor, to accommodate the requirements of a modern railway and allow for the provision of a maintenance walkway. This would result in the extension of embankments over 13.3km and cuttings over 8km. In order to reach an equitable position between widening embankments and cuttings, there would be minor retaining walls installed at discrete locations.
- 3.1.4. Existing track drainage would be replaced with a pipe drainage system along each side of the railway corridor. Drainage would discharge to the same locations as the existing drainage system. Additionally, there are 93 culverts, which require a variety of works undertaken, varying between minor repairs, extensions and reconstruction.
- 3.1.5. Permanent access points will be provided along the railway for maintenance and access purposes. These will comprise two types: permanent vehicular access points and pedestrian access points. Permanent maintenance compounds will be provided along the railway at key maintenance locations and broadly comprise of a compound / storage area and any equipment required for operation of the railway. These compounds will vary in size to suit the maintenance requirements and equipment that will be located at the site but will be a minimum of 30m by 30m. These will generally be finished with a granular surfacing and will have facilities to store equipment for the safe maintenance of the railway and have provision for water and power for temporary installations. Pedestrian access points will generally be provided at 2 mile intervals along the railway to provide a maximum 20 minute response time to any incident on the railway. These will comprise a layby for parking and a gate to facilitate access.

## **3.2. Winslow Station**

- 3.2.1. Outline consent has been granted for the development of Winslow Station, with the exception of the platforms and footbridge linking the station building to the platforms. This was achieved in November 2013 (application reference 13/02112/AOP), and a reserved matters application (reference 16/03132/ADP) is pending. The development approved in outline comprises a single storey rail station building, a two storey car park providing 360 spaces and internal road including a bus layby and vehicle drop-off point.
- 3.2.2. The TWAO submission will seek planning consent for the remaining features of the proposed rail station site not covered by the extant planning permission. These features are two platforms, along with a footbridge providing stepped and lift access from the station building to the platforms. A full discussion of the design rationale for the footbridge and platforms is provided in the draft Design and Access Statement (draft DAS).
- 3.2.3. Step-free access is to be provided throughout the station interchange. Access to the platforms would be via a pedestrian footbridge and stairs / lifts to the pair of side platforms. The footbridge would measure a total length of 37.8m, with a width of 3.1m and a vertical clearance of 7.85m over the railway line. The footbridge walkway would be constructed using perforated aluminium profiled cladding and exposed stainless steel bracing, whilst the lift shafts would be finished in rustic brick cavity wall to provide consistency with the appearance of the station building.
- 3.2.4. The two proposed platforms would be located within the existing cutting alongside the railway lines. Both platforms would have a total operational length of 212m, along with an additional 15m refuge area on the east end of the platforms. The width of the platforms would measure 3.5m. Covered shelters for passengers would be provided on both platforms under the steps of the footbridge.
- 3.2.5. Both proposed platforms would be constructed from pre-cast slabs on pre-cast riser walls and ground bearing strip foundations. Tactile paving and copper edge would be incorporated into the precast unit along the edge of the platforms.
- 3.2.6. The station building has been designed to support access to all users and people with protected characteristics, as defined by the Equality Act 2010. The ticket barriers on the concourse would include wheelchair and pushchair access. The proposed footbridge has been designed to ensure safe and convenient access to the platforms for all users through the provision of lifts in addition to stepped provision.

## **3.3. Aylesbury Vale Parkway Station**

- 3.3.1. The provision of two new platforms at Aylesbury Vale Parkway Station is required in order to ensure that the station has the capacity to accommodate future passenger services when the EWR2 line is in operation.

- 3.3.2. The first of the two proposed platforms (platform 2) would be located directly alongside the existing platform (platform 1) to the south west, whilst the second (platform 3) would be positioned further to the south west along the opposite side of the 'Down Aylesbury' railway line. Both proposed platforms would have a length of 202m and a width of 3.5m. Additionally, the platform edge would measure 740mm in length from the nearest railway track.
- 3.3.3. To connect the proposed platform 3 with the other platforms and station building, the proposed development includes the construction of a new footbridge. The footbridge would provide stepped and lift access from both platforms 1 and 2 to platform 3. The total length of the footbridge between platforms would measure 19.1m, comprising a span length of 13.3m and walkway widths of 2.9m. In height, the footbridge would measure 11.4m from platform level and would provide a 6.5m vertical clearance from the railway tracks. The footbridge would be constructed to comprise a steel framed lift shaft and main span using steel chords and verticals with cable diagonal cross-bracing.
- 3.3.4. This proposed development benefits from permitted development under Part 18 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2016 and the prior approval of Aylesbury Vale District Council was granted in March 2017 (reference 17/00318/ARW). As such, consent for the above works is not required through the TWAO submission.

### 3.4. Quainton Road Station

- 3.4.1. As the route of the scheme travels southbound towards Aylesbury it passes through Quainton Road Station. Quainton Road Station is currently non-operational and is used solely by visitors of the adjacent Buckinghamshire Railway Centre. Although no scheduled trains pass through the station two platforms, a station building, shelters and a footbridge are still in place. Regular landfill freight trains pass through the station.
- 3.4.2. As part of the proposed works to construct a double railway and widen the railway corridor, it is proposed to reduce the width of the platform at the station on the north side of the line, which is currently in poor condition, by up to 240mm by rebuilding the front wall. This is necessary to accommodate the proposed railway alignment for the EWR2 route. Additionally, it is proposed to erect high security fencing along the perimeter of the platform to provide protection for visitors of the Buckinghamshire Railway Centre from services along the route. The fencing would have a more sensitive appearance to ensure compatibility with the listed status of the station.
- 3.4.3. Quainton Road Station is subject to Grade II listed status and therefore works to reduce the width of the platform represents direct work to a heritage asset. Therefore, a separate Listed Building Consent application will be submitted at the same time as the TWAO submission, seeking consent to carry out the proposed works to this heritage asset.

### 3.5. Proposed Bridges

- 3.5.1. The proposed development within the Aylesbury Vale sub-section would also include the construction of 14 new bridges over the railway and a box culvert, which are described below (running from west to east).

- 3.5.2. **Marsh Gibbon** - an existing accommodation bridge and Marsh Gibbon footpath crossing would be replaced with a new accommodation overbridge. The span of the overbridge would measure 17.0m and would have a total width of 8.96m. The overbridge would comprise a 5.0m wide carriageway, a 2.0m wide footway and 1.20m wide verge. Pre-cast reinforced concrete parapets and wingwalls would be positioned on both sides of the carriageway, along with pedestrian edge protection barriers. The overbridge would have a 5.6m vertical clearance over the railway line.
- 3.5.3. **Poundon No.2**, where a stepped footbridge would be constructed to replace Poundon No.2 footpath crossing. The footbridge would have a total length of 34.11m and total width of 2.0m (the width of the main span and stepped walkway). The footbridge would have a vertical clearance over the railway line of 5.6m. It is proposed that the existing ground on both sides of the line would be regraded after construction of the footbridge. The footbridge would be constructed following the principles of Network Rail's standard design (see the draft DAS).
- 3.5.1. **Twyford No.2 and No.3**, where a stepped footbridge would be constructed to replace Twyford No.2 & 3 footpath crossings. The footbridge would measure a total of 19.10m in length and 18.21m in width. In height, the footbridge would have a vertical clearance of 5.6m over the railway line. The footbridge would be constructed following the principles of Network Rail's standard design.
- 3.5.2. **Queen Catherine Road**, where a highway overbridge would be constructed to the west to replace the existing public highway crossing. The span of the overbridge would measure 15.50m in length and 10.34m in width. The overbridge would comprise a 6.4m wide carriageway, a 1.59m wide verge and 2.0m wide verge. Concrete parapets and wingwalls would be constructed on both sides of the carriageway, along with metal vehicle and pedestrian restraint barriers. The overbridge would have a 5.6m vertical clearance over the railway line.
- 3.5.3. **Middle Claydon No.8**, where a stepped footbridge would be constructed to replace Middle Claydon No.8 footpath crossings. The footbridge would have a total length of 19.10m and width of 19.40m. With regards to height, the footbridge would have a vertical clearance of 6.2m over the railway line. The footbridge would be constructed following the principles of Network Rail's standard design.
- 3.5.4. **Middle Claydon No.4 & 6**, where a stepped footbridge would be constructed to replace Middle Claydon No.4 and 6 footpath crossings. The footbridge would measure a total of 19.10m in length and 15m in width. The footbridge would have a vertical clearance of 5.6m over the railway line. The footbridge would be constructed following the principles of Network Rail's standard design.
- 3.5.5. **Verney Junction**, where Verney Junction and Littleworth Farm accommodation crossings and a bridleway would be replaced with a new accommodation overbridge. The span of the overbridge would measure 17m in length and 8.96m in width. The overbridge would comprise a 5.0m wide carriageway, a 2.0m wide verge and 1.2m wide verge. The overbridge would have a vertical clearance over the railway line of 6.2m. Concrete parapets and wingwalls would be erected on both sides of the carriageway, along with pedestrian edge protection barriers.

- 3.5.6. **Furze Lane**, where a highway overbridge would be constructed on a new alignment to the west, to replace the existing highway overbridge. The span of the overbridge would measure 17m in length and 8.96m in width. The overbridge would comprise a 5m wide carriageway and two verges measuring 1.2m and 2.0m in width. Concrete parapets and safety barriers would be constructed on both sides of the carriageway, along with metal vehicle restraints. The overbridge would have a vertical clearance of 5.6m over the railway line.
- 3.5.7. **Winslow Footpath No.6**, it is proposed to replace the existing step-free footbridge with a new like-for-like step-free footbridge. There would be no material change in the appearance and dimension of the replacement footbridge from the existing structure.
- 3.5.8. **Moco Farm**, where an existing accommodation crossing and Winslow Footpath No.5 would be replaced with a new accommodation bridge. The span of the new bridge would measure 16.83m in length and 8.20m in width. The bridge would comprise a carriageway of 5.0m in width, a 2.0m wide verge and 1.2m wide verge. Concrete parapets and wingwalls would be positioned on both sides of the carriageway, as well as pedestrian edge protection barriers. The bridge would also have a vertical clearance over the railway line of 6.2m.
- 3.5.9. **Moco Farm No.2**, where an existing footpath crossing and Swanbourne Old Station footpath crossing would be replaced with a new stepped footbridge. The total length of the footbridge would measure 19.14m, with the width measuring 17.6m. The footbridge would have a vertical clearance over the railway line of 5.6m. The footbridge would be constructed following the principles of Network Rail's standard design.
- 3.5.10. **Swan's Way**, where a step-free/level footbridge would be constructed to replace Swan's Way footpath crossing. In length, the footbridge would measure a total of 32.11m and would have a vertical clearance over the railway line of 5.6m.
- 3.5.11. **Salden**, where a highway overbridge would be constructed on a new alignment to the west to replace the existing highway overbridge. The span of the overbridge would measure 16m in length and 8.45m in width. The overbridge would comprise a 5m wide carriageway and two verges measuring 1.33m in width. Pre-cast concrete parapets and wingwalls would be erected on both sides of the carriageway, along with pedestrian edge protection barriers. The overbridge would have a vertical clearance of 5.6m over the railway line.
- 3.5.12. **OXD 08**, where an existing trenches underbridge would be demolished and replaced with a box culvert.
- 3.5.13. **North Bucks Way**, where North Bucks Way No.1 footpath crossing would be replaced by a new stepped footbridge. The footbridge would measure a total of 22.0m in length and 21.7m in width. In height, the footbridge would have a vertical clearance of 6.2m over the railway line. The footbridge would be constructed following the principles of Network Rail's standard design.

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- 3.5.14. **Lower Blackgrove**, where an existing accommodation crossing would be replaced with a new accommodation bridge. The bridge span would measure 21.5m in length and 7.4m in width. The bridge would comprise a carriageway of 5.0m, as well as two verges measuring 1.2m each. Concrete parapets and wingwalls would be positioned on both sides of the carriageway, along with metal vehicle restraint barriers. The bridge would have a vertical clearance over the railway line of 5.6m.
- 3.5.15. Full details of the above proposed works are provided by the drawings listed in Table 1 below. Reference should be made to the draft DAS for further design details.

**Table 1: Proposed Works within the Aylesbury Vale Sub-section**

Location	Structure Proposed	Scheme Drawing Number	Planning Drawing Number
Rail Route	Railway Works	133735_2A-EWR-OXD-106340-DR-T-002007 to 004027; and 002013	-
Winslow Station	New railway station	133735_2B-EWR-OXD-092020-DR-T-003016	133735_2A-EWR-OXD-XXXXXX-DR-T-016055 to 016057
Marsh Gibbon	New accommodation bridge	133735_2A-EWR-OXD-105560-DR-T-002008	133735_2A-EWR-OXD-XXXXXX-DR-T-016018 to 016021
Poundon No.2	New stepped footbridge	133735_2A-EWR-OXD-104780-DR-T-002009	133735_2A-EWR-OXD-XXXXXX-DR-T-016022 to 016024
Twyford No.2 and No.3	New stepped footbridge	133735_2A-EWR-OXD-102380-DR-T-002012	133735_2A-EWR-OXD-XXXXXX-DR-T-016025 to 016027
Queen Catherine Road	New highway overbridge	133735_2B-EWR-OXD-098080-DR-T-002005; and 133735_2B-EWR-OXD-098080-DR-T-002006	133735_2B-EWR-OXD-XXXXXX-DR-T-016029 to 016031
Middle Claydon No. 8	New stepped footbridge	133735_2B-EWR-OXD-097300-DR-T-002007	133735_2B-EWR-OXD-XXXXXX-DR-T-016031 to 016033
Middle Claydon No. 4 and 6	New stepped footbridge	133735_2B-EWR-OXD-096500-DR-T-002008	133735_2B-EWR-OXD-XXXXXX-DR-T-016034 to 016036

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Location	Structure Proposed	Scheme Drawing Number	Planning Drawing Number
Verney Junction	New accommodation overbridge	133735_2B-EWR-OXD-095040-DR-T-002010	133735_2B-EWR-OXD-XXXXXX-DR-T-016038 to 016040
Furze Lane	New highway overbridge	133735_2B-EWR-OXD-092020-DR-T-003016	133735_2B-EWR-OXD-XXXXXX-DR-T-016052 to 016054
Moco Farm No. 1	New accommodation bridge	133735_2B-EWR-OXD-089620-DR-T-003019	133735_2B-EWR-OXD-XXXXXX-DR-T-016043 to 016045
Moco Farm No. 2	New stepped footbridge	133735_2B-EWR-OXD-088800-DR-T-003020	133735_2B-EWR-OXD-XXXXXX-DR-T-016040 to 016042
Swan's Way	New step-free footbridge	133735_2B-EWR-OXD-087140-DR-T-003022	133735_2B-EWR-OXD-XXXXXX-DR-T-016046 to 016048
Salden	New highway overbridge	133735_2B-EWR-OXD-085420-DR-T-003024	133735_2B-EWR-OXD-XXXXXX-DR-T-016049 to 016051
OXD 08	Box Culvert	133735_2B-EWR-OXD-083060-DR-T-003027; and 33735_2B-EWR-OXD-083060-DR-T-004027	-
North Bucks Way	New stepped footbridge	133735_2E-EWR-MCJ-029300-DR-T-002013; and 133735_2E-EWR-MCJ-032420-DR-T-007013	133735_2F-EWR-PRA-XXXX-DR-T-016100 to 016102
Lower Blackgrove	New accommodation bridge	133735_2E-EWR-MCJ-031640-DR-T-007017	133735_2F-EWR-PRA-XXXX-DR-T-016106 – 016108

### 3.6. Existing Bridges

3.6.1. In addition to the construction of new bridges over this section of the railway line, the proposed scheme comprises work to 34 existing bridges (either highway, accommodation or footbridges) along the route. Such works include the repair, upgrade or removal of these bridges, as described below (running west to east). Such works benefit from permitted development under Part 8 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2016 and therefore consent for the works described below are not sought through the TWAO submission.

- OXD 33 (accommodation bridge – Marsh Gibbon), which would be demolished in favour of a new bridge to the west.
- OXD 32 (Station Road – Poundon), which would receive a replacement deck and general repairs.
- OXD 31 (Marsh Gibbon accommodation bridge), which would have the installation of a con-arch and repairs. This would also carry the permanently diverted Charndon No.3 footpath crossing.
- OXD 30 (Green Lane accommodation bridge), which would have the existing deck lifted and general repairs.
- OXD 29 (Charndon – Twyford), which would have the installation of a con-arch and repairs. This would also carry the permanently diverted Grebe Lake footpath crossing.
- OXD 25 (Middle Claydon – Sandhill Road, Poundon), which would have the installation of a con-arch and general repairs.
- OXD 24 (Addington – Claydon Brook & Verney Road), which would receive parapet works and general repairs.
- OXD 23 (accommodation bridge - Verney Junction), which would receive parapet works and general repairs.
- OXD 21 (accommodation bridge – Winslow), which would receive parapet works and general repairs. This will have Winslow Footpath No.5 footpath permanently diverted underneath it.
- OXD 20 (Furze Lane – Winslow), which would be demolished in favour of a new bridge to the west.
- OXD 19 (Winslow No.6 Footpath – Winslow), which would be demolished in favour of a new footbridge in the same location.
- OXD 18 (Buckingham Road – Winslow), which would receive parapet works and general repairs.
- OXD 17 (Horwood Brook – Winslow), which would receive parapet works and general repairs.

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- OXD 16 (Horwood Road – Winslow), which would receive a replacement deck and general repairs.
- OXD 15 (Horwood Brook – Winslow), which would receive parapet works and general repairs.
- OXD 14 (Moco Farm – Winslow), which may be retained. There would be a new bridge built to the west.
- OXD 13 (Station Road – Mursley), which would have the installation of a con-arch and repairs.
- OXD 12 (Salden Water Trough – Mursley), which would be removed and not replaced.
- OXD 11 (Whaddon Road – Mursley), which would have the installation of a con-arch and repairs.
- OXD 10a (Watercourse – Mursley), which would receive general repairs.
- OXD 10 (Salden), which would be demolished in favour of a new bridge to the west. This would also carry the permanently diverted Weasel's Lodge footpath crossing.
- OXD 09 (Newton Approach – Newton Longville), which would receive parapet works and general repairs.
- OXD 08 (Trenches – Bletchley), which would be demolished and replaced by a new box culvert.
- OXD 07 (Tomkins – Bletchley), which would receive parapet works and general repairs.
- MCJ2 184a (Quainton Road Bridge – Station Road, Quainton), which would receive general repairs.
- MCJ2 179 (Waddesdon Manor Bridge – Blackgrove Road, Waddesdon), which would receive parapet works and general repairs.
- MCJ2 177 (Accommodation bridge – Fleet Marston), which would receive a replacement deck and general repairs. This would also carry the permanently diverted Fleet Marston Farm accommodation crossing.
- MCJ2 175 (Akeman Street – Aylesbury), which would receive a new deck added to the existing abutments.
- MCJ2 174 (accommodation bridge – Aylesbury), which would receive general repairs.
- MCJ2 173 (Terrys Bridge – Aylesbury), which would receive a replacement deck and general repairs.
- MCJ2 171 (accommodation bridge – Aylesbury), which would receive general repairs.

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- MCJ2 170 (River Thame – Aylesbury), which would receive general repairs.
- MCJ2 168 (accommodation bridge – Aylesbury), which would receive general repairs.
- MCJ2 167 (Rabans Lane – Aylesbury), which would receive general repairs.
- MCJ2 164 (watercourse – Aylesbury), which would receive general repairs.
- MCJ2 161 (California Brook – Aylesbury), which would be replaced with a new culvert structure.

## 4. Planning Policy Context

4.1.1. This chapter reviews the planning policy framework against which the scheme is to be considered. This includes planning policy and guidance at the national level, as well as adopted and emerging policies in local development plan documents. In addition, this chapter also reviews relevant local transport policy. Planning policies focussing on the design of proposed development have been omitted from this document and are discussed in the draft DAS.

### 4.2. National Planning Policy

#### National Policy Statement for National Networks

4.2.1. The National Policy Statement for National Networks (NPS) sets out the need for and the Government's policies to deliver development of national significant infrastructure projects on the national road and rail networks in England. The Secretary of State is to use the NPS as the primary basis for making decisions on development consent applications for national significant infrastructure projects related to national networks.

4.2.2. The NPS concludes that at a strategic level there is a need for development of the national rail network. The NPS outlines the following objectives for the rail network to ensure that it is a driver of economic growth and social development:

- offer a safe and reliable route to work;
- facilitate increases in both business and leisure travel;
- support regional and local public transport to connect communities with public services, with workplaces and with each other; and
- provide for the transport of freight across the country, and to and from ports, in order to help meet environmental goals and improve quality of life (paragraph 2.29).

4.2.3. The NPS sets out a number of potential impacts that are relevant to national networks infrastructure and discusses how these should be assessed by development proposals and appropriate mitigation measures identified. Those of relevance to EWR2 are discussed below.

4.2.4. **Biodiversity and Ecological Conservation** - States that appropriate weight is to be applied to designated sites of international, national and local importance, protected species, habitats and other species, as well as biodiversity and geological interests within the wider environment (paragraph 5.26).

- 4.2.5. The NPS states that proposed development located within or outside of a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) should not normally be granted if it would have an adverse impact on the designation, unless the benefits clearly outweigh the impacts (paragraph 5.29). The same principle applies to proposed developments that affect Ancient Woodland. The NPS also recognises the value of Regional and Local Sites and states that due consideration should be given to these designations. However, it states that such designations should not be used in themselves to refuse development, particularly given to the need for infrastructure. Proposals should ensure that appropriate mitigation measures are included as an integral part of the development (paragraph 5.31).
- 4.2.6. **Flood Risk** – requires the submission of a Flood Risk Assessment alongside proposals located within Flood Zones 2 and 3, or those within Flood Zone 1 that are of 1ha or greater or may be subject to sources of flooding other than from rivers and the sea (paragraph 5.92).
- 4.2.7. **The Historic Environment** – requires developments that are subject to an EIA to include an assessment of any likely significant heritage impacts (paragraph 5.126). The NPS states that the Secretary of State should seek to identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected and its setting (paragraph 5.128). Great weight is to be given to the conservation of a heritage asset and any harmful impact on its significance is to be weighed against the public benefit of development (paragraph 5.131).
- 4.2.8. **Landscape and Visual Impact** – The NPS requires consideration on landscape and visual impact. Proposals are required to consider the nature of the existing landscape likely to be affected and nature of the effect likely to occur. Proposals should aim to avoid or minimise harm to the landscape and provide reasonable mitigation where appropriate (paragraph 5.149). The Secretary of State is required to judge whether the visual effects on sensitive receptors, such as residents, outweigh the benefits of the development (paragraph 5.158).
- 4.2.9. **Noise and Vibration** – Developments are required to be undertaken in accordance with statutory requirements for noise and regard should be given to the Noise Policy Statement for England. Proposals will be considered against the extent to which they achieve the following aims:
- avoid significant adverse impacts on health and quality of life from noise as a result of the new development;
  - mitigate and minimise other adverse impacts on health and quality of life from noise from the new development; and
  - contribute to improvements to health and quality of life through the effective management and control of noise, where possible (paragraph 5.195).
- 4.2.10. **Impacts on Transport Networks** – requires consideration to be given to the impacts of the proposal on wider transport networks and of construction sites on transport networks whilst it is in development. Consideration is to be given by the Secretary of State on the extent of impacts on local transport networks and policies set out in local plans (paragraph 5.211).

- 4.2.11. **Water Quality and Resources** – seeks to prevent new development from contributing to water pollution. It states that for projects that are improvements to the existing infrastructure, opportunities should be taken, where feasible, to improve upon the quality of existing discharges where these are identified and shown to contribute towards the Water Framework Directive commitments (paragraph 5.222). In determining a proposal, the Secretary of State should be satisfied that a proposal has had regard to the River Basin Management Plans and the requirements of the Water Framework Directive and its daughter directives (paragraph 5.226).

## **National Planning Policy Framework**

- 4.2.12. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published on 27th March 2012 and provides the Government's planning policies for England and sets out how these are expected to be applied.
- 4.2.13. The NPPF states that for Development Plans and emerging policies, due weight according to their degree of consistency with the NPPF (paragraph 215) should be given. The NPPF is clear that the decision-taker may also give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to the stage of preparation, the extent of unresolved objections, and the degree of consistency of the policies to the NPPF (paragraph 216).
- 4.2.14. The NPPF highlights 12 Core Planning Principles which should underpin decision-taking (paragraph 17). These core Planning Principles, all of which are of relevance to EWR2, are as follows:
- be genuinely plan-led;
  - be a creative exercise in finding ways to enhance and improve the places in which people live their lives;
  - proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver the homes, business and industrial units, infrastructure and thriving local places that the country needs;
  - always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings;
  - take account of the different roles and character of different areas, promoting the vitality of our main urban areas, protecting the Green Belts around them, recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and supporting thriving rural communities;
  - support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk and coastal change, and encourage the reuse of existing resources;
  - contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment and reducing pollution;
  - encourage the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed;

- promote mixed use developments, and encourage multiple benefits from the use of land in urban and rural areas;
  - conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance;
  - actively manage patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling, and focus significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable; and
  - take account of and support local strategies to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all, and deliver sufficient community and cultural facilities and services to meet local needs.
- 4.2.15. A fundamental principle of the NPPF (paragraph 14) is the presumption in favour of sustainable development, which states that development proposals which accord with the Development Plan should be approved without delay. The NPPF sets out national policy on a number of areas, against which proposals are to be considered. Those of relevance to EWR2 are summarised below.
- 4.2.16. [Section 1: Building a strong, competitive economy](#) – sets out the Government’s commitment to secure economic growth and to ensure that the planning system encourages sustainable growth. It emphasises that significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth (paragraph 19). It requires planning policies to seek to address potential barriers to investment, including a lack of infrastructure, and identify areas for infrastructure provision (paragraph 21).
- 4.2.17. [Section 4: Promoting sustainable transport](#) – emphasises the important role that transport policies can play in facilitating sustainable development and highlights that the transport system needs to be balanced in favour of sustainable modes (paragraph 29). It encourages solutions that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and reduce congestion (paragraph 30) and states that Plans should protect and exploit opportunities for the use of sustainable transport modes for the movement of goods and people (paragraph 35).
- 4.2.18. [Section 7: Requiring good design](#) - states the importance which the Government attaches to the design of the built environment and how this should contribute positively to making places better for people (paragraph 56). It is considered important to plan positively for the achievement of high quality and inclusive design for all development (paragraph 57). Securing this involves not just aesthetic considerations, but addressing the connections between people and places and the integration of new development into the natural, built and historic environment (paragraph 61).
- 4.2.19. [Section 8: Promoting Healthy Communities](#) – paragraph 75 seeks to protect PRoWs and access. It encourages local authorities to identify opportunities to enhance existing facilities.

- 4.2.20. [Section 10: Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal flooding](#) – highlights the key role that planning can have in reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and minimising impacts on climate change (paragraph 93). New development should avoid increased vulnerability to the impacts arising from climate change and that any risks should be managed through appropriate adaptation measures (paragraph 99). In addition, the NPPF seeks to avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding, but where it is necessary ensure that it is safe without increasing flood risk elsewhere (paragraph 100).
- 4.2.21. [Section 11: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment](#) - emphasises the need for the planning system to contribute to and enhance the natural environment (paragraph 109). Planning policies and decisions should encourage the effective use of land by re-using land that has been previously developed, provided that it is not of high environmental value (paragraph 111). Impacts on biodiversity should be minimised and where possible development should provide net gains in biodiversity (paragraph 109).
- 4.2.22. [Section 12: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment](#) - recognises that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource which should be the subject of a positive strategy for their conservation and enjoyment (paragraph 126). In determining applications, local planning authorities should ensure that applications are assessed for their impact on heritage assets and seek to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal (paragraph 129).

### 4.3. Local Planning Policy

- 4.3.1. This sub-section of the route is located within the administrative boundaries of Aylesbury Vale District Council and Buckinghamshire County Council. Local planning policy documents of relevance to this sub-sections are:
- Aylesbury Vale District Local Plan (Saved Policies)
  - Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan: Issues and Options Draft (Emerging)
  - Buckinghamshire Minerals and Waste Core Strategy 2012
  - Buckinghamshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2004 – 2016 (Saved Policies)

#### **Aylesbury Vale District Local Plan 2004 (Saved Policies)**

- 4.3.2. Aylesbury Vale District Council adopted the Local Plan in December 2004 which sets out the strategic planning policies for the district for the purpose of assessing development proposals. A number of Local Plan policies were saved by the Secretary of State in September 2007 and these continue to form part of the development plan.
- 4.3.3. [Policy GP8: Protection of amenity of residents](#) – Prevents development that would unreasonably harm any aspect of the amenity of nearby residents when considered against the proposal's benefits.

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- 4.3.4. [Policy GP25: Re-opening of rail routes](#) – States the development will be resisted if it prejudices the use of the rail route running through the district between Bicester and Bletchley, as well as the northward link from Aylesbury. The policy also states that in considering proposals for any associated rail development the Council will protect the amenities of occupiers close to the route.
- 4.3.5. [Policy GP35: Design of new development proposals](#) – Requires new developments to respect and complement the following:
- the physical characteristics of the site and the surroundings;
  - the building tradition, ordering, form and materials of the locality;
  - the historic scale and context of the setting;
  - the natural qualities and features of the area; and
  - the effect on important public views and skylines.
- 4.3.6. [Policy GP38: Landscaping](#) – requires new schemes to include landscaping proposals to help development fit in with and complement their surroundings, as well as conserve natural features as far as possible. It also requires new planting to consist predominantly of native species.
- 4.3.7. [Policy GP39: Existing trees and hedgerows](#) – States that in considering applications for development affecting trees or hedges the Council will:
- require a survey of the site and the trees and hedges concerned;
  - serve tree preservation orders to protect trees with public amenity value; and
  - impose conditions on planning permission to ensure the retention or replacement of trees and hedgerows of amenity landscape or wildlife importance, and their protection during construction.
- 4.3.8. [Policy GP40: Retention of existing trees and hedgerows](#) – Opposes the loss of trees, in particular native Black Poplars, and hedgerows of amenity, landscape or wildlife value.
- 4.3.9. [Policy GP84: Public rights of way](#) – States that in considering developments that affect a public right of way, the Council will have regard to the convenience, amenity and public enjoyment of the route and the desirability of its retention or improvement for users. The policy states that where it is proposed to stop up or divert a public right of way to enable a development, permission will only be granted where there is an existing suitable alternative route, or provision is made.
- 4.3.10. [Policy AY.18: New Rail Stops](#) – identifies the position of new rail stations tops at Berryfields and Stoke Mandeville as shown by the Proposals Map. Development that would prejudice such provision is not to be permitted.
- 4.3.11. [Policy RA.8: Development within Designated Landscape Areas](#) – states that development proposals in ‘Areas of Attractive Landscape’ and ‘Local Landscape Areas’ should respect the landscape character of such designations. Appropriate mitigation measures are to be employed where adverse effects are identified. Such designations are shown by the Proposals Map.

## Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan: Issues and Options Draft (Emerging)

- 4.3.12. The Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan is currently being prepared and as such the weight that can be attributed to the document at present is very limited. At this stage, the emerging Local Plan sets out a number of draft planning policies that are to be subject to consultation. Nonetheless it is considered prudent to acknowledge relevant draft planning policies which are as follows:
- 4.3.13. [S1: Sustainable Development Proposals](#) – requires all development proposals to comply with the principles of sustainable development set out in the NPPF. The policy also sets out criteria for identifying sustainable locations for new development.
- 4.3.14. [Policy S6: Protected Transport Schemes](#) – Supporting text to this policy highlights EWR as a strategically important infrastructure scheme that directly impacts on the district. As such, this policy identifies EWR as a Protected Transport Scheme. Development will not be granted if it would prejudice the implementation of movement strategies projects associated with EWR, including new stations.
- 4.3.15. [Policy T2: Footpaths and Cycle Routes](#) – sets out criteria to be considered for developments that have implications for footpath and cycle route networks. The criteria is as follows:
- The delivery of a strategic cycle network and improvements a. to the footpaths will be supported.
  - The council will protect existing cycle routes from adverse effects of new development. In dealing with planning applications the council will seek new or improved cycle access and facilities, including cycle storage, and will use planning conditions or legal agreements to secure such arrangement.
  - The council will safeguard existing pedestrian routes from adverse effects of new development. Development proposals must provide for direct, convenient and safe pedestrian movement and routes, connected where appropriate to the existing pedestrian network. In deciding planning applications the council will use planning conditions or legal agreements to secure the provision of new footpaths and the improvement of existing routes.
- 4.3.16. [Policy BE1: Heritage Assets](#) – states that proposals for development will not be permitted if they cause harm to the character or appearance of conservation areas, their settings or any associated views of or from the conservation area.
- 4.3.17. [Policy BE3: Protection of the Amenity of Residents](#) – states that development should not unreasonably harm the amenity of nearby residents when considered against the benefits from the scheme.
- 4.3.18. [Policy NE1: Protected Sites](#) – where development schemes would result in substantial adverse impact on SSSIs, ancient woodland or ancient trees the overall benefits of the proposal will be considered against the impact. The policy states that planning permission will be granted where:

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- the benefits of and need for the development clearly significantly a. outweigh the direct and indirect impact on the protected site and the ecosystem services it provides;
  - the development could not be located in an alternative, less harmful location, and
  - appropriate mitigation, compensation and where possible enhancement measures have been put in place.
- 4.3.19. **Policy NE2: Biodiversity** – sets out large criteria to be considered in the determination of development proposals to ensure the protection and enhancement of biodiversity and the natural environment.
- 4.3.20. **Policy NE3: Landscape** – seeks to maintain the district’s landscape character and requires development to have regard to the Aylesbury Vale Landscape Character Assessment 2008 (as amended 2015). It requires development proposals to recognise the individual character and distinctiveness of particular Landscape Character Areas set out in the Assessment.
- 4.3.21. **Policy NE5: Pollution, air quality and contaminated land** – seeks to ensure that negative effects on the natural environment arising from development are mitigated or prevented including air, light and noise pollution, as well as in respect of contaminated land.
- 4.3.22. **Policy NE6: Local Green Space** – prohibits new development on land identified as ‘Local Green Space’ either in the Local Plan or Neighbourhood Plan other than in very special circumstances.
- 4.3.23. **Policy NE8: Trees and Hedgerows** – states that development should seek to enhance and expend the local tree and woodland resource. It resists development that would result in the unacceptable loss of, or damage to, protected trees, hedgerows, community orchards, veteran trees or woodland.
- 4.3.24. **Policy C4: Protection of Public Rights of Way** – requires development proposals to ensure the following:
- existing rights of way and a. byways are retained and enhanced;
  - the delivery of improvements to the public rights of way network;
  - no adverse impact on the existing public rights of way network;
  - new pedestrian routes are provided that link to the wider public rights of way network;
  - new cycle routes, bridleways and where appropriate greenways or dual/multiple routes are included; and
  - there are no negative visual impacts on the setting and amenity of existing rights of way.

- 4.3.25. **Policy I1: Green Infrastructure** – seeks to ensure that existing and new green infrastructure is implemented as an integral part of supporting sustainable communities and growth. It requires development proposal to demonstrate that the green infrastructure network would be maintained and, where appropriate, enhanced in accordance with criteria set out by the policy.
- 4.3.26. **Policy I4: Flooding** – seeks to ensure that only development appropriate to the level of flood risk is permitted. It sets out a number of requirements for development proposals to consider to ensure appropriate assessment and management of flood risk, as well as effective use of sustainable urban drainage systems (SuDS).

## **Buckinghamshire Minerals and Waste Core Strategy 2012**

- 4.3.27. Buckinghamshire County Council adopted the Buckinghamshire Minerals and Waste Core Strategy in November 2012 which sets out the strategic planning policy framework against which development proposals are assessed. The Core Strategy also identifies and safeguards land for minerals and waste development. It should be noted that the route is located outside of safeguarded land identified in the Core Strategy.
- 4.3.28. **Policy CS8: Waste Prevention in New Development** – requires proposals for new development to utilise the efficient use of resources in its design, construction and operation.

## **Buckinghamshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2004 (Saved Policies)**

- 4.3.29. The Council adopted the Minerals and Waste Local Plan in June 2006 which also sets out planning policies for development management purposes. In 2009, the Secretary of State directed that all policies be saved, although a number have since been superseded by the Core Strategy. Local Plan policies that remain saved continue to form part of the development plan for the County. It should be noted that the route is not located within land identified as a Minerals Consultation Area and does not conflict with any Preferred Areas for future mineral working, as defined by the Local Plan.

## **4.4. Neighbourhood Planning**

### **Marsh Gibbon Neighbourhood Plan**

- 4.4.1. The route travels within the Marsh Gibbon Neighbourhood Plan Area. A neighbourhood Plan was adopted in February 2015 and now forms part of the development plan for the local area. Planning policies within the Marsh Gibbon Neighbourhood Plan of relevance are as follows:

- 4.4.2. [Policy MG19: Enhancing, Protecting and Provision of new Natural Environment Habitats, Trees and Hedgerows](#) – States that proposals which are accompanied by a Tree and Hedgerow Survey will be supported when the designs demonstrate sympathetic development around trees of high or moderate quality in accordance with current BS5837 national best practice. The policy supports proposals that are landscaped and include planting trees that respect the distinctive characteristics of the local landscape. Finally, proposals will be supported if they can demonstrate net gain in biodiversity in accordance with the DEFRA Biodiversity Impact Calculator.

### **Steeple Claydon Neighbourhood Plan**

- 4.4.3. The route travels within the designated Neighbourhood Plan Area of Steeple Claydon. The Neighbourhood Plan Area was designated in April 2015 and a draft plan published for consultation in February 2017. Emerging policy SC8 of the draft plan focuses on the design of development proposals and is discussed in the draft DAS. No other emerging policies are of relevance to EWR2.

### **Quinton Neighbourhood Plan**

- 4.4.4. The route is located within the Quinton Neighbourhood Plan Area. The Quinton Neighbourhood Plan went to referendum on 14th July 2016 following examination, with a majority voting to adopt the plan. At present the plan is awaiting formal adoption. Draft planning policies within the Quinton Neighbourhood Plan of relevance are as follows:
- 4.4.5. [Policy E2: Historic Environment](#) – All development beyond the Conservation Area is required to preserve and enhance the historic character and heritage assets of the Parish. Proposals are required to take account of the scale of any harm or loss of significance of the heritage assets.
- 4.4.6. [Policy NE2: Natural Environment](#) – requires new development to protect existing natural features, as well as protect, improve and create green infrastructure and where possible wildlife value. It states that proposals will be supported if they:
- Are landscaped and include planting trees that respect local distinctive landscape character;
  - Incorporate bird and bat boxes into new dwellings that border open space;
  - Are accompanied by a Tree and Hedgerow Survey and demonstrate sympathetic development around trees of high or moderate quality;
  - Retain existing hedgerows where at all possible and the hedgerows replaced if not; and
  - Mitigate and compensate for any loss of habitat and enhance wildlife value where possible.

## Winslow Neighbourhood Plan

- 4.4.7. The route travels through the Winslow Neighbourhood Plan Area, for which a Neighbourhood Plan was adopted in September 2014 and forms part of the development plan. Neighbourhood Plan policies of relevance to these sub-sections are as follows:
- 4.4.8. [Policy 1: The Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development](#) – Outlines that planning applications will be approved if they accord with policies in the Neighbourhood Plan and the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 4.4.9. [Policy 6: Land South of Buckingham Road](#) – Allocates Land South of Buckingham Road for a mixed use scheme comprising approximately:
- 1.5ha of land for B1, B2 and B8 uses;
  - 1.35ha of land for a Winslow station, a bus layby, pedestrian and cycling facilities, taxi facilities, and car parking to serve railway customers; and
  - 1.5ha of land for education use.
- 4.4.10. Policy 6 requires a masterplan to be prepared and approved in order to manage the planning and delivery of the development proposals. It states that the masterplan will be supported provided:
- it can demonstrate that a single access on to Buckingham Road to serve all the proposed land uses can be satisfactorily achieved;
  - provision is made for the retention of the public right of way over the land and over the railway line to Land East of Furze Lane;
  - a travel plan demonstrates how the station operator will manage car parking by rail passengers to avoid the use of existing public car parks or residential streets in the town; and
  - a satisfactory layout, design and landscape strategy can be achieved that will protect the amenities of each land use.
- 4.4.11. [Policy 8: Cycle Routes](#) – Supports the improvement and extension of existing national and local cycle routes and facilities between Winslow and Buckingham, as well as between Winslow and Great Horwood.
- 4.4.12. [Policy 19: Local Green Space](#) – Designate Local Green Space at a number of locations, one of which adjoins sub-section 220007 of the line (Land off Magpie Way (including 'The Spinney')). Development on such land that is not ancillary to the use of the land for public recreational purposes will be resisted.

## **Newton Longville Neighbourhood Plan**

- 4.4.13. The route travels through the designated Newton Longville Neighbourhood Plan Area (designated September 2014). At present, preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan is at an early stage and a draft version has yet to be published. As such, there are currently no planning policies against which these sub-sections should be considered.

## **Waddesdon Neighbourhood Plan (Emerging)**

- 4.4.14. The route also travels within the designated Neighbourhood Plan Area of Waddesdon. The Neighbourhood Plan Areas was designated in April 2015 and a Pre-Submission draft of the document was published in December 2016.
- 4.4.15. [Emerging Policy WAD12: Traffic & Car Parking](#) - requires proposals for all types of development to demonstrate that there is no adverse impact on the road network.

## **4.5. Local Transport Policy**

### **Local Transport Plan 2011-2016 Buckinghamshire: Connecting People and Places**

- 4.5.1. The Local Transport Plan (LTP) sets out the transport policies and strategies in Buckinghamshire over the period 2011/12 to 2015/16. The LTP supplements the spatial planning policies in the Aylesbury Vale District Local Plan, as well as national planning policies.
- 4.5.2. The LTP supports the delivery of EWR2 and recognises that it will improve the connectivity of Aylesbury with surrounding economic centres, which will enable the town and borough to attract inward investment. The LTP sets out the local, regional and national benefits that EWR2 will deliver, including:
- Supporting economic growth and investment in new jobs and homes;
  - Faster journeys between towns and cities to the north and west of London, avoiding the need to travel via the capital;
  - Providing an alternative to travel by road, reducing congestion and carbon emissions;
  - Creating increased capacity elsewhere on the rail network in the longer term; and
  - A stop change on connectivity for the north south axis in Buckinghamshire.

## **Local Transport Plan 4: Draft for Consultation**

- 4.5.3. Buckinghamshire County Council is currently drafting an updated LTP, which, once adopted, will supersede the current LTP. The draft LTP highlights the economic benefits that EWR2 will deliver. It states that the scheme will help to stimulate sustainable economic growth not only in Buckinghamshire but also in Oxfordshire and Bedfordshire. It highlights that the delivery of EWR2 will support the England's Heartland alliance and the Buckinghamshire Thames Valley Local Economic Partnership's Strategic Economic Plan. It also states that the scheme could boost the regional economy by £72.7 million a year with a £33.2 million boost to UK tax receipts (based on the findings of an assessment of the economic impact of the western section undertaken by Arup).

## 5. Planning Considerations

5.1.1. Section 38 (c) of the TCPA 1990 confirms that planning applications should be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material circumstances indicate otherwise. In this section, the planning issues raised by the proposed development are considered against the prevailing planning policy framework.

5.1.2. Having established the context within the Aylesbury Vale sub-section, the proposed development and existing planning policy context, the main material considerations raised by EWR2 are considered within the remainder of this section under the following headings:

- Sustainable Development;
- Land Use and Agriculture;
- Cultural Heritage;
- Air Quality;
- Ecology;
- Noise and Vibration;
- Geology, Soil and Land Contamination;
- Landscape and Visual Impacts;
- Water Quality and Flood Risk; and
- Traffic and Transport.

5.1.3. With the exception of 'Sustainable Development', the above headings relate to the individual chapters of the Draft ES. Each Draft ES chapter provides a detailed assessment of the impact of the scheme on the above environmental topics. They also provide a detailed discussion of the existing environmental baseline in the Aylesbury Vale sub-section and also identify mitigation measures appropriate to any adverse effects. This chapter of the draft Planning Statement provides a high level summary of the findings of each Draft ES chapter to a level appropriate to assessment performance against planning policy objectives. Therefore, reference should be made to the Draft ES and for detailed content on each environmental topic.

### 5.2. Sustainable Development

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- 5.2.1. EWR2 would make a valuable contribution to achieving the objectives of national and local planning policies and strategies. The scheme would deliver a number of social and economic benefits. Firstly, it would deliver a strategic link between key economic centres and would support the ambition of local authorities for substantial economic growth. The scheme would support new commercial and residential development key centres along the route. It would make a valuable contribution towards reducing congestion on the local road network and would improve connectivity between communities. Additionally, the development of new crossings over the railway line and works to existing structures would significantly improve safety for vehicles and PRow users.
- 5.2.2. In this context it is clear that the scheme would achieve the objectives of national and local planning policies. At a national level, the objectives for the rail network set out in the NPS would be achieved through facilitating a reliable route for commuters to the workplace and other communities, as well as increasing business and leisure travel. Additionally, the route would support the transport of freight across the region.
- 5.2.3. As referenced in Chapter 4, the core principles of the NPPF seek to support sustainable economic development to deliver homes, commercial units, infrastructure and thriving local places, along with making the fullest possible use of public transport. The scheme would contribute towards achieving these objectives. It would also support the delivery of policy objectives provided in Section 1 and Section 4 of the NPPF, in particular through addressing an evident barrier to investment in the region through the existing lack of suitable infrastructure.
- 5.2.4. At a local level, the scheme would deliver the objective of Aylesbury Vale District Local Plan 2004 Saved Policy GP25, emerging Policy S6 of the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan and the Local Transport Plan 2011-2016 Buckinghamshire: Connecting People and Places.
- 5.2.5. The EWR Alliance has adopted a Net Positive biodiversity target for the entire EWR2 scheme. A Biodiversity Net Positive assessment of the scheme is provided in Technical Appendix 9.19 of the Draft ES. Through the achievement of a net positive biodiversity target, the scheme would achieve the objective of biodiversity enhancement sought in NPPF Section 11 (paragraph 109), Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan Issues and Options Draft Policy NE2, Marsh Gibbon Neighbourhood Plan Policy MG19 and Quanton Neighbourhood Plan Policy NE2.
- 5.2.6. Additionally, EWR2 includes the closure of a number of existing level crossings and diversion of PRowS over the railway line via proposed new overbridges and footbridges. Such work would ensure that access over the railway line via all PRowS would remain open, as well as significantly improving the safety of users. In this regard, the scheme delivers the objective of NPPF paragraph 75, Aylesbury Vale District Local Plan Saved Policy GP84 and Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan Issues and Options Draft Policy C4.

## 5.3. Land Use and Agriculture

- 5.3.1. An assessment of the impact of the scheme within the Aylesbury Vale sub-section on existing land uses and agriculture is discussed in Chapter 6 of the Draft ES.

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- 5.3.2. The scheme as a whole would require both temporary and permanent land take. Temporary land take is required during the construction phase for compounds, storage and access, whilst permanent land take is required for the scheme itself.
- 5.3.3. Prior to mitigation, the scheme in the **Claydon/Quainton** parish area of the Aylesbury Vale sub-section would result in temporary and permanent land take. The majority of temporary land take would be agricultural land. Other temporary land take would include access, grounds and boundary fences/hedges of residential properties. It would also result in temporary land take of a narrow strip of land along the eastern boundary of the Buckinghamshire Railway Centre and a narrow strip to the west of the track (which is Network Rail owned land).
- 5.3.4. The construction works would result in approximately 57.89ha of temporary land take of potentially Sub-grade 3a agricultural land in the Claydon/Quainton parish area, which is considered to be of medium sensitivity. Less than 20ha of Sub-grade 3a land would be permanently lost and this is considered to be of negligible significance. The scheme would also result in the loss of less than 50ha of temporary and permanent Sub-grade 3b and Grade 4 land which is of low sensitivity and considered to be of negligible significance.
- 5.3.5. The scheme in the **Winslow/Swanbourne** parish area would result in an approximate total temporary land take of 92.80ha and permanent land take of 14.98ha. The majority of temporary land take would be agricultural land. Other temporary land take would include an incursion over the boundary of residential properties and a strip of land of the car park at Furze Lane Burial Ground, Winslow. Permanent land take would affect Station House, Swanbourne which would need to be demolished.
- 5.3.6. The construction works would result in approximately 56.47ha of temporary land take of potentially Sub-grade 3a agricultural land in the Winslow/Swanbourne parish area, which is considered to be of medium sensitivity. The scheme would result in the permanent loss of less than 20ha of Sub-grade 3a land and a small loss of low sensitivity Sub-grade 3b and Grade 4 land (less than 50ha). The permanent loss of such agricultural land is not considered to be significant.
- 5.3.7. The majority of the scheme within **Aylesbury** parish area is restricted to land within Network Rail's ownership and roads. The scheme in this parish area would result in an approximate total temporary land take of 29.17ha and permanent land take of 4.83ha. The majority of temporary and permanent land take would be agricultural land. Other temporary land take would include strips of land from the gardens of residential properties, sites earmarked for development and areas of green space. The scheme would also result in temporary and permanent land take of less than 20ha of medium sensitivity Sub-grade 3a agricultural land, as well as less than 50ha of Sub-grade 3b and Grade 4 land. Such agricultural land take is not considered to be significant.
- 5.3.8. It is proposed that following construction works, the scheme would restore temporary land take to its previous condition. Construction working areas would be managed so that access to residential properties, community facilities and commercial enterprises are maintained, whilst disturbance to such receptors would be managed. With regards to agricultural land, construction areas would be fenced off to prevent access into adjacent land and arrangements would be put in place to ensure farm access is maintained during construction.

- 5.3.9. There is potential for temporary amenity impact on residential properties, as well as community facilities and commercial enterprises. This would represent some conflict with NPPF paragraph 17, Aylesbury Vale District Local Plan Saved Policy CP8 and Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan: Issues and Options draft Policy BE3. However, it is important to note that such impact would not be permanent and through appropriate mitigation measures the significance of such impact would be substantially reduced and greater compliance with these policies achieved. The long term residual effects on agricultural land quality would be limited to the permanent loss of agricultural land. As permanent agricultural land take within the Aylesbury Vale sub-section, and across the scheme as a whole, would be small, no significant effects on agricultural land quality are predicted as a result of the scheme. In this context, the permanent impact of the scheme is fully compliant with the NPS and NPPF Section 3.

## 5.4. Cultural Heritage

- 5.4.1. An assessment of the impact of the scheme within the Aylesbury Vale sub-section on cultural heritage assets is discussed in Chapter 7 of the Draft ES.
- 5.4.2. The Draft ES identifies a number of designated and non-designated heritage assets within the Aylesbury Vale sub-section. Within 1km of the route, it identifies Conservation Areas, a large number of listed buildings (Grade I, II\* and II), Registered Park and Gardens, and a large number of non-designated assets, including buried archaeology as well as ridge and furrow.
- 5.4.3. Against this baseline, and before mitigation measures are implemented, the Draft ES identifies, within the **Claydon/Quinton** parish area, there would be significant effects upon the setting of 11 listed buildings, one registered Park and Garden and one Conservation Area, whilst there would be a physical impact on the Grade II listed Quinton Road Station through works to the platform and erection of fencing. Additionally, there would be physical impacts on six non-designated assets, including ridge and furrow.
- 5.4.4. Within the **Winslow/Swanbourne** parish area, the Draft ES identifies there would be significant impact on the setting of two listed buildings (Horwood House and Horwood House Lodge), as well as 10 non-designated assets. However, there would not be significant adverse physical impacts to any designated assets. It is important to note that the impact on the setting of the two listed buildings would be temporary.
- 5.4.5. Within the **Aylesbury** parish area, the Draft ES identifies that there would be no significant effects either directly on or to the setting of designated heritage assets. However there would be significant effects on six areas of non-designated buried archaeology.
- 5.4.6. Mitigation measures to reduce the significant effect on assets within the Aylesbury Vale sub-section have been identified in the Draft ES. This includes maintaining and planting vegetation for screening and sensitive design of proposed structures to mitigate permanent effects on the setting of listed buildings. A Written Scheme of Investigation would be developed where archaeological remains are confirmed to be impacted by construction groundworks, and would identify appropriate mitigation measures to prevent impact.

- 5.4.7. The Draft ES identifies that through the implementation of mitigation measures there would be no significant effects on non-designated assets, including buried archaeological remains. Whilst the impact on the majority of designated assets would be mitigated successfully, there would still be a level of residual impact on the setting of a number of listed buildings, as well as a Registered Park and Garden (Claydon) and Conservation Area (Middle Claydon).
- 5.4.8. In the context of the above, the scheme within the Aylesbury Vale sub-section would result some level of conflict with the objectives of national and local heritage policies, including the NPS, NPPF Section 12 and emerging Policy BE1 of the draft Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan. However, substantial harm would not occur nor would the significance of the listed structures be compromised. In any case, the public benefit of the scheme would clearly outweigh any less than substantial harm (see NPPF paragraph 134). In this regard, it is considered the scheme ultimately meets the requirement of NPPF Section 12.

## **5.5. Air Quality**

- 5.5.1. An assessment of the impact of the scheme within the Aylesbury Vale sub-section on air quality is discussed in Chapter 8 of the Draft ES. However, it should be noted that the ES has not assessed the operational traffic impacts of EWR2.
- 5.5.2. Aylesbury Vale District Council has declared three Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) in Aylesbury as a result of exceedances of the annual mean Nitrogen Dioxide objective. Of these the scheme travels closest to the Friarage Road (100m) and Stoke Road (200m) AQMAs. The Scheme does not travel close to or within any AQMAs elsewhere in the district. Monitored annual mean concentrations within the AQMAs exceed the annual mean objective for nitrogen dioxide, although outside of the AQMAs concentrations are generally well below the annual mean objective. As such, the air quality is generally good outside of the air quality management areas.
- 5.5.3. The assessment identifies that although diesel rail locomotives would be in operation, no significant effects are likely to result from emissions, which would be partially offset by a decrease in emissions from road transport. There is potential for impact arising from dust deposition during construction of the scheme. Therefore, mitigation measures have been identified to prevent harmful impact. Such measures comprise:
- Regular and recorded monitoring of construction areas;
  - Use of hard surfaces haul routes;
  - Sufficient protection between the scheme boundary/construction sites and other properties; and
  - Regular damping down of surfaces when needed.
- 5.5.4. The air quality assessment demonstrates that the part of the scheme within the Aylesbury Vale sub-section, and as a whole, would have no significant effect on air quality. In this context, it is demonstrated that the scheme is fully compliant with the NPS, NPPF Section 11 and emerging Policy NE5 in the draft Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan.

## 5.6. Ecology

- 5.6.1. An assessment of the impact of the scheme within the Aylesbury Vale sub-section on Ecology is discussed in Chapter 9 of the Draft ES.
- 5.6.2. The Draft ES identifies, within the **Claydon/Quinton** parish area and in close proximity of the route, designated sites relating to; five National Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), 11 Local Wildlife Sites (LWSs) and two Biological Notification Sites (BNSs).
- 5.6.3. Within the Claydon/Quinton parish area landscape, the Draft ES notes habitat types relating to woodland and scrub, hedgerows, grassland, watercourses (including Claydon Brook which passes under the proposed scheme, adjacent to South Lake, Addington), ponds, lakes and wetlands arable/cultivated land and urban areas of Calvert, Steeple Claydon and Verney Junction, are all located within or in close proximity to the route.
- 5.6.4. The scheme has been amended to ensure full integration of the design with HS2 to enable both projects to be constructed without any requirement for additional land take (beyond that already required to build HS2) in the area between Claydon Junction and Station Road, Quinton. This will avoid potential impacts on both grassland/woodland habitats and bat populations.
- 5.6.5. The Draft ES identifies that the proposed scheme has been designed to minimise habitat loss from Verney Junction Station LWS by routing a construction access road around this site rather than through it; however, land would be required to construct Verney Junction overbridge; general construction access routes and widening to accommodate double tracking, which would require approximately 0.1ha (8.1%) of the LWS. To mitigate against this, approximately 1.0ha of new species rich grassland and scattered shrub habitat would be created along the operational landscape of the proposed scheme and adjacent to Verney Junction Station LWS to ensure long term mitigation with no residual significant ecological effect on the LWS.
- 5.6.6. There would also be a requirement for land take and vegetation clearance within Calvert Brick Pits and Great Moor Sailing Club LWS to enable a Strategic Compound at Claydon Junction and the Charndon overbridge works, approximately 0.23ha (0.4%) of the habitat of the LWS would be affected. Areas of the LWS required for construction but not for operational use would be restored to scrub and grassland habitat. Mitigation against habitat loss would include measures to enhance 1.0ha of habitat within the LWS which would provide mitigation for great crested newts. Additional mitigation would include consideration of works (the Strategic Compound) outside of the bird nesting season, best practice measures to control noise, vibration, personnel movements and site lighting. The use of a temporary bund or screens between the LWS and the Strategic Compound may also be incorporated as part of the mitigation proposals. These measures would reduce adverse impacts on this LWS to a negligible level. Such mitigation measures would also be realised at Grebe Lake to safeguard wintering gull habitats.

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- 5.6.7. The reconstruction of the Marsh Gibbon Overbridge and closure/diversion of the Charndon Footpath would collectively require approximately 1.3ha (4.0%) of the Lawn Farm, Tinkers Hole LWS. The construction would affect the lowland meadow, a designated feature of this LWS and it would also remove a single waterbody, which may contain some of the notable aquatic plants. Mitigation to compensate for loss of the habitat would be through the acquisition of new land adjacent to the LWS with translocation of meadow species to the new mitigation area. Once newly created habitats have matured and a meadow management regime is in place there would be no residual effect from the proposed scheme.
- 5.6.8. Construction of the proposed scheme would result in the loss of general habitat which is suitable for rare plant species, scarce invertebrate species (including the black hairstreak butterfly), bats, barn owls, reptiles, great crested newts, water voles and otters. This habitat loss includes scrub, grassland, hedges and riverbank vegetation.
- 5.6.9. The majority of this habitat loss (approximately 24ha) would be between Queen Catherine Road and Winslow, within the mothballed section of railway whilst approximately 10ha of grassland and scattered scrub mosaic habitat within this mothballed section is used by reptiles (grass snake, common lizard and adder).
- 5.6.10. The scheme would also impact bats commuting and foraging along this mothballed section of railway and also the western edge of Sheepphouse Wood SSSI. It is recognised that recreation of habitats along the mothballed section would not occur until the end of the construction phase (up to four years). In addition, as a result of double tracking, less space would be available for these habitats compared to the baseline whilst the habitats along this section of the operational railway would be required to be managed to Network Rail's lineside standard.
- 5.6.11. Noise and vibration from construction works may also impact breeding birds at Sheepphouse Wood SSSI; however, no ancient woodland at Sheepphouse Wood SSSI would be lost to the proposed scheme, whilst new broadleaved semi-natural woodland to increase the extent of woodland habitat and increase connectivity with the existing parcels of ancient woodland shall be planted to maintain the integrity of the woodland. The extent and type of mitigation would be agreed with Natural England. Bat mitigation is also proposed at Sheepphouse Wood SSSI, with SSSI assent required from Natural England. Bat mitigation would seek to avoid potential collision impacts on bats crossing the railway adjacent to Sheepphouse Wood.
- 5.6.12. Mitigation would also be required for river restoration techniques which shall be agreed with the Environment Agency (EA) to compensate for the loss of river habitat at Claydon Brook. The Draft ES also identifies new habitat creation for great crested newts around Claydon Junction, Verney Junction and between Finmere and Aylesbury. The Draft ES also recognises that the proposed scheme has the potential to disturb or damage otter holts within Claydon Brook and the ditch network around Chardon and Marsh Gibbon. Replacement holt/sheltering habitat, if required, would be implemented in these areas. The Draft ES also recognises that replacement habitats for water vole populations may also be required at Steeple Claydon and ditches near Marsh Gibbon and Charndon.

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- 5.6.13. Construction works would also result in the potential loss of two assumed barn owl breeding/roosting sites, situated within 0.18km of the proposed scheme, however mitigation measures are proposed through liaison with landowners within the vicinity whilst the residual effect of a loss of one barn owl nest would be reduced to a level that is not significant.
- 5.6.14. The Draft ES identifies, within the **Winslow/Swanbourne** parish area and in close proximity of the route, designated sites relating to one National SSSI, eight LWSs and 9 BNSs.
- 5.6.15. Within the Winslow/Swanbourne parish area landscape, the Draft ES identifies that the dominant land use relates to areas of intensive farmland, both arable and pastoral with a number of small settlements and notes habitat types relating to woodland and scrub, hedgerows, grassland, watercourses (including Horwood Brook) ponds, lakes and wetlands, arable/cultivated land primarily between the urban areas of the town of Winslow in the west and Milton Keynes in the east, all located within or in close proximity to the route.
- 5.6.16. The proposed scheme has been designed to avoid any land take from Salden Wood LWS to ensure the proposed scheme would not directly impact upon the ancient woodland. The scheme has also been designed to minimise land take from the railway siding east of Salden Wood to ensure habitat loss is reduced from this site and thereby reducing impacts on reptile and invertebrate populations there. Notwithstanding this, the Draft ES recognises that to facilitate the construction works associated with the proposed scheme land would be required from within four BNSs (Horwood House BNS, Old Quarry, Winslow BNS, Claypit near Horwood House BNS and Ponds east of Lower Grove Farm BNS) and four LWSs (Railway Bank by Salden Wood LWS, Salden Wood LWS, Railway Siding east of Salden Wood LWS and Wood copse off Magpie Way LWS).
- 5.6.17. These works predominantly relate to the construction and reinstatement of the mothballed section of the existing railway to a double track railway, construction access routes, the closure and diversion of Swanbourne Old Station Level Crossing, the closure of Moco Farm No. 2 Level Crossing and the construction of a footbridge in this location, the closure of an existing footpath (Station Road east of the BNS) and creation of a new footpath route, reconstruction of Salden Overbridge, the closing of Weasel's Lodge Level Crossing, the provision of access around Salden Wood, access routes at Newton Longville Railway Loops, including associated construction access, footpath rerouting, Swanbourne Construction Compound and works associated with Whaddon Way Overbridge.
- 5.6.18. The land required for construction would impact upon habitats which are suitable for species including bats, water voles, barn owls, great crested newts, reptiles and scarce invertebrate species. This includes habitat such as riverbank vegetation, waterbodies grassland and scrub and woodland. The majority of the habitat lost would be from within the mothballed section of railway between Winslow and Bletchley, which predominantly provides in excess of 50ha of semi-natural grassland and scrub habitat. The construction works would also result in indirect impacts such as noise, vibration, dust and changes in hydrology (including associated drainage).
- 5.6.19. The Draft ES also recognises that 0.35 km of vegetation on the bank of Horwood Brook would be removed and the aquatic feature within Claypit near Horwood House BNS would likely degrade the ecology of the watercourse through increasing erosion and the amount of sediment entering the watercourses.

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- 5.6.20. The loss of these habitats associated with the construction works of the proposed scheme would likely impact upon bats, barn owls, great crested newts, reptiles, scarce invertebrate species and water voles.
- 5.6.21. The Draft ES recognises that 29 barn owl territories are assumed to overlap the proposed scheme. The proposed works would also result in the loss of up to 10 breeding or roosting barn owl sites, situated within 150m of the proposed scheme due to disturbance from works. Furthermore, two collision 'hot-spots' have been identified, associated with seven barn owl pairs. The increase in train frequencies would present an increased collision risk to the identified barn owl populations, with the greatest risk being to the seven barn owl pairs associated with the collision hot-spots. Mitigation is proposed through liaison with landowners within the vicinity whilst the residual effect of a loss of one barn owl nest would be reduced to a level that is not significant.
- 5.6.22. Mitigation against habitat loss would include measures to create new woodland, grassland and scrub habitats at Horwood House BNS, Old Quarry, Winslow BNS, Claypit near Horwood House BNS and Ponds east of Lower Grove Farm BNS, Railway Bank by Salden Wood LWS, Salden Wood LWS, Railway Siding east of Salden Wood LWS and Wood copse off Magpie Way LWS to compensate for temporary/land take within the designated sites. Impacts upon notable plant species would be mitigated by transferring the soil seed bank from the affected area to a habitat mitigation area.
- 5.6.23. Mitigation would also be required for river habitat restoration at Horwood Brook through scrub and tree planting to compensate for the loss of river habitat. The Draft ES also identifies that new habitat creation for both great crested newts and bats (including linear tree and hedgerow planting and bat house structures would be created to compensate for the loss of bat habitat).
- 5.6.24. The Draft ES identifies, within the **Aylesbury** parish area and in close proximity of the route, designated sites relating to; one National SSSI, one Local Nature Reserve (LNR), six LWSs and eight BNSs).
- 5.6.25. Within this parish landscape, the Draft ES identifies that the dominant land use relates to arable land to the north and south of Aylesbury. It identifies habitat types relating to woodland and scrub, hedgerows, grassland, watercourses (including the River Thames, Southcourt Brook, California Brook, Bear Brook, Wendover Brook and their associated tributaries) , ponds, lakes and wetlands, arable/cultivated land and urban areas, all located within or in close proximity to the route.
- 5.6.26. The Draft ES recognises that construction works would result in habitat loss from two BNSs and three LWSs. This includes embankment widening either side of the River Thames which would potentially result in permanent loss of riparian vegetation along both sides of an approximately 70m length of the river where it passes through the proposed scheme with possible damage to the river banks. Of this 70m tract, approximately 30m lies within the River Thames north of Aylesbury BNS and the River Thames south-east Putlowes BNS. Approximately 0.01ha of vegetation would be removed from the designated sites which equates to less than 1% of the BNS.

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- 5.6.27. The construction of North Bucks Way underpass; repairs to Waddesdon Manor (Blackgrove Road) Overbridge and construction access routes and compounds would result in permanent loss of 3.2ha of grassland and scrub habitat from Waddesdon Common LWS, approximately 18% of the grassland in the LWS with approximately 0.5ha considered likely to be damaged by the construction of HS2. Hydrology would also be affected by modifications in the track drainage north of Blackgrove Road, likely altering the volume of water entering and leaving Waddesdon Common LWS along both the ditch and the stream.
- 5.6.28. The proposed Waddesdon Manor (Blackgrove Road) Overbridge repair and enhancement works would require a construction compound within Sunny Hill Farm Pastures LWS and a temporary construction access route parallel to the railway crossing which would also be in the LWS. This would result in removal of approximately 0.5ha (approximately 7%) of the lowland meadow vegetation for which this LWS is designated. A stream also forms the northern boundary of Sunny Hill Farm Pastures LWS. Hydrology would be affected by modifications in the track drainage north of Blackgrove Road, likely altering the volume of water entering and leaving Sunny Hill Farm Pastures LWS along both the ditch and the stream.
- 5.6.29. The creation of the double track railway and associated earthworks and other activities between Quinton and Aylesbury would result in complete removal of the Waddesdon Station Complex LWS, comprising of some 3.0ha (100%) of habitat, for which the LWS is designated. The LWS is recognised to be heavily overgrown with scrub and may not support the same diversity of plants as it may have done in the past. Notwithstanding recent habitat change, the soil seed bank may remain intact and there is potential to restore this site to its former quality with scrub removal.
- 5.6.30. Proposed construction works associated with the scheme would result in the loss of habitats which are suitable for bats, barn owls, great crested newts, otters, reptiles, scarce invertebrate species and water voles. Works also have the potential to disturb or damage otter holts within the streams west of Aylesbury, and may directly impact or disturb roosting bats. Works would also result in the loss of four breeding or roosting barn owl sites, situated within 175m of the proposed scheme due to disturbance from works. The Draft ES also identifies that 15 barn owl home ranges overlap with the proposed scheme, however at least eight are considered likely to be effected by the construction and operation of HS2. The increase in train speed and frequency north of Aylesbury Vale Parkway Station may result in an increase in barn owl deaths through collision.
- 5.6.31. Mitigation against habitat loss would include measures to create new habitat adjacent to Waddesdon Common, Sunny Hill Pastures, Waddesdon Station Complex LWSs to compensate for land take within the designated sites. Mitigation would also be required for river restoration techniques which shall be agreed with the EA to compensate for the loss of river habitat. The Draft ES also identifies new habitat creation for both great crested newts and bats (including bat house structures).

- 5.6.32. Chapter 9 of the Draft ES recognises that where mitigation measures have been identified across the Parish areas and forming this wider sub-section, these would be implemented to prevent harmful impacts. Such measures comprise best practice construction measures to minimise the risk and control of incidental pollution. Long-term mitigation would include, where feasible, habitat retention and enhancement within close proximity to existing habitats/mosaics. The mitigation techniques reduce the operational ecological effects to a level that is not significant. The Draft ES predicts that there would be no adverse operational ecological effects on habitats in the Aylesbury Vale sub-section and accordingly the scheme would comply with the requirements of the NPS, NPPF Section 11, Policies NE1, NE2 and NE8 of the Emerging Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan, as well as Marsh Gibbon Neighbourhood Plan Policy MG19 and Quainton Neighbourhood Plan Policy NE2.

## 5.7. Noise and Vibration

- 5.7.1. An assessment of the noise and vibration impact of the scheme within the Aylesbury Vale sub-section on sensitive receptors is discussed in Chapter 10 of the Draft ES. It should be noted that the ES has not assessed the impacts associated with traffic noise.
- 5.7.2. At present, noise levels are typically dominated by traffic on the road networks. Measured levels typically fluctuate depending on the time of day due to the morning and afternoon rush hours, and train movements. The Draft ES establishes that train movements are also more frequent during the busier rush hour periods. The level of audible noise from train movements differed at various locations along the route due to distance, screening, topography and existing buildings and structures.
- 5.7.3. Activities during the construction phase of the scheme would result in some degree of noise disturbance at nearby receptors, in particular at Verney Junction and Winslow. However, it is important to note that such impact would be temporary. Mitigation measures to reduce noise during the construction phase have been identified. A number of measures to manage noise generated during construction activities would be agreed with the local authority and set out in a Code of Construction Practice (CoCP). Through implementation of mitigation measures, such as phased construction activities and acoustic screening in appropriate locations, it is anticipated that the scheme would meet with appropriate noise thresholds at all sensitive receptor locations during the construction phase.
- 5.7.4. During the operational phase, the Draft ES identifies receptors within the Aylesbury Vale sub-section that could potentially be affected by noise levels exceeding Significant Observed Adverse Effect Level (SOAEL) (as defined in the Noise Policy Statement for England, as referenced in the NPS) as a result of train movements. Such receptors are located at Steeple Claydon, Quainton, Verney Junction, Winslow, Aylesbury, Waddesdon and Quarrendon. It is therefore proposed to erect noise barriers/bunding at these locations to reduce noise levels. Impacts arising from vibration during the operation of the scheme are anticipated to occur at a number of locations during the operation the scheme.
- 5.7.5. The proposed Winslow Station is assumed to include a public address system and building service (heating and cooling) equipment installed on both platforms. However, it is not anticipated that this would result in a significant noise impact.

- 5.7.6. The Draft ES identifies that following the consideration of the proposed noise barriers or bunding, a number of properties within the Aylesbury Vale sub-section may be eligible for noise insulation, which would further reduce noise impact to an acceptable level.
- 5.7.7. The NPS and NPPF (paragraph 123) highlight that it is important to recognise that new development will often create some noise. The key consideration is whether any noise impact would result in significant adverse impact on health and quality of life. In this regard, it is considered that, through the mitigation measures identified above, in particular the erection of noise barriers at sensitive locations and additional use of noise insulation at eligible properties, the impact of the scheme would not result in a significant adverse impact on health and quality of life. Whilst vibration impact is predicated to occur at some locations, it is considered that such impact would not result in a significant adverse impact on health and quality of life. Therefore, the scheme would be compliant with the NPS and NPPF, as well as Aylesbury Vale District Local Plan Saved Policy CP8 and Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan: Issues and Options draft Policy BE3.

## **5.8. Geology, Soil and Land Contamination**

- 5.8.1. An assessment of the impact of the scheme within the Aylesbury Vale sub-section on geology, soils and land contamination is discussed in Chapter 11 of the Draft ES.
- 5.8.2. The Draft ES determines that no significant impacts would arise during the construction phase of the scheme within the Aylesbury Vale sub-section in respect to exposure of contaminants to nearby residents, built environment receptors, pollution to surface water courses and pollution of groundwater.
- 5.8.3. In respect to the operational phase of the scheme, mitigation measures have been incorporated into the design of the scheme to reduce impact and as a result it is considered that no significant impacts would occur. The scheme is considered to result in moderate/low risk for contaminants to impact on superficial secondary A aquifer, Bedrock Principal and Secondary A aquifers, as well as ground gas from surrounding landfills impacting on nearby properties. Other potential impacts, such as exposure of contaminants to nearby residents, pollution of surface water courses and pollution of groundwater are considered to be either very low risk or low risk.
- 5.8.4. In terms of the risks to geology as a resource within this sub-section no local geology sites or 'Really Important Geology Sites' (RIGs) are located within 500m of the scheme.
- 5.8.5. The Draft ES demonstrates that through the incorporation of mitigation measures into the design of the scheme, it would result in no significant residual impact with respect to geology, soil and land contamination within the Aylesbury Vale sub-section and across the entire route. In this context, it is demonstrated that the scheme is fully compliant with the NPS and NPPF Section 11.

## 5.9. Landscape and Visual Impacts

- 5.9.1. A full Landscape and Visual Assessment (LVIA) of the impact of the scheme within the Aylesbury Vale sub-section on landscape and visual receptors is discussed in Chapter 12 of the Draft ES.
- 5.9.2. Within the Aylesbury Vale sub-section there are a number of statutory designations representing areas that are potentially sensitive to the scheme. Such designations include Scheduled Monuments, Registered Park and Gardens, SSSIs, Ancient Woodlands, Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings, Areas of Attractive Landscape and Local Landscape Areas. Additionally, the route travels through and adjacent to a large number of Landscape Character Areas and Landscape Character Types within the sub-section. There are also a number of viewpoints within the sub-section from sensitive visual receptors that have the potential to be affected by EWR2.
- 5.9.3. The LVIA finds that within the **Claydon/Quainton** parish area, the effects of EWR2 on the quality and value of some Landscape Character Areas are primarily from the presence of new bridge or station related structures in the rural setting. Other effects are from a loss of vegetation within the scheme boundary. It is considered that the overall significance of such effects would be moderate adverse. Views of the scheme within the Claydon/Quainton parish area are limited by combinations of surrounding landform, intervening vegetation, characteristically dense hedgerows, hedgerow trees and woodlands, and where the railway is in a cutting. Views are possible however, to and from low lying valleys and to a lesser extent from surrounding higher ground.
- 5.9.4. Within the **Winslow/Swanbourne** parish area, the effects on the setting, quality and value of some Local Character Areas are localised, and primarily from the presence of new bridge structures in the rural setting. Other effects are from a loss of vegetation from within the scheme area. It is considered that the overall significance of such effects would be slight adverse with localised moderate adverse significance in the Claydon Tributary arising from effects on the setting to Horwood House from new bridge structures. Views of the scheme within this parish area are limited to within less than 1km by intervening landform, vegetation and built form, particularly within Winslow itself. Within this relatively close range of visibility however, the majority of receptors would experience some significant effect, lessening in time as mitigation planting matures.
- 5.9.5. Within the **Aylesbury** parish area, effects on Landscape Character Areas and Townscape Character Areas are primarily from loss of vegetation within the railway corridor, new bridge structures in the landscape and effects on ridge and furrow at bridge works. The characteristics and qualities of other Local Landscape Character Areas within the study area would not be affected. The majority of visual effects resulting from the operation of the scheme would be of slight adverse or neutral significance. The LVIA finds that the operation of the scheme within the Aylesbury conurbation and rural areas would result in no significant effects on visual receptors. It highlights that landscape mitigation planting along the operational boundary would continue to lessen effects over time.

- 5.9.6. To summarise, the impact of the scheme within the Aylesbury Vale sub-section is likely to result in some impact on Landscape Character Areas, as well as the viewpoints from a number of visual receptors. Mitigation measures have been identified and implementation of such measures would significantly reduce adverse impact. It is considered that any residual impact is not of a significance whereby the objectives of the NPS, NPPF Section 11 and Aylesbury Vale Local Plan Saved Policies GP8, GP38 and RA.8 are compromised. In this regard, the impact of the scheme on landscape and visual receptors within the Aylesbury Vale sub-section is considered to be acceptable against planning policy.

## **5.10. Water Quality and Flood Risk**

- 5.10.1. An assessment of the impact of the scheme within the Aylesbury Vale sub-section on flood risk and the water environment is discussed in Chapter 13 of the Draft ES.
- 5.10.2. The route within the Aylesbury Vale sub-section crosses or is located in close proximity to a large number of surface water features including main rivers, ordinary watercourses, drains, lakes and ponds. A review of the EA's Flood Map for Planning indicated that the vast majority of the scheme within the sub-section is located in the low risk Flood Zone 1. However, there are sections of the scheme that are identified as being located in areas of Flood Zone 2 and 3.
- 5.10.3. A review of the EA's Risk of Flooding from Surface Water map indicated isolated areas on both sides of the line at risk of flooding from surface water, along with overland flow routes within the vicinity of the scheme. It also indicated large areas of land on both sides of the scheme within the vicinity of Fleet Marston Brook and its tributaries to be highly susceptible to flooding from surface water.
- 5.10.4. Although there is a risk of pollution to adjacent water features and groundwater resources associated with construction activities, no such potential impacts are considered to be significant. Likewise, temporary works to surface water features are not considered likely to result in significant impacts. There is potential for flood risk to be increased through construction activities associated with repair works to bridges over watercourses and railway embankment widening. Flood risk may potentially be increased temporarily through the creation of construction compounds. Likewise, the construction of a new footbridge (North Bucks Way) near to the Fleet Marston Brook has potential to increase flood risk, as does the provision of access tracks adjacent to the existing railway between Fleet Marston Farm and Aylesbury Vale Parkway Station.
- 5.10.5. The Draft ES identifies potential impacts associated with the operational phase of the scheme prior to mitigation. It identifies potential for increased flood risk associated with widening of existing railway embankments, realignment of a tributary of Horwood Brook, the removal of an aqueduct and diversion of channel flow, and reduction of the existing floodplain associated with Fleet Marston Brook and Bear Brook. Prior to mitigation, the impact of proposed works is identified as having potential to be significant.

- 5.10.6. A CoCP has been prepared, a draft of which forms an appendix to the Draft ES for consultation. The CoCP includes mitigation measures to protect the water environment during the construction phase and would be reviewed regularly. For construction compounds and areas of the proposed works located within areas deemed to be at risk of fluvial and surface water flooding, a Flood Emergency Response Plan will be prepared for implementation during the construction phase.
- 5.10.7. With regards to the operational phase, the Draft ES identifies that the majority of potential adverse impacts on the water environment can be mitigated through appropriate design of the scheme. General mitigation principles that would be implemented are summarised as follows:
- If construction in the existing floodplain is unavoidable, compensation of lost flood storage capacity on level for level basis would be provided;
  - Design footbridges that are required to be located within the existing floodplain as light, open structures with a small footprint to minimise obstruction to flows during flood events;
  - Design new watercourse crossings to have appropriate capacity so as to not increase flood risk elsewhere;
  - Retain the capacity of existing culverts and bridge openings so as to not increase the risk of flooding in the area or elsewhere;
  - Avoid the diversion or culverting of watercourses. If this is unavoidable, consult with the EA and local authority to agree design and mitigation requirements;
  - Provide appropriate drainage systems in areas identified as being susceptible to flooding from surface water;
  - Surface water runoff from new stations, platforms, extensions to existing platforms, car parks, sidings or other potentially polluting areas would be drained via appropriate pollution prevention measures before discharge to the receiving water environment;
  - Surface water runoff from new impermeable surfaces would be drained via appropriate attenuation measures to limit runoff; and
  - Surface water that drains from track areas where this is not from station or sidings locations will percolate through the gravel track ballast to provide natural treatment prior to overland flow to an adjacent surface water feature or infiltration to ground.
- 5.10.8. In respect of water quality, the Draft ES identifies, in general, that construction activities have the potential to result in adverse impact. However, implementation of mitigation measures to avoid polluting water courses would mean no significant effects would occur.

- 5.10.9. The Draft ES demonstrates that through the implementation of the above identified mitigation measures, the part of the scheme within the Aylesbury Vale sub-section, and as a whole, would have no significant effect on flood risk and the water environment. In any case, the 'Technical Guidance on Flood Risk' (as referenced in the NPPF), makes it clear that essential infrastructure is appropriate and acceptable in Flood Zone 3 provided flood risk is not increased elsewhere. In the context of the Draft ES findings, in particular the confirmation that flood risk would not be increased elsewhere, it is demonstrated that the scheme is fully compliant with the NPS and NPPF Section 10.

### 5.11. Traffic and Transport

- 5.11.1. An assessment of the impact of the scheme within the Aylesbury Vale sub-section on traffic and transport is discussed in Chapter 14 of the Draft ES. However, a full impact assessment arising from traffic and transport has not been reported in the Draft ES at this stage.
- 5.11.2. The highway network within the Aylesbury Vale sub-section includes 18 road overbridges and six road underbridges. There is also one existing vehicle level crossing along the route within the Aylesbury Vale sub-section, which would be closed and replaced by a new highway overbridge.
- 5.11.3. The Draft ES identifies that the internal haul road crosses the highway network in 15 places. It is identified that construction compounds would generate traffic during the construction phase and have the potential to affect the road network during this time. Such traffic would consist of HGVs and car trips generated by staff. Operational changes to traffic flows at Winslow Station, Aylesbury Vale Parkway Station and Aylesbury Station due to changes in passenger demand as a result of the scheme would also occur.
- 5.11.4. The assessment of construction and operational effects from traffic and transport changes within the Aylesbury Vale sub-section is ongoing and has yet to be established. Consultation with Local Highway Authority stakeholders with regards to traffic projections and methodology is currently being undertaken. Once the full assessment is available in the final ES, its findings and an assessment of performance against planning policy will be included in the final Planning Statement.

## 6. Conclusion

- 6.1.1. The EWR2 scheme, as proposed at this stage, has been considered against the national and local planning policy framework of Aylesbury Vale District Council and Buckinghamshire County Council.
- 6.1.2. It is clear that the scheme would deliver significant economic and social public benefits and presents an opportunity to make a substantial contribution to achieving the strategic objectives of national and local planning policies. It would do so through the creation of a strategic link between economic centres, facilitating economic growth, reducing congestion of the highway network, providing a reliable rail route for commuters, ensuring net gain in biodiversity and enhancing the local PRow network.
- 6.1.3. The current findings of the Draft ES identify that the scheme would not result in significant adverse impacts in relation to the main material considerations and environmental topics within the Aylesbury Vale sub-section (notwithstanding that a full assessment has not been reported in the Draft ES at this stage). The majority of potential residual impacts arising from the scheme can be mitigated through measures identified in the Draft ES to a level that is not significant.
- 6.1.4. It is anticipated that there would be some residual impact within the Aylesbury Vale sub-section in respect of noise at residential properties, temporary amenity impact through construction land take, the setting of listed structures and viewpoints from some visual receptors. However, it is considered that such impact would not be of a level whereby the objectives of national and local planning policies are compromised. In any case, the significant public benefits that would be brought about by the scheme would demonstrably outweigh any less than significant impacts.
- 6.1.5. Section 38 (c) of the TCPA 1990 confirms that planning applications should be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material circumstances indicate otherwise. This is reiterated in NPPF paragraph 14 which provides a presumption in favour of sustainable development, stating that development proposals which accord with the Development Plan should be approved without delay.
- 6.1.6. The scheme must therefore be considered in the context of the TCPA 1990 and NPPF paragraph 14. Using the current findings of the Draft ES, it is considered that the scheme within the Aylesbury Vale sub-section, and as a whole, is currently in full compliance with national planning policies and the local Development Plan, therefore representing sustainable development in the context of planning policy.
- 6.1.7. Findings of this draft Planning Statement may be subject to change at the time of the TWAO submission as the ES is updated and aspects of the proposed development amended.