

Stakeholder Webinar Q&A: Part 1

Theme	Matter raised	EWR Co Response
Need to Sell Scheme	<p>In the Need to Sell Property Scheme guide it states</p> <p>“The requirement that you should make all reasonable efforts to sell your property and that, despite those efforts, you have not received offers within 15% of the property’s realistic unblighted asking price, helps to show any effect of the EWR Project”, does this mean those looking to sell may have to take a 15% reduction on market value?</p>	<p>Where a successful application is made under the NTS Property Scheme, we will buy the property at its unblighted market value. That is the property value as if there were no plans for the EWR Project. Under the NTS Property Scheme valuation process, initially two valuations will be completed, both paid for by us. The homeowner will choose one of the valuers. If the two valuations are within 10% of each other our offer will be based on the average of these valuations. If the two valuations are not within 10% of each other, we will pay for a third valuation and our offer will be based on the average calculated from the two closest valuations. All valuations will be carried out by a RICS Registered Valuer. There is more information on the valuation process at eastwestrail.co.uk/needtosell. Following these valuations, EWR Co will make an offer to purchase the property at its unblighted market value.</p> <p>If an offer is made for your property following a successful Need to Sell application it will represent 100% of the unblighted market value of your property at the time of the valuation. The unblighted market value at that point may be different from the unblighted asking price used when marketing the property.</p> <p>For further information please take a look at our Need to Sell Property Scheme Guide and further information on our website.</p>
	<p>Is the East West Rail Need to Sell Scheme anything like the HS2 scheme?</p>	<p>Although HS2 and East West Rail are two separate projects, both have introduced discretionary Need to Sell property schemes with similar eligibility criteria.</p>
	<p>We are concerned the current Need to Sell Scheme is unfair in terms of meeting current market prices.</p>	<p>Where a successful application is made under the NTS Property Scheme, we will buy the property at its unblighted market value. That is the property value as if there were no plans for the EWR Project. For further information please take a look at our Need to Sell Property Scheme Guide.</p>
	<p>Where does the 15% come from referred to in the Need to Sell Property Scheme Guide?</p>	<p>Under the Need to Sell Property Scheme, applicants need to show that blight resulting from the EWR project, rather than any other factor, is the reason why their property has not been sold or could not be sold, other than at a substantially reduced value (blighted value). The requirement that you should make all reasonable efforts to sell your property and that, despite those efforts, you have not received offers within 15% of the property’s realistic unblighted asking price, helps to show any effect of the EWR Project. We make the distinction between the asking price of the property and the final purchase price of the property. The asking price is set with the aim of achieving the best possible price. We do not expect you to accept a blighted value for your property. If you consider that an offer received within 15% of a realistic unblighted asking price represents a blighted value, you should submit evidence of this for the NTS Panel to consider.</p>

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Need to Sell Scheme	What compensation is there for those not under compulsory purchase but whose homes have been devalued and / or are blighted for 10 years of construction and congestion?	<p>Where houses are not acquired in whole or part, under Part I of the Land Compensation Act 1973 compensation may be claimed for reduction in the value of the property due to physical factors caused by the use of a new or altered railway, which is explained further in the guide on the EWR Co website: Guide to Part 1 Claims</p> <p>Properties which are within the limits of the line of a proposed railway route, and where land would be required for the project, can be directly affected by blight; this is known as Statutory Blight. Blight is when the value of a property is reduced because of a large scale or major public works proposal, and the owners are unable to sell their property at market value. Statutory Blight is normally triggered by an application for a Development Consent Order (“DCO”). Property owners within the limits of the line of the railway could then ask us to buy their property. Claims for statutory blight cannot be made before this time.</p> <p>For more information please see our guide on the Statutory Blight Process.</p>
Health Impacts	We are concerned about the mental health of those who are affected by the project. What will you do about this?	<p>We are committed to working hard to reduce, mitigate or - where we can - to eliminate disruption for people at every stage of the Project, in planning, during construction and through to our day-to-day operations. In line with the Government’s Noise Policy, we will aim to avoid or minimise negative impacts on the health and quality of life of local residents and communities along the East West Rail route.</p>
Environmental Impacts	How do you mitigate against the loss of countryside?	<p>We are committed to delivering biodiversity net gain across EWR. Our ambition is to deliver 10% net gain across the Project. One way in which we are working to ensure we can achieve this, is through continuing to prioritise avoiding high value and priority habitats.</p> <p>To support both our biodiversity net gain ambitions and wider environmental outcomes, we use environmental data to help us develop proposals that avoid, mitigate and compensate for potential impacts on the environment.</p> <p>At each stage of our planning and development process, we’re assessing the environmental impacts on important areas like farmland and countryside.</p> <p>We’ll always try to avoid direct impacts on the most significant designated environmental assets.</p> <p>To help us do this, we’re following the Environmental Mitigation Hierarchy by aiming to avoid significant adverse effects on the countryside, woodland and ancient woodland.</p>
	Where will the many tonnes of hardcore needed for the embankment across South Cambridgeshire be brought from? What environmental implications does that have?	<p>We’ve tried to make sure that when developing designs for the railway there is a good ‘cut-fill balance’ across the route. This means spoil or earth that’s extracted from the ground would be used elsewhere on the Project and not transported off-site to landfill. This could assist with management of excavated material by enabling greater volumes of this to be reused during construction. Our aim would be to help reduce cost, traffic disruption and embedded carbon by reducing the amount of spoil that must be disposed of elsewhere and the volume of material that must be imported in order to construct embankments.</p>

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	Why are environmental concerns relevant for the routes you don't prefer but not for the route you have chosen?	<p>You'll see references to assessment factors within our reports. These are the framework of 15 factors, including environmental considerations, we've used to review possible route options we have been considering since 2019. These assessment factors allow us to compare and consider a range of aspects and find the best balance of benefits.</p> <p>Our assessment factors look at how well different route options meet the overall Project objectives. They help us to determine the benefits of each option for customers, as well as the broader communities EWR will serve. These assessment factors have been agreed with the Government and provide a robust framework for comparing the relative performance of options. We've taken all 15 factors into account at each stage of the design process. More information on the Assessment Factors can be found in Chapter 5 and Appendix C of the 2021 Consultation Technical Report.</p>
	When will you publish the results of the environmental surveys, e.g. bats, owls, trees?	<p>The Environmental Statement is a key document within the DCO application and will be made public once it has been submitted and approved by the Planning Inspectorate. If any data is deemed sensitive, such as that of protected species, it will be made confidential. We still have work to do and are carrying out more surveys and investigations to help us design the Project in more detail.</p>
Cowley Branch line	Will EWR include stops on the Cowley Branch line?	<p>Network Rail is currently considering proposals to reopen the Cowley Branch Line 24 to passenger services. This scheme would enable additional capacity for trains to change direction (turn back) south of Oxford station and would also facilitate EWR services. However, should the Cowley scheme not progress or not be possible to integrate in the required timescales for our Project, we would need to develop a turn back facility south of Oxford, which would be complementary to the Cowley proposals.</p>
Bicester	Please could you provide costings for the options around Bicester?	<p>Our proposals are still at a formative stage, so it would be too early to develop a detailed breakdown of quantitative costs for the multiple variations, concepts and options that we're presenting. The high level and indicative costs comparisons outlined in the 2021 Technical Report, [East West Rail - Browse Consultation Documents] have been provided as a guide. These will help us make an informed decision before we go into more detailed calculations against each of the assessment factors, including cost.</p>
Freight	What about Freight?	<p>EWR's (east West Rail) primary purpose is to support economic growth as a passenger railway – to connect lives and unlock opportunities. Alongside this - and noting that some freight already runs on sections of our route - we are considering whether EWR might also support new freight opportunities as part of delivering wider economic growth. These opportunities will need to be balanced against the required investment and also the impact to local communities.</p>
	How are you factoring in freight movements with your reduced frequency?	<p>It is extremely difficult to fit all of the planned new EWR services into the timetable onto the slow lines of the current four-track MML (Midland Main Line). This is because the timetable is driven by constraints further afield. If the lines north of Bedford are shared between EWR (East West Rail) and non-EWR services, these constraints mean that Thameslink and freight services would likely be prioritised because of the need to reduce knock-on effects across the wider network, increasing the performance risk to EWR.</p>
	If the level of freight grows will Great Shelford need a grade separated junction?	<p>There are currently no plans for a grade-separation at Great Shelford.</p>

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	Will the freight train paths be daytime or at night?	The number of freight paths that could be available should be known by the time of the statutory consultation. However, the number of trains that would use EWR (East West Rail) is dependent on market forces and Government policy, as well as the infrastructure.
	Freight is almost more important for this line than passenger to get all the HGV’s off the roads from Southampton to the midlands and east coast and vice versa.	When it opens, our railway is likely to enable up to two additional freight trains per day in each direction from Oxford to Bletchley, and two from Cambridge to Oxford. This would take nearly 70,000 HGVs off the road each year, and the volume of freight trains would be unlikely to exceed this level without significant further investment, both on EWR and elsewhere on the rail network.
	Network rail said 50 per day. When you forecast 2 per day? For the next 100 years?	To enable more than two freight trains per day per direction, it is considered that holding loops would be necessary, assumed to be required between Hauxton Junction and Coldham Junction, north of Cambridge station. Higher volumes of freight would also require other enhancements, both on EWR and the wider railway network.
	Unless you are running passenger trains at 3/4tph through the night you are talking about less 1 freight train per hour between midnight and 0500?	We’re currently carrying out a study into freight on East West Rail (EWR) and no decisions have yet been made. Freight services are operated in the UK by open access commercial freight companies and unless government policy changes, this would be the case in the future. EWR’s final operating model for passenger and potential freight services has also not been finalised.
Carbon	The use of diesel trains seems to be a contradiction with the project aim to deliver a net zero carbon railway?	<p>We are considering several ways that EWR trains may be powered, with the aim of delivering a net zero carbon railway that aligns with government aspirations and decarbonisation policy by the time our services to Cambridge become fully operational.</p> <p>Whilst we haven’t yet made a decision about what technology we could use, the initial use of diesel only trains is only a temporary solution so that we may commence services more rapidly.</p> <p>Development of proposals for our traction power strategy is ongoing and further details will be presented at the statutory consultation.</p>
Marston Vale Line	If Marston Vale has 2 fast and 1 slow each hour then it won’t be 20 min spacing. The fasts will be 30 mins apart with a slow slotted into one of the gaps.	Regarding the proposal of three trains per hour on the MVL, one train every 20 minutes is an approximation. At the next stage we’ll consider all three trains together in identifying the best timetable and stopping pattern for communities along the line of the railway.
	The slides note “The full EWR service will run four trains an hour from Oxford to Cambridge“, why do you state that there will 4 tph when MVL is constrained to 3 tph?	There would be four trains per hour from Oxford, only two of which would progress to Cambridge. Plus a service between Bletchley and Bedford, which could be replaced by extending one of the Bedford Cambridge trains to Bletchley to further improve connectivity for the Marston Vale.
Housing demolition	How have you determined that the demolition of part of a terrace will not structurally damage the rest of the terrace? There has been no structural or land surveys to our knowledge.	Acquisition of the adjacent property to the properties being demolished would be required to implement a structural solution (such as propping) to ensure structural stability of the latter building (the building adjacent to the one being demolished) and avoid demolition of the row of houses.

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	My house states that if I am a connect structurally which I am to a property being demolished then my house maybe requires too. But if that stands for me surely that’s the whole street?	The reduction in the number of properties anticipated to be affected from structural damage through demolition of adjoining houses is due to EWR Co back checking its assumptions from the 2021 consultation. Further review of designs found that the structural risk to the houses can be reasonably reduced in Milne Row and Chesterton Mews through structural intervention to the house immediately adjacent to the houses being demolished.
	Will residents who may / may not lose their homes be told this prior to the Statutory Consultation or will they be expected to wait until 2024?	Throughout the process, the EWR team will be available for you to discuss any issues you may have, though there are specific stages when we will be in touch with people whose home, property, land or rights in land could be required for the project. Ahead of Statutory Consultation, which we are expecting to start in the first half of 2024, we will contact directly affected homeowners, occupiers and landowners. At Statutory Consultation, we will present detailed design information across the route, and invite your views on the project proposals including in relation to land requirements. After the statutory consultation and before we submit the application for the Development Consent Order (DCO), if we require your home, property, land or rights in land, we will be in touch with you to seek to enter into a voluntary agreement with you. After the statutory consultation and until the DCO is granted, we will continue discussions with you as the design is further refined and to understand your concerns.
	A housing site at Caldecote is set to have vote railway straight through it, demolishing a number of recently built houses.	Since the 2021 consultation the design has been amended to avoid having a direct impact on the Linden Homes development at All Angels Park, in Highfields Caldecote.
Cost of Project	We are concerned about the overall cost of the Project and whether train fares will be more expensive than what they are currently.	<p>East West Rail (EWR) is a once in a generation opportunity for local communities. It will offer new, reliable, sustainable transport for people and businesses across the entire area. EWR will improve connectivity between key towns and cities including Oxford, Milton Keynes Cambridge and beyond. It will significantly reduce people’s journey times and provide safer, cheaper transport that is better for the customer, greener for the environment and great value for the taxpayer.</p> <p>The cost of constructing the route is not linked to fares, however, fares would contribute to the operating costs as it does across the UK rail network.</p> <p>EWR Co and its operating partners will set fares to ensure the service offers value for money and are inclusive to as many people as possible. Fares would be simple to understand and easy to purchase, in line with the rail industry’s fares reform programme, which seeks to increase the trust in the railway and remove both economic and convenience barriers to travel.</p>
Bedford 6 Tracks	Why are 6 tracks necessary at Bedford?	<p>It’s extremely difficult to fit all of the planned new EWR services into the timetable onto the slow lines of the current four-track MML. This is because the timetable is driven by constraints further afield, for example timing of the Thameslink services through central London, and the requirement to weave existing freight services through the station area on specifically timed paths because of high occupancy of the platforms by the Thameslink services. If the lines north of Bedford are shared between EWR and non-EWR services, these constraints mean that Thameslink and freight services would likely be prioritised because of the need to reduce knock-on effects across the wider network, increasing the performance risk to EWR.</p> <p>We recognise the impacts of the six-track option on local residents and businesses. Through design development, we’ve reduced the overall number of properties that are likely to be directly affected by the construction of two additional tracks from 98 (97 residential properties and one business property) identified at the 2021 consultation, to 66 (65 residential properties and one business property) now, and we’ll continue to seek further opportunities to refine our proposals to limit the amount of land we would need.</p>

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	How can Thameslink put 24 tph through City Thameslink but you need 6 tracks?	<p>EWR would first and foremost be a passenger service and, while we’re planning a passenger route, the Government has asked us to accommodate existing freight services that are already running through areas including Oxford, Bicester, the Marston Vale Line and Bedford.</p> <p>It’s extremely difficult to fit all of the planned new EWR services into the timetable onto the slow lines of the current four-track MML. This is because the timetable is driven by constraints further afield, for example timing of the Thameslink services through central London, and the requirement to weave existing freight services through the station area on specifically timed paths because of high occupancy of the platforms by the Thameslink services. If the lines north of Bedford are shared between EWR and non-EWR services, these constraints mean that Thameslink and freight services would likely be prioritised because of the need to reduce knock-on effects across the wider network, increasing the performance risk to EWR.</p>
Cost	How much is the cost increase on the wider network from using the greater Anglia trains	<p>At this stage of the project, it’s too early to say exactly how much tickets will cost or to be able to make wider network cost comparisons, but we’re committed to providing and supporting excellent customer service across the whole journey and that includes delivering value for money for our customers. We do expect East West Rail (EWR) to be cheaper than current journeys by rail – which often require going into London and back out again.</p>
	How long will it take for this line to pay for itself in terms of passenger numbers; after all we have been repeatedly told this is 'principally a passenger service'	<p>Following the Route Update Announcement, work will continue to assess the costs and benefits associated with EWR, including mitigation measures and capital costs, as the design of the route continues. East West Rail will deliver a range of benefits for businesses, communities, and academia throughout the length of the railway, enabling economic growth and supporting a range of public and private sector investments. The National Infrastructure Commission estimated that creating these transport links and supporting the areas between the world class education hubs of Oxford and Cambridge was worth nearly £80bn extra a year to the UK economy.</p> <p>More detailed information for the preferred alignment will be presented at the statutory consultation.</p>
	What are your plans for construction routes and do you plan to build haul roads along the line?	<p>With regards to track construction, rail is delivered to site via Network Rail’s special fleet of Rail Delivery Trains (RDT’s). Rails are then transported across site to where they are needed via specialist equipment called “TRT’s” (small caterpillar tracked mobile lifting frames). Once the rail is in position, sleepers can then be installed. The “New Track Construction” train is brought to site, carrying with it enough sleepers to install 1.1km of track in a single 10-hour shift. The methodology we are using means that the work will be carried out in stages. The wagons and new track construction train will continuously work their way along the line. This methodology also means less construction traffic using the local roads, as materials will be brought in by rail.</p>

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	Buckinghamshire has born the brunt of construction HGVs, road closures and diversions. Impacting residents and local businesses. Other areas will need information on construction routes well in advance.	<p>East West Rail aims to connect communities, not to sever them. If any roads have to be permanently closed as a result of building the new railway, they'll be replaced with diversionary routes of equal or improved capacity to reduce any inconvenience or disruption as much as possible. We've heard from people about the concerns relating to closing roads in Buckinghamshire and we continue to review the options available. Please keep in touch with the project and stay up to date with the latest information by signing up to our newsletter. [https://eastwestrail.co.uk/library/newsletters]</p> <p>We know that construction work might impact the communities the line will serve. So it's important to us that, through good planning and open communication, we avoid or reduce disruption to local people, communities and the environment. We'll explain our approach to construction and operation of the railway and provide further details of potential effects of this during our statutory consultation.</p>
	In your assessment did you take into account buildability and traffic impacts during construction of building a line through Bedford?	<p>We're carrying out road traffic assessments and modelling to understand how the traffic flows are working and where congestion is. Our plans for access to the new stations will take this into account, so that we can make the existing situation better than it is today. We don't just include the railway – we also design the other solutions that support the railway, such as road diversions and connections to stations. A Code of Construction Practice will be prepared and this will explain steps to avoid or reduce disruption to local people, communities and the environment during construction.</p>
	In your assessment did you take into account buildability and traffic impacts during construction of building a line through Bedford?	<p>We're carrying out road traffic assessments and modelling to understand how the traffic flows are working and where congestion is. Our plans for access to the new stations will take this into account, so that we can make the existing situation better than it is today. We don't just include the railway – we also design the other solutions that support the railway, such as road diversions and connections to stations. A Code of Construction Practice will be prepared and this will explain steps to avoid or reduce disruption to local people, communities and the environment during construction.</p>
Viaducts/Embankments	Where are the reductions in height of embankments/viaducts?	<p>The work we've been doing since the consultation has helped us to identify some potential opportunities to reduce or remove viaducts and embankments, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Taking the railway under roads in cuttings instead of building viaducts over them• Making minor diversions to potential route alignments to allow the railway to be lowered• Diverting the roads over the railway on smaller overbridges instead of building viaducts over existing roads <p>We believe these initiatives could allow us to remove completely or reduce the height of approximately 50% of the embankments or viaducts (by length) compared to what was shown in the 2021 consultation. You can find more information about our approach to embankments and viaducts at https://eastwestrail.co.uk/planning/embankments</p>
LRG meetings	Will details be shared ahead of the Local Representative group meetings?	<p>Information has been sent to all Local Representatives Groups with information on their next meeting.</p>
	Poets Residence Group still has no representation on LRGs	<p>The LRG meeting are specifically for elected ward councillors and parishes along the route. Cllrs that represent residents within the Poets areas are invited to attend LRG for Bedford Town, you can see a full list of the Group's members on the Community Hub here</p>

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	LRG meetings exclude the most relevant / affected	The LRG meeting are specifically for elected ward councillors and parishes along the route. We hold community drop-in events to provide an opportunity for communities to speak to members of the Project team.
Tempsford	It said the station would "enable a new community to grow, including opportunities to improve biodiversity and give more people access to green spaces" This text infers that a rural Station at Tempsford has been selected to encourage people to get off here and enjoy the rural life rather than contribute to a town- or have I missed something?	Creating a new station at a Tempsford location has a greater potential to support economic growth to come forward than a new station at St Neots, due to constraints at the St Neots location in relation to existing developments and infrastructure. Development at Tempsford would also enable the redevelopment of brownfield land at RAF Tempsford. The higher growth potential of Tempsford than St. Neots was validated by advice received from Homes England. Therefore, the station would contribute to enabling housing and economic growth
	The proposed Tempsford station interfaces with the ECML, there is no mention of whether any ECML services will stop at this station. Will this occur or is it outside the scope of this work?	Tempsford station would offer passenger interchange between EWR and ECML but no direct rail connection between the lines.
	What industrial or commercial opportunities at Tempsford have you identified to support your claimed economic growth opportunities?	Development at Tempsford would also enable the redevelopment of brownfield land at RAF Tempsford. The higher growth potential of Tempsford than St. Neots was validated by advice received from Homes England. Therefore, the station would contribute to enabling housing and economic growth.
	How will the new houses at Tempsford and Cambourne get built? They are not in any local plan.	In designing route options for the railway to date, we've stayed informed about proposals for new housing across the route, including in these locations. In selecting the preferred route option following the 2019 consultation, we took account of how the new railway could serve developments across the region, including the Bedford, Tempsford and St Neots areas. We considered the potential impact of the Project on existing housing – including housing that has been granted planning permission and is in the course of being built – when we looked at detailed potential route alignments. We've also thought about how the railway might best support future housing development by providing cost-effective, sustainable and accessible public transport alternatives for residents of new settlements. We've considered this as part of the Assessment Factor 'Contribution to enabling housing and economic growth including best serving areas benefitting from developable land'. The allocation of land for development is a matter for local planning authorities. It is important to note that the railway is also intended to provide new connections for existing settlements, residents and businesses – not just future development.
	Why has RAF Tempsford been described as brownfield? What proportion of Tempsford remains brownfield?	Please contact the Tempsford Parish Council
	Can you confirm Tempsford station is an interchange with ECML?	Tempsford station would offer passenger interchange between EWR and ECML but no direct rail connection between the lines.
Further information requested	When will the horizontal engineering long drawing be reissued for Alignment 1 as amended to include Tempsford and all the other changes to embankment/cutting dimensions you have already committed to?	More detailed information on the proposed design of the railway, including our emerging preference for Alignment 1 (Tempsford variant) will be available at the statutory consultation which we anticipate will be undertaken during the first half of 2024.

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	For clarity can the EWR team please provide a copy of the map illustrating the alignment 1 (Tempsford variant) overlaid onto satellite rather than block OS mapping?	<p>With regards to the maps, we know from previous consultations that while some people find maps become too busy when every conurbation is included, other people do prefer to have that detail. We have been working with experts in both mapping and design to find the right balance.</p> <p>The purpose of the map is to confirm the preferred route. We understand that it is helpful to have maps tailored to each area, however at this stage we are continuing to develop the next stages of designing the railway.</p> <p>We will of course share additional information at the statutory consultation during the first half of 2024. This will be a further opportunity for you to share your views with us.</p>
	More detailed maps with place names would be appreciated.	<p>With regards to the maps, we know from previous consultations that while some people find maps become too busy when every conurbation is included, other people do prefer to have that detail. We have been working with experts in both mapping and design to find the right balance.</p> <p>The purpose of the map is to confirm the preferred route. We understand that it is helpful to have maps tailored to each area, however at this stage we are continuing to develop the next stages of designing the railway.</p> <p>We will of course share additional information at the statutory consultation during the first half of 2024. This will be a further opportunity for you to share your views with us.</p>
	While there are many pages the docs are light on detail	<p>While we have endeavoured to be as transparent as possible with our proposals for the Route Update Announcement, we appreciate that each person will have their own unique questions and queries. As such, please get in touch with our Correspondence Team at contact@eastwestrail.co.uk and they shall be happy to handle your enquiry.</p>
	The 2021 alignment consultation drew heavily on horizontal long engineering drawings which enabled valuable visualization of the local impacts and communities commented accordingly. Now the decision has been made to use a hybrid combination of 1 and 9 without having consulted on the changes involved. Please publish the revised long section drawing so that the communities impacted can take account of the changes in the Black Cat area and where other changes to visible features have also been incorporated.	<p>More detailed information on the proposed design of railway, including our emerging preference for Alignment 1 (Tempsford variant) will be available at the statutory consultation which we anticipate will be undertaken during the first half of 2024.</p>

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	Will a more detailed map be made available of the route, especially considering that the documentation states optimisations to reduce viaduct heights and the variation around Tempsford. So the 2021 map (including vertical/horizontal updates of the line) would likely have developed.	<p>With regards to the maps, we know from previous consultations that while some people find maps become too busy when every conurbation is included, other people do prefer to have that detail. We have been working with experts in both mapping and design to find the right balance.</p> <p>The purpose of the map is to confirm the preferred route. We understand that it is helpful to have maps tailored to each area, however at this stage we are continuing to develop the next stages of designing the railway.</p> <p>We will of course share additional information at the statutory consultation during the first half of 2024. This will be a further opportunity for you to share your views with us.</p>
Consultation	Will you be publishing the data / information captured from recent consultation, especially given it's taken so long to process?	<p>We have produced and published s consultation feedback report which can be found here: www.eastwestrail.co.uk/consultationfeedbackreport</p>
	Why is there a 9 months + delay from now to the statutory consultation process?	<p>We still have work to do and are carrying out more surveys and investigations to help us design the Project in more detail. These will be vital in providing information for our assessments, which will underpin the information presented at the statutory consultation.</p>
Engagement	What's the point in engagement? You have disregarded us completely	<p>We take the views of local people, communities, and their representatives seriously and we will keep listening to all of the comments we receive so that we can build a railway that meets the needs of the communities we serve and the UK as a whole. All feedback received from our previous consultations and ongoing engagement activities has been considered and taken into account in the development of the proposals.</p>
	Please could we have notice of these meetings days before not on the day	<p>We aim to provide notice for all the events we hold and regret not being able to do so on this occasion for the LRG Announcement webinar. We have now published all LRG meeting dates and confirmed the dates and locations for our next round of our community drop-in events.</p>
	Can you please ensure that technical EWR representatives are present at the various open events, we want answers at the event, not after, as per Wyboston event.	<p>Our relevant subject matter experts will be in attendance at our upcoming community drop-in events where possible.</p>

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Cambridge	Has there been an assessment of the likely disruption for rail commuters at Cambridge station and if so can you publish it please?	<p>We have produced and published a consultation feedback report which can be found here: https://eastwestrail.co.uk/consultationfeedbackreport In this, respondents requested that both cycle lanes and bus routes are created for commuters at Cambridge station, raising concerns about a lack of parking and links to Cambridge station. We’ve considered access to and from the station for use of both EWR and non EWR services including the use of taxis, pick up and drop off provision, parking, bus services, as well as improvement of cycle and pedestrian links. We would strive to promote active travel where appropriate and would aim for the new services to be accessed across the area using sustainable transport modes. We would continue to liaise with other public transport promoters in the Greater Cambridge area to develop plans which complement current or planned public transport provision. It should be noted that new public transport services such as bus routes are the responsibility of statutory bodies and operators.</p> <p>We believe that EWR will unlock opportunities for rail commuters. For example, the Cambridge Biomedical Campus already has 17,000 jobs within easy reach of the future Cambridge South station. Therefore, immediate productivity benefits for commuters could be enabled by EWR, as the new connection would help facilitate access for this workforce, boosting productivity in turn for both existing and future jobs.</p> <p>A 15-minute walk (or less) is an accepted duration for connectivity on foot and almost the entire Cambridge Biomedical Campus would be within a 15-minute walk of Cambridge South station.</p>
Interchanges	Why has an interchange at Wixams been ruled out?	<p>Early timetable proposals for a station at Wixams, as promoted by Bedford Borough Council, are likely to further increase risks due to increased platform occupancy time at Bedford station, which further constrains capacity on the slow lines.</p> <p>Bedford station is already an important transport hub in the region. East West Rail services will bring back vital connections to this area which would support local jobs, prosperity and growth. By linking directly into Bedford Station, it also provides better connectivity to places further afield, too. It also prevents the need for further disruption by planning for a new north-south station at Wixams.</p>
Air Quality	The "Clean Air Strategy" is referred to in the documents in the glossary only. How does this solution apply this strategy now that we have PM2.5 data within the Bedford AQMA (adjacent to Bedford Hospital and Bedford St Johns) which shows we are well above WHO standards ?	<p>We take our commitment to delivering sustainable transport seriously. We’re developing the Project in line with UK Government policy and law, such as the Clean Air Strategy, and will continue to consider impacts on air quality (including CO2 and PM2.5 emissions) throughout the design process.</p> <p>We’ll seek to work with local authorities to understand the current situation in communities and how to consider relevant Air Quality Management Areas such as Bedford AQMA as we develop our proposals. The PEIR will include information regarding the baseline air quality environment and the relevant air quality standards and targets. The likely risks from construction activities and potential impacts from operation, including identification of mitigation and control measures, will also be included and will be presented at the statutory consultation.</p> <p>We’ll then submit an ES as part of the DCO application, which will assess potential changes in Nitrogen Oxides (NOx) and fine particulates (known as PM2.5 and PM10) and dust. This assessment will follow best practice and guidance such as that set by the Institute of Air Quality Management and other recognised bodies including WHO’s standards.</p>

Theme	Matter raised	EWR Co Response
	Please try not to just quote how many cars will stop using the roads in the area to reduce pollution. Adding multiple diesel trains per hour will add to the poor air quality.	<p>In 2018, the Government committed to the removal of all diesel-only trains from the network by 2040. In line with this, we're committed to running a sustainable railway by introducing new and emerging technologies in our long-term train fleet, and reducing emissions including carbon, NOx (Nitrogen Oxides) and particulates.</p> <p>Whilst we haven't yet made a decision about what technology we could use, the initial use of diesel only trains is only a temporary solution so that we may commence services more rapidly. We're dedicated to minimising the impact the new railway will have on air quality and this allows us to retain full flexibility as we explore options for the long-term fleet, while also unlocking the benefits of the new railway earlier</p> <p>Development of proposals for our traction power strategy is ongoing and further details will be presented at the statutory consultation.</p>
Highfields Caldecote	What will happen to Highfields Caldecote? Will it lose access to the A428 or will there be a bridge/underpass?	<p>The proposed route of the southern approach to Cambridge would leave Cambourne using two new EWR tracks. It would head south-east passing under the A428, then north of Highfields Caldecote, west of Comberton Village and south of Haslingfield Village, passing through Chapel Hill, and crossing over the river Cam.</p> <p>Running EWR parallel to the A428 could manage impacts within an existing and developing travel route. Visual changes to the landscape could be concentrated within the same area as the A428 rather than areas that are currently relatively untouched by infrastructure development.</p>
Approach to Cambridge	Is the southern route into Cambridge cheaper?	<p>A southern approach provides the only solution to fully unlock economic opportunities that can be realised through EWR. Our high-level investigations since the 2021 non-statutory consultation indicate that a northern approach may potentially be cheaper to build and quicker to construct, and have less potential environment impact, but it would not be an alternative to a southern approach in terms of economic growth. We have concluded that the benefits of the southern approach outweigh the cost and delivery advantages of the northern approach and are therefore confirming our preference for a southern approach to Cambridge.</p>
	Do you look at extending Thameslink Cambridge services as they serve a much wider selection of London destinations than Greater Anglia?	<p>As part of the optioneering process we looked at the extension of Thameslink (GTR) Services.</p> <p>The complexity of the GTR timetable and the level of interdependencies that these services have across the London and South-East area was assessed to be to be too high for this option to be taken forwards.</p> <p>In addition, extension of GTR trains would add substantial additional infrastructure due to the Class 700 train type and consequently additional cost and resource. It would also import risks with timetabling and operational performance, which our preferred option does not involve. This view was supported by both the DfT and NR during our exploratory work and indicative assessments of what was possible and feasible.</p>

Theme	Matter raised	EWR Co Response
	Where does the forecast of Cambridge growing by 80,000 jobs by 2050 come from?	<p>Many of the constraints highlighted by EWR Co’s analysis are already having an impact in the fastest growing cities in the Ox-Cam region. This is particularly acute in the Cambridge area¹ where employment has been growing at a 3.4% per annum, higher than the UK average of 0.8%, and much higher than forecast (1.6%) in the transformational NIC growth scenario². EWR Co has calculated that, if Cambridge’s potential is realised, it could grow by 80,000 jobs by 2050, creating a potential total value of £4bn-5bn GVA per annum – over 50% more than its current economic contribution³.</p> <p>1. Cambridge area [Cambridge] refers to the Urban Cambridge Area, which is defined for the purposes of the ToC as Cambridge local authority and eight Lower-layer Super Output Areas (LSOA) from South Cambridgeshire local authority. 2. Partnering for Prosperity, NIC 2017 3. EWR Co Analysis.</p>
	Did you assess whether the northern or the southern route was better for freight?	<p>The southern approach is expected to enable an estimated two freight trains a day from Felixstowe port, without further enhancements assumed to be required either on or off the EWR network, although further optimisation of the gradient of the route and available sidings in the Cambridge area may be required to facilitate the running of rail freight onto EWR. To enable higher volumes of freight trains to run would require additional infrastructure both on and off the EWR network, with different interventions required depending on whether the services were to be routed via Newmarket or Ely.</p> <p>The northern approach would require a north-west EWR connecting chord onto the West Anglian Main Line (WAML) in the Milton area, and an avoiding line at Ely, to enable any freight trains to run from Felixstowe onto EW, bypassing the congested central Cambridge area. Once in place, no further interventions are expected be required in this section of the EWR route, however further enhancements would be necessary on the national network to facilitate higher volumes of freight trains per day, similarly to the southern approach.</p>
	Have you considered the possibility for passengers for the Science Park to congregate in the end carriages. These could be de-coupled at Cambridge North and connected to a shunting engine to go to Cambridge South?	<p>We considered whether it would be possible to serve Cambridge South station taking the northern approach but concluded that this would reduce the frequency of trains and extend journey times, including likely requiring passengers to change trains, to an unacceptable level. It would make it harder for people living in Bedford, the Marston Vale or near St Neots/Tempsford to access the jobs at the Biomedical Campus – and therefore it wouldn’t deliver the economic opportunity that underpins the case for EWR.</p>
Congestion	If you are creating jobs and houses to go to the Cambridge Biomedical Campus won’t that increase congestion?	<p>People will obviously have a range of views on where housing development should take place. This is ultimately a decision for government and local authorities – it’s not down to East West Rail.</p> <p>However, the EWR line would mean people can choose to live in a more affordable area within an easy commute, rather than having to pay premium house prices within CBC. This is particularly important for key workers. EWR would also help take cars and lorries off local roads, resulting in cleaner air, safer roads and less congestion in the CBC.</p> <p>We’re also carrying out road traffic assessments and modelling to understand how the traffic flows are working and where congestion is. Our plans for access to the new stations will take this into account, so that we can make the existing situation better than it is today.</p>

Theme	Matter raised	EWR Co Response
Economic benefits	EWR will turn Bedford into a dormitory settlement- what economic benefits are there here? What jobs are coming here as a result?	<p>We undertook detailed economic modelling that indicates that the Bedford route would provide the greatest benefits for transport users and, by connecting key areas of economic activity, will contribute to wider economic benefits for both Bedford and the wider region. EWR Co will continue to work with the responsible highway authorities to appropriately consider the impacts of the scheme on local traffic and identify any associated mitigation measures to support the development and its impacts within Bedford.</p> <p>Bedford station is already an important transport hub for the region, providing a gateway into the town centre and easy connections to Thameslink and East Midlands Railway (EMR) services on the Midland Main Line (MML). Introducing EWR services would strengthen the hub and support local aspirations for more jobs, prosperity and growth. Improvements to Bedford station would contribute to the regeneration of the area immediately around the station, as well as the centre of Bedford.</p>
	EWR appears to be solely focussed on expanding the jobs etc in Cambridge- why is the same focus not being applied to the Oxford end?	EWR would considerably expand the number of people within commuting distance of high-quality jobs in the region. The region supports over three million jobs overall and by joining up the currently siloed individual jobs markets, whether in logistics in Milton Keynes, agri-tech in Central Bedfordshire, or life sciences in Oxford and Cambridge, EWR will make all these jobs more easily accessible for everyone living in the region.
	Slide 23 suggests Bedford will become a dormitory town to Cambridge. Is it really sustainable to encourage people to travel this distance? How are you going to ensure there isn’t house price inflation as a result- this will make it even more difficult for local people to Bedford to afford property. Government talks about 15min neighbourhoods- jobs local to where people live. I am not sure this achieves this?	East to west public transport is currently inadequate. For instance, the journey from Bedford to Cambridge would be reduced from an approximate 75 minute journey by car or 90 minutes by bus, to just 35 minutes by train. EWR would considerably expand the number of people within commuting distance of high-quality jobs in the region. The region supports over three million jobs overall and by joining up the currently siloed individual jobs markets, whether in logistics in Milton Keynes, agri-tech in Central Bedfordshire, or life sciences in Oxford and Cambridge, EWR will make all these jobs more easily accessible for everyone living in the region.
Operation	Will it be possible to get on an EWR train at Oxford and arrive at Cambridge without changing trains at any point along the route? Same question going from Cambridge to Oxford?	Yes – There would be four trains per hour from Oxford, two of which would progress to Milton Keynes and two would continue to Cambridge.
Electrification	Concerns were raised around the cost of electrification if introduced at a later stage and it was suggested the route should be electrified from the start.	No commitment on the traction power type to be used has yet been made by the Government, and electrification is only one of the options being considered. EWR Co will need to ensure the railway aligns with relevant policy and legislation for a net zero carbon UK by 2050.
Noise	What form of noise barrier is planned to be introduced along the route when passing through residential areas if this proposal goes ahead?	<p>We know that issues like noise and vibration are a real concern for local communities. And we take these very seriously. We’ll be undertaking baseline noise surveys for the next stage of the project. Through the design, we’ll seek to avoid putting the railway close to ‘sensitive receptors’ – such as schools and housing. If this can’t be reasonably achieved and we think the railway would cause noise levels to increase, we will seek to implement ‘on-site’ mitigation. This includes siting the railway in a cutting, installing noise barriers or using earthworks and landscaping to reduce noise levels. Where noise levels are still sufficiently increased at receptors, we’ll look to ‘off-site mitigation’ – such as secondary glazing or localised screening. As part of the Environmental Statement, we’ll report on any noise effects likely to occur. We’ll prepare a Code of Construction Practice for the project, which will explain steps we’re taking to avoid disruption to local people, communities and the environment. We’ll also explain our approach to construction and operation of EWR and provide further details of potential effects of this during our statutory consultation. You can read more about our outline commitments here: [https://eastwestrail-production.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/public/MediaObjectFiles/3074a8f95b/Impact-of-Noise.pdf], which we’ll use to build practical guidance to inform our decision making.</p>