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Making Meaningful Connections

Consultation Responses Report

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Executive summary

Introduction

On 31 March 2021, the East West Railway Company (EWR Co) launched its second non-statutory public consultation inviting feedback on plans for East West Rail (EWR), a proposed new rail link, connecting communities between Oxford, Milton Keynes, Bedford, and Cambridge. The consultation ran for 10 weeks, closing on 9 June 2021.

The first period of non-statutory consultation was held by EWR Co in January 2019. Further consultation will be held as the project progresses.

EWR Co commissioned Traverse, an independent company, to process, analyse and report on the feedback received during the second non-statutory consultation. This report is the output of that analysis, summarising all the feedback.

The consultation

The purpose of the consultation was to share draft plans for EWR with local communities, stakeholders and potential EWR passengers, and invite feedback on:

- Customer experience and railway operations; and
- Infrastructure proposals such as route alignments, stations, and level crossings.

The consultation was publicised via documents sent directly to local residents and stakeholders, emails, and publicity and advertising in the media.

Participation

People were invited to respond to the consultation via the project website, virtual consultation rooms, email, or Freepost. As this consultation was delivered during a period when there were various restrictions in place to reduce the spread of Covid-19, a programme of online events was held to help encourage people to get involved and an online chat function and phoneline were also available for questions.

Almost 10,000 people responded to the 2021 consultation with the majority indicating that they were from local residents. The consultation generated over 160,000 individual comments.

Summary of key themes

A summary of the key themes identified in the feedback received is provided below. Please note, additional detail on each of the themes (including quantifiers for the level of responses received under each theme) can be found in Chapters three to nine.

What you told us about…

Customer experience and railway operations

Train service • The price of train fares compared to other modes of transport. • The need for a simplified ticketing system. • Railway should have no net carbon impact (e.g., electrify the line). • Reliability of current rail services. • The need for faster trains and a more regular railway service in the UK.	Station experience • Station accessibility, including step-free access to platforms; wider ticket barriers and platforms; and passenger assistance. • Station design, including weather protection; facilities such as refreshments and toilets; and safety considerations. • Suitable facilities for cyclists, drop-off and pick-up, and car parking. • Simple interchanges between different modes of transport.
Interaction with colleagues • Staff should be friendly, competent, knowledgeable, proactive, confident, and available.	Sharing information with customers • Live train updates, ticket pricing, and interchange information should be easy to access, via multiple channels/formats.

What you told us about…

Infrastructure proposals for Oxford to Bicester

Proposals for Oxford to Bicester • Support for increased connectivity. • Potential impacts, for example on wildlife, air quality, noise levels and safety. • Possible disruption to homes, existing services, and roads and paths. • The need to consult on further changes	*Oxford station* • Support for increased capacity at the station. • Support for the improving service reliability and connectivity with a new platform. • Suggested improvements to the station. • Potential disruption from construction and operation. • Various impacts including on wildlife, car parks, properties, monuments, and current services.
Bicester Village station • Lack of highway capacity to support increased passenger numbers/additional rail services. • Potential environmental impacts on air quality and land uptake. • Need for sustainable transport methods to the station or use of existing infrastructure. • Need for better rail connections and improved passenger comfort and flow at the station.	*London Road level crossing* • Preference for Concept 2 - an online road underpass at London Road. • Concern about the London Road level crossing proposals: preference for retaining existing crossing; concern about duration of closure; potential environmental impacts. • Support for the concepts, with preference for continued access for all users. • Suggestion that a bridge would be safer and cheaper. • Suggestion that a bridge may not be usable or suitable. • Support for an underpass. • Crossing should consider accessibility and mobility needs. • Signalling improvements would maximise opening time. • Suggestions for alternative concepts.

What you told us about…

Infrastructure proposals for Bletchley and the Marston Vale Line

Existing Stations on the Marston Vale line

- Preference for Option 1 (of two upgrade options), with an hourly stopping service.
- Support for maintaining access to local stations.
- Option 2 (provide a more frequent, faster service with some new and relocated stations and improved community access) would reduce access to local rail services for residents and encourages greater car use.
- Woburn Sands station needn't be relocated, particularly if this would divide the community in Woburn Sands.
- Support for Option 2, allowing for quicker and more reliable journeys.
- Existing stations on the Marston Vale Line should be upgraded to benefit local communities.
- Improved access to stations for all users.

Level crossings

- Concern about potential impacts on splitting local communities by the proposed line.
- Potential congestion in villages if level crossings are closed.
- Support for Option 2 at Woburn Sands level crossing (to keep the level crossing open).
- Concern about the impact of Option 1 (a new road around Woburn Sands and new School Crossing bridge) on green spaces including allotments on Edgewick Farm.
- A bridge or an underpass would not divide the community.

Bletchley station

- Support for proposals at Bletchley station, in particular for an eastern entrance providing better access.
- Current issues including accessibility and parking.

Improvements to the Marston Vale line

- Preference for a mix of short and long blockades to be used for the closure of the Marston Vale line during construction of EWR.

Fenny Stratford additional track • Preference for replacing existing bridges at Fenny Stratford with new, wider bridges to carry both the existing and a reinstated second track, causing less disruption. • Concern about the cost and impact of additional track.	

What you told us about…

Infrastructure proposals for Bedford

General comments • Concern about Route E and its alignment through Bedford, with preference for a more southernly route, following the current A42.1 • Route E alignment has been unduly influenced by local politicians. • Potential impacts of the Bedford station proposals and the additional track near Bromham Road on property values.	*Bedford St Johns station* • Slight preference for a new station to the south of its existing location, with a new railway bridge across the River Great Ouse. • Suggestions that an alternative location should be explored to align with a southern route out of Bedford. • Concern about impacts from construction on the local community, local roads, and walking routes.
Bedford station • Concern about accessibility and parking at the station. • Lack of perceived economic benefit. • Negative impact on local residents and the environment.	*Bromham Road* • Disruption would be unfair to local residents. • Existing four tracks could accommodate the proposed service.

What you told us about…

Infrastructure proposals for the approach to Cambridge

Northern approach

- Support for a northern approach as it would:
  - Provide better connectivity for freight, planned housing and the Science Park.
  - Serve a much larger population than a southern approach, unlocking greater economic benefits.
  - Have a lower environmental impact than the southern approach.
  - Have fewer impacts on communities.
- Concern about a northern approach as it would:
  - Have a negative impact on local communities and wildlife.
  - Have a negative visual impact and increase noise pollution.
  - Be potentially complex and costly to construct and maintain.
  - Impact on other infrastructure and developments.
  - Not be needed due to existing transport infrastructure.
- Suggestions, such as aligning with existing transport corridors; connecting to housing

Southern approach

- Support for a southern approach as it would:
  - Have less of a negative impact on the community than a northern approach.
  - Support increased onward connectivity.
  - Be less challenging and costly to construct.
- Concern about a southern approach as it would:
  - Have a negative impact on local communities, farming, the environment, and wildlife.
  - Have impacts during a long construction period.
  - Reduce property values.
- Suggestions, such as alternative routes; mitigating the impacts of closing crossings; track design; and improving infrastructure for cyclists.

developments; and using trenching technologies.	
Other comments • Concern about the approach to Cambridge in general. • Requests for further information, such as ticket costs; economic impact; and mitigation measures.	

What you told us about…

Infrastructure proposals for Clapham Green to The Eversdens

Alignment 1 - St Neots South Option A station and a Cambourne North station	*Alignment 2 - St Neots South Option A station and a Cambourne South station*
• Overall preference for Alignment 1, as it follows existing transport infrastructure corridors and would have less impact on properties and the environment. • Alignment 1 would increase connectivity between St Neots South and Cambourne North whilst avoiding more remote and less populous rural villages. • Concern about potential impacts on local communities, including proximity to villages and houses; limiting access to amenities such as doctors and schools; and negative visual impact. • Concern about the cost, feasibility, and requirement.	• Support for Alignment 2 as it would impact fewer villages and have less significant environmental impact. • Alignment 2 would serve new housing developments most effectively and increase connectivity to St Neots. • Concern about potential impacts on local communities, including potential loss of properties or decrease in property values; environmental impacts; and disruption to roads, paths, and utility infrastructure.

Alignment 6 - St Neots South Option B station and a Cambridge South station

- Support for Alignment 6 as it would have fewer impacts on the environment and properties, and it would service the growing community at St Neots.
- Concern about potential impacts, including on wildlife and biodiversity, house prices, visual impact, traffic, and agricultural land; and potential disruption to utility infrastructure and walking routes.

Alignment 8 - Tempsford Option B station and a Cambourne South station

- Support for Alignment 8, as it would have fewer environmental impacts; more shielding to prevent noise pollution; and fewer impacts on communities.
- Support for a new station at Tempsford.
- Concerns about potential environmental impacts, such as on conservation areas, woodlands, and floodplains; as well as noise and air pollution.
- Concern about potential impacts on local communities, including access to amenities; effecting the rural nature of villages; and vibration damage to historic buildings.
- Tempsford and Cambourne South stations are too small to warrant a station.
- Concern about cost and requirement.

Alignment 9 - Tempsford Option A station and a Cambourne North station

- Support for Alignment 9 as it has suitable stations along the route, a potential northern approach into Cambridge, and the lowest impact on environment and biodiversity.
- Alignment 9 would generate fewer carbon emissions and require less construction on flood plains.
- Alignment 9 would offer greater connectivity to new housing, and result in less disruption to local road

Other comments

- Support for improving rail links in North Bedfordshire.
- Concern that North Bedfordshire is unsuitable for rail infrastructure.
- Opposition to all route alignment options.
- Concern about potential impacts on communities, the environment, highways, and property values along the route.
- Suggestions, including alternative routes and station locations; track design; and information that should be provided/assessed.

networks and fewer impacts on existing homes. • Concern about potential impacts on the environment, including woodlands and sensitive ecosystems; and the visual impact of embankments and viaducts. • Concern about potential impacts on local communities, including mental health impacts; lack of direct benefits; access to amenities because of roads and path severance; and traffic. • Concern about cost, complexity, and efficiency.	

What you told us about…

Infrastructure proposals for Harlton to Hauxton

- Support for the proposals as they would improve infrastructure whilst minimising disruption to existing services.
- Concern about potential impacts on local communities and the environment, including access to services and amenities; traffic; visual impact; property values; flood risk; and pollution.
- Concern about potential impacts of construction and disruption to existing services.
- Concern about cost.
- Suggestions, including mitigation measures; re-use of existing tracks; and encouraging increased mobility through the proposals.

What you told us about…

Infrastructure proposals for The Shelfords to Cambridge station

General comments

- Support for the proposed route from The Shelfords to Cambridge
- Opposition to the proposed route from The Shelfords to Cambridge, based on opposition to the southern approach.
- Proposed route is not needed as the area already has good rail services.
- Concern about potential disruption, including increased traffic, noise pollution and vibration.
- Concern the proposals would sever links between communities.
- Concern about potential impacts on the environment, including landscape and wildlife; noise and air pollution; and visual impacts.
- Suggestions, including investment into existing road infrastructure; additional local carparks; adjusting current train timetabling to accommodate new trains; and using the Cambridge guided busway route.

Hauxton Road level crossing

- Support for closing the level crossing.
- Concern about closing the crossing, citing perceived risks such as dividing communities, increasing journey times, and disrupting walking and cycling routes.
- Concern about potential impacts on local communities and the environment, including increased traffic and associated pollution and carbon emissions; noise and vibration; impact on local wildlife and rare species; and impact on rural heritage.
- Suggestions, including maintaining access for motorists, pedestrians, and cyclists across the level crossing; building a new bridge or underpass; and maintaining the crossing but improving it.

Modifications to the Shepreth Junction

- Support for proposed modifications, to reduce rail congestion and allow trains

Increasing the existing railway line

Shepreth Junction to Addenbrookes Road Bridge:

- Support for the proposal to expand the existing railway from

to access more platforms at Cambridge station.
- Support for an at-grade option, where the railway would be at the existing level, as less disruptive to residents and would improve the flow of trains through Cambridge station.
- Support for a grade-separated option, using a new bridge to join the two railways, as this would provide greater capacity for rail traffic.
- Opposition to a grade-separated option, citing concerns about environmental and visual impacts.
- Concern about potential impacts of all proposed options on the environment and communities.
-

Shepreth Junction to Addenbrookes Road Bridge to four tracks.
- Concern about potential impacts on the local environment and the Addenbrookes to Great Shelford Cycleway.
- Suggestions to widen or improve the cycleway.

Long Road, Cambridge:

- Support for the proposals.
- Opposition to the proposals due to concerns about potential disruption around Long Road during construction and to the guided busway; and impacts on local residents.

Track expansion:

- Support for track expansion to provide sufficient capacity.
- Opposition to track expansion, questioning the need for four tracks.
- Concern about potential impacts on the green belt and on the local environment.

Cambridge station

- Support for the proposals including additional platforms.
- Opposition to the use of Cambridge station by EWR trains, as it is already busy.
- Concern that Cambridge station is difficult to reach by car, foot, cycle, and public transport.
- Suggestions for station improvements, including more car parking and cycle storage; a new eastern entrance to the station; and a new footbridge.

Cambridge South station

- Support for the proposed location of Cambridge South

station, citing improved access to Addenbrooke's Hospital
- Suggestion to link Cambridge South station and Cambridge main station.

Other level crossings

- Suggestion that all level crossings in the surrounding areas be closed for safety reasons.

What you told us about…

The consultation

- Support for the consultation process, information provided, and questions asked.
- Concerns about the complexity of the information provided; that more detailed information is needed (including on compensation); and that it should be provided in more languages.
- Concern that the level of communication and publicity for the consultation was too low.
- Comments that the consultation should have been longer, more accessible to those without internet access, and not held during a pandemic.
- Concerns about the fairness or transparency of the consultation.

1. Introduction and Methodology

Background to the project

East West Rail (EWR) is a proposed new rail link, connecting communities between Oxford, Milton Keynes, Bedford, and Cambridge. The project is being delivered in stages, with trains already running between Oxford and Bicester. The aim is to have trains serving the full length of the EWR line by the end of the decade.

The design, planning and development of EWR is being managed by the East West Railway Company (EWR Co), which was established in 2017 by the UK Government to:

- Bring forward the second phase of the section of EWR that runs between Aylesbury, Bicester, Milton Keynes, and Bedford; and
- Develop the case for the section of EWR that runs between Bedford and Cambridge.

In January 2019 EWR Co held a first non-statutory consultation on various route options for the section of EWR between Bedford and Cambridge. Following that consultation, a preferred route was selected.

The consultation

A second, non-statutory consultation was held between 31 March 2021 and 9 June 2021. It focused on two key themes:

- The customer experience and railway operations; and
- The infrastructure proposals such as route alignments, stations, and level crossings.

Although face-to -face engagement was limited due to Covid-19 restrictions, there were a variety of ways people could take part in the consultation, as detailed below.

- Virtual consultation rooms (websites) provided information on the proposals via exhibition boards, videos, maps, consultation materials; and invited feedback via an online response form. More than 4,800 people visited the rooms;
- Online events presented the proposals to members of the public and enabled questions to be posted for the project team. 18 online public webinars and 16 live chat events were held;
- 64 online meetings were held with local MPs, councillors and parishes;
- 32 online meetings were also held with stakeholders including industry and business groups;
- Feedback could be sent by email - more than 3,500 email enquiries were received;
- A dedicated consultation phone line was available to discuss the proposals with members of the project team, ask questions or request copies of the consultation materials.

To provide information during the consultation period, a range of materials were published by EWR Co, including:

- the full Consultation Document
- the Consultation Summary Document
- specific chapters of the Consultation Document
- the Consultation Technical Report – Appendices A-D & F
- the Consultation Technical Report – Appendix E
- the Consultation Feedback Form
- the Guide to the Proposed Need to Sell Scheme
- the Feedback Form for the Proposed Need to Sell Scheme
- a Guide to Compulsory Acquisition and Compensation
- a Guide to Statutory Notices
- a Guide to Part 1 Claims
- a range of maps, including 100+ PDF maps and an online interactive map
- additional fact sheets about specific topics

All consultation materials were available on the EWR Co website or could be requested via email or the project phone line. In total, consultation materials were downloaded more than 75,000 times from the website.

The consultation was widely publicised to raise awareness and encourage involvement, as detailed below.

- Summaries of the Consultation Document were sent to 270,000 homes and business along the route.
- Emails were sent to a wide range of groups and individuals including local authorities, parish councils, MPs and councillors between Oxford and Cambridge; other statutory and technical stakeholders; and members of the community who had previously expressed an interest in the proposals.
- Information was sent to news and media outlets, resulting in more than 400 articles about the consultation.
- More than 300 adverts were placed in local media between Oxford and Cambridge; as well as outdoor advertising at or near stations including Oxford, Bicester, Bletchley, Bedford, and Cambridge
- Online advertising campaigns – including ad placements on local media websites and popular social media channels such as YouTube – generated more than 14,700 click-throughs to the EWR website.

Methodology

EWR Co commissioned Traverse, an independent company specialising in public consultation and engagement, to process, analyse and report on the feedback received in response to the consultation (https://traverse.ltd/).

Responses could be submitted to the consultation by:

- Completing the online response form which was available on the EWR Co website;
- Email, to the project email address consultation@eastwestrail.co.uk
- Post, via a dedicated Freepost address

Details of the these were included in the Consultation Document alongside the deadline for the receipt of comments.

Responses sent directly to EWR Co via their website or email address; or by post to their office were also received and were forwarded to the consultation email address for processing.

All responses were processed and imported into Traverse's database for analysis. Where responses were received via email or post fitted the structure of the response form, these were input under the corresponding question(s). All emails and letters that did not fit the structure of the response form were reviewed by analysts to identify which aspect of the proposals respondents were commenting on and the content was then assigned relevant codes, as described below.

Coding

Coding is the process whereby analysts read text provided in a response (a response being the answer to an open question) and apply an appropriate code to a part or all of the response. Each code is created to represent a point of view expressed by a respondent, so that they can be grouped together according to unifying themes or sentiments. This generates a systematic record of all points raised by respondents and allows reporting on this information in a logical, structured way. Codes continue to be added until all text is covered, and all the key themes and sentiments are captured. Coding was managed by a dedicated coding lead who was responsible for adding codes as required.

The codes form part of a coding framework – a means of structuring all codes used. Each consultation question is given a theme in the coding framework, within which sub-themes capture the sentiment of the coded text, which is primarily divided into reasons given for support, expressions of concern and suggestions.

To ensure quality and consistency of coding a number of checks of analysts' work are carried out, including ensuring that a percentage of each analysts' work was reviewed by a senior analyst. Regular team meetings are held to discuss the coding and share feedback on how codes should be applied, to ensure the coding is accurate and robust throughout.

Reading this report

This report structure mirrors the response form (a copy of which can be found in Appendix A) apart from Question 1 – the approach to Cambridge question - which is reported in Chapter 8, This has been reported together with the section on route alignments between Bedford and Cambridge as both questions relate to the same section of the proposed EWR line. The report is broken down in the following sections:

- Chapter 2: Comments on the customer experience and railway operations;
- Chapter 3: General comments on the overall East West Rail proposals;
- Chapter 4: Comments on Section A: Oxford to Bicester;
- Chapter 5: Comments on Section B: Bletchley and the Marston Vale Line;
- Chapter 6: Comments on Section C: Bedford;
- Chapter 7: Comments on the approach to Cambridge and Section D: Clapham Green to The Eversdens;
- Chapter 8: Comments on Section E: Harlton to Hauxton;
- Chapter 9: Comments on Section F: The Shelfords to Cambridge station; and
- Chapter 10: Comments related to the consultation process.

Responses to closed questions

Several of the questions asked respondents to rank proposed options from their most preferred to their least preferred option or concept using a numerical scale where "1" identifies their most preferred option, "2" would be their second preference and so on. To analyse the response data, scores were allocated to the different ranks. If an option or concept was selected as a first preference, it was given a score of 1, while a second preference was given a score of 2. The total score for each option or concept was then divided by the number of respondents offering a view on that option or concept to give an average ranking score. We have presented these in tables and charts in the relevant chapters. These are accompanied by a summary of the responses provided to open questions, which asked respondents to explain their ranking of the options or concepts presented.

Responses to open questions

This report summarises all the comments made in consultation responses. The summaries are structured by sentiment i.e., expressions of **support, concern,** and **suggestions**.

In order to indicate the weight of each summarised comment, relative to the other comments made in response to that question and the number of responses to other questions, the following quantifiers have been used.

- A few (1-5)
- A small number (6-10)
- Some (11-20)
- Several (21-40)
- Many (41-150)
- A considerable number (151-300)
- A substantial number (301-600)
- A large number (601-1,200)
- A very large number (1,201+)

Participation

In total this consultation received 9,775 responses. Table 1 below shows a breakdown of the number of responses received by response type.

Type of response	Number of responses
Online response form	6,479
Emails	2,285
Hardcopy letters	580
Hardcopy response form	431
Total	**9,775**

Table 1: Overall number of responses received by response channel

Table 2 below shows the number of responses received. Prospective statutory consultees includes responses from organisations such as Councils and statutory bodies.

Group	Online response form	Emails	Hardcopy letters	Hardcopy response form	Totals
Individual respondents	6,321	2,143	577	420	9,461
Prospective statutory consultees	38	63	2	6	109
Others	120	79	1	5	205
Total	**6,479**	**2,285**	**580**	**431**	**9,775**

Table 2: Responses received by respondent category and by response channel

Demographic information

The response form asked respondents to provide their name, address, the organisation they represent (if applicable), the capacity in which they were responding and their age range. This was to provide some wider context to the views expressed.

Respondent type

Respondents were asked to indicate the capacity in which they were responding to this consultation. 6,654 respondents provided a response to this question. The breakdown of these responses is shown in Figure 1 and Table 3

The majority (90.2%) indicated they were responding as a local resident. Of the remaining categories (9.8%), the largest categories were directly impacted land or property owners (2.8%) or 'other' (1.9%). Those who indicated 'other' included friends and relatives of local residents, a transport planner, a rail user group representative, a farmer, a land agent and owners of property in the local area.

Some respondents indicated they also belonged to another category, including local business owner, directly impacted land or property owner, elected representative, or local authority representative, or 'other' categories.

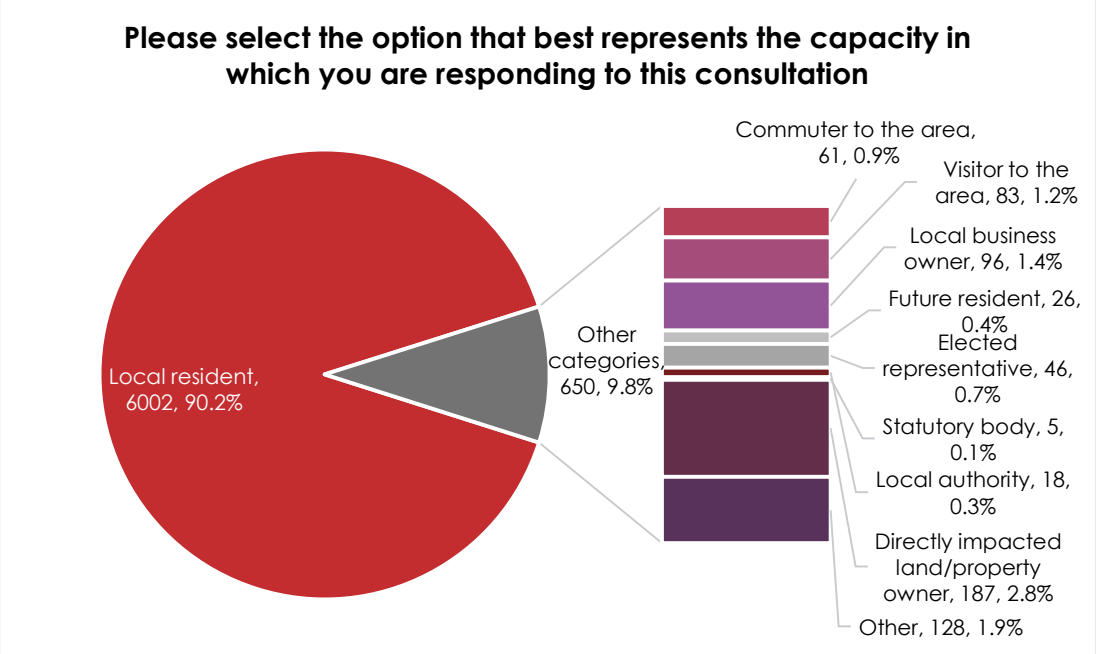

Figure 1: respondents by type (n=6,652)

Capacity person is responding as	Total responses
Local resident	6,002
Commuter to the area	61
Visitor to the area	83
Local business owner/business owner	97
Future resident	26
Elected representative	47
Local authority	18
Statutory body	5
Directly impacted land/property owner	187
Other	128
No response	3,123
Total	9,775

Table 3: Response count by type

Age

A total of 6,239 respondents specified their age range in their response. The majority (63.3%) indicated that they were between 35 and 65, with the remaining respondents indicating they were over 65 (25.8%) or between 19 and 34 (10.9%). No respondents indicated that they were 18 or under, however around a third of respondents did not provide information on their age.

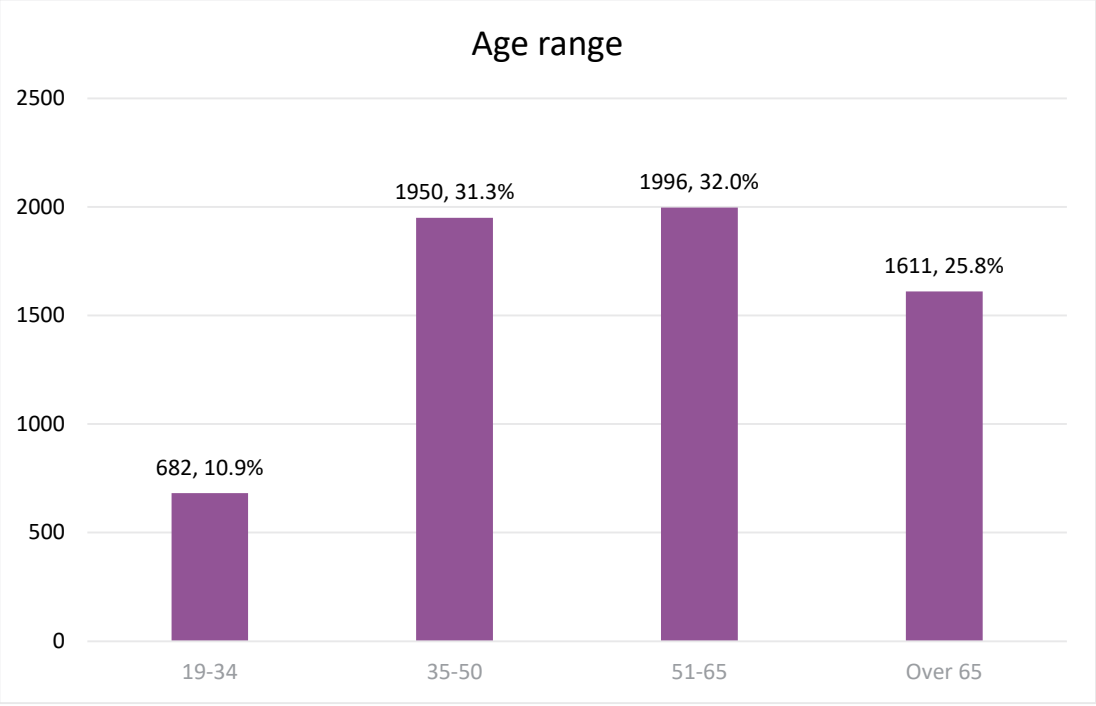

Figure 2: Respondent age range (n=6,239)

Age range	Total responses
19-34	682
35-50	1,950
51-65	1,996
Over 65	1,611
No response	3,536
Total	**9,775**

Table 4: Respondent age range

Geographical distribution of responses

Of the 9,775 responses received, 7,090 provided a postcode. These postcodes have been used to illustrate the maps in Figure 3 and Figure 4 (below), to give an indication of response volume by geographic area. The red shading indicates where more responses were received from.

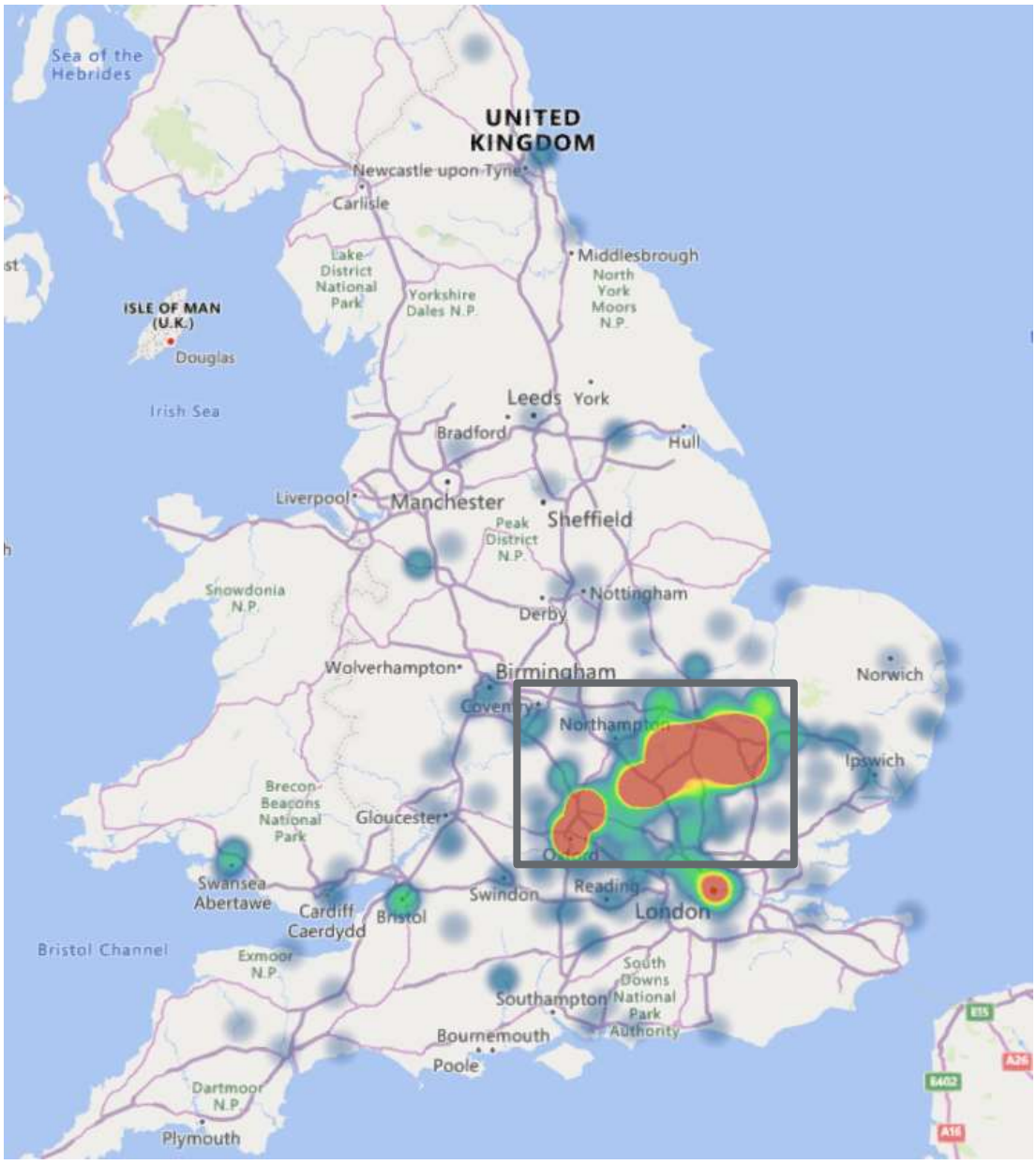

Figure 3: Geographical distribution of all responses with a valid UK postcode

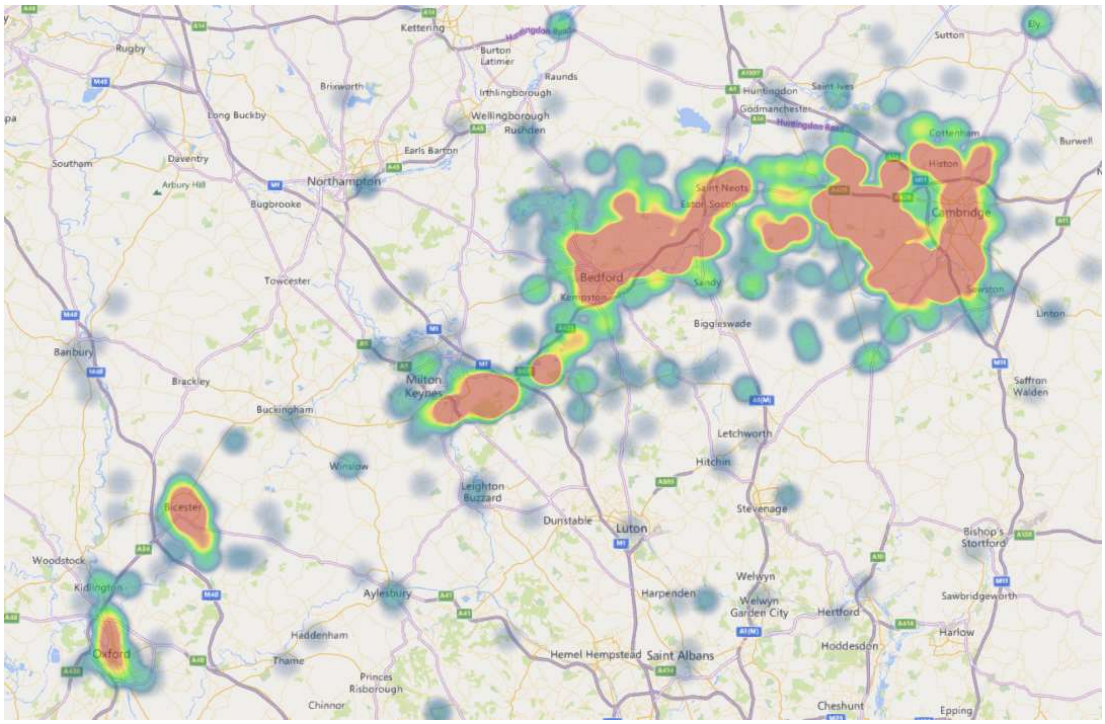

Figure 4: Geographical distribution of all responses with a valid UK postcode (Oxford to Cambridge)

Campaigns and petitions

The consultation received one petition - counted as one response – as recorded below:

- **Brickhill Liberal Democrats** organised a petition which received 229 signatories. These signatories suggest that EWR Co should use Alignment 1as it runs furthest from homes in Brickhill and has a lower environmental impact than Alignment 9. They also call on Bedford Borough Council to support Alignment 1.

The consultation received several coordinated responses, where respondents used similar terms, arguments, and phrases. The issues raised and common themes are recorded below:

- **Woburn Sands campaign**: Many respondents comment on the proposals regarding the Woburn Sands level crossing. They express concern about the impact of Option 1 (new road around Woburn Sands and new School Crossing bridge) as they feel it would lead to a severance of the village and impact green spaces, including Edgewick Farm and the Woburn Sands allotment. These comments are summarised in section 5.2.
- **Bedford For a Re Consultation** (BFARe) **campaign**: Several respondents comment on the impact the proposed route through Bedford could have on the town centre. Preference for a route that avoids Bedford town centre as much as possible was stated. These comments are summarised in section 6.4
- **Caldecote Council feedback guide**: Several respondents comment on the route alignments and the approach to Cambridge. They express

concern about alignments 1 and 9 due to the developments at Bourn Airfield and Bourn Quarter, as well as the route traveling north but then approaching Cambridge from the south. These comments are summarised in Chapter 7.

2. Customer experience and railway operations

Questions 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 asked respondents for their comments and views on the customer experience of the EWR railway.

These questions invited feedback on:

- Likely use of the EWR line and how EWR Co can encourage rail use;
- The station experience along the line;
- The on-train experience;
- Interactions with colleagues, both on the train and at stations; and
- What information should be shared with rail customers.

The table below shows the number of responses to each of the open questions in this section.

Question	Number of responses
Question 2: The train service	4,955
Question 3: Station experience	3,829
Question 4: On-train experience	3,460
Question 5: Interaction with colleagues	2,954
Question 6: Customer information	3,038

Table 5: Number of respondents directly answering each question

2.1. Comments on the train service

Question 2 asked respondents to share their views on customer experience and railway operations, particularly:

- How they might use EWR services, for example for work, to visit friends and family or for leisure;
- Suggestions for improvement based on experiences of rail travel in the United Kingdom;
- The reasons people do not currently travel by rail and what might persuade them to do so;
- How the entire journey could be improved, from planning trips and travelling to the station, to the rail journey itself and then travelling to their end destination; and
- How to support EWR's net-zero carbon ambitions through the delivery of services to customers, for example through station and train design or through forms of active travel such as cycling or walking.

Question 2 received 4,955 responses which are summarised below.

Carbon emissions

Many respondents would prefer EWR to have no net carbon impact and suggest electrifying the line. Several do not support the proposal to use diesel trains and a similar number suggest adopting environmentally friendly station design with solar panels, or trains powered by renewable energy to help offset carbon emissions.

Fares and ticketing

A large number of respondents believe train fares are very expensive. A considerable number of respondents ask that EWR's ticketing system is simplified in comparison to the current approach. Several respondents say there is a need for ticket discounts.

Many respondents believe online booking services are necessary and many support the idea of an app to book railway tickets. Several support using e-tickets instead of paper tickets. Some suggest having a seat reservation function when booking online.

Transport links

A substantial number of respondents agree that transport links to railway stations are vital for interchange and connectivity, and many respondents suggest using cycle lanes, public transport, and footpaths to create better connections from the train station to their homes.

Maintenance and reliability

A few respondents comment that maintenance works and engineering works are disruptive to those using railway services. A few other respondents dislike using replacement services during maintenance works.

A substantial number of respondents express concern over the unreliability of current rail services. A considerable number of respondents also state their desire for faster trains, whilst a similar number remark on the lack of trains and request a more regular railway service.

Current operators and nationalisation

Some respondents criticise current operating companies and others believe railway services should be nationalised.

Types of use

Many respondents favour the proposed EWR route as it avoids going through London and several respondents feel that the route would be quicker both for direct connections and onward journeys.

A substantial number of respondents remark they would use the railway to commute to work and that it would open up new job opportunities.

Many respondents support the new EWR line as it would allow local young people to commute to schools or universities.

A considerable number of respondents comment that they would use the

line frequently. Many state they would use it to travel to Cambridge, and a similar number said they would use it to travel to Oxford. Some respondents comment that they would use the railway to access local hospitals, including Addenbrooke's Hospital.

A small number of respondents state that they would prefer to use the railway over the X5 bus service (between Oxford and Cambridge). A few comment that it would reduce the time of their journeys.

A substantial number of respondents agree that they would use EWR for leisure purposes and for shopping purposes.

A substantial number of respondents comment that they would use the railway line to visit friends and families from towns and villages along the route.

A very large number of respondents state that they would not use the EWR service. Some reasons for this include: they do not need to commute to work, or they prefer commuting by other modes of transport; there are no planned stations near them; there are easier and quicker methods to travel to Cambridge or Oxford; the railway is expensive; and concerns about contracting Covid-19.

2.2. Comments on the station experience

Question 3 asked respondents for feedback on the station experience, particularly:

- How they would like their rail journey to link with other parts of their journey;
- How station forecourts and approaches can be designed to offer the most convenient access for walking, cycling and bus services;
- The facilities they would like to see at stations, both those that contribute to the overall journey experience and those that might serve a wider community purpose;
- If there are any particularly good examples of stations with good facilities, including those for connecting with other modes of transport (e.g. bus services);
- What could improve safety and security at stations;
- How could stations be designed to better manage customer flows around the station itself; and
- How to ensure inclusivity through accessibility at the station

Question 3 received 3,829 responses which are summarised below.

Station structure and design

Accessibility

Many respondents feel that stations should be easily accessible for people with disabilities, wheelchair users, people with pushchairs, and elderly people with limited mobility; citing stairs, lack of ramps and poor-quality lift services

as key accessibility barriers. Several respondents describe frustration at pre-arranging assistance for people with limited mobility at train stations, describing it as a demeaning experience. They suggest that station and train staff should be trained appropriately and there should be no expectation for people with disabilities to book in advance. Additionally, many respondents ask for permanent, gently sloping ramps; step-free access around the entire station; spacious lifts; lower signs and ticket machines; wide doors and paths; tactile paving and comfortable shared seating that is accessible to disabled people.

A small number of respondents are also concerned about the station experience for those with invisible disabilities, such as mental health conditions and deafness. Some respondents suggest that the whole project should be underpinned by design principles which acknowledge the needs of an increasingly ageing population.

Many respondents remark that well sized, reliable, and fast lift facilities are important for bikes, wheelchairs, and pushchairs. Respondents describe how unreliable station lifts put off certain rail users and suggest that passenger assistance should be provided if a lift is out of order. Additionally, a few respondents suggest that lifts near station entrances and exits would be useful.

Platform height

Many respondents suggest that there should be level access between trains and platforms, to make it easier for wheelchairs, bikes, and pushchairs to transfer between the two.

Wide ticket barriers

Some respondents ask for wide ticket barriers to be implemented at stations to allow cycles, wheelchairs, pushchairs, and luggage to pass through more easily.

Capacity

Many respondents comment on the need for increased capacity at train stations. For example, more space on platforms to allow commuters to stand at busy times and space to allow good ventilation. A few respondents remark that existing stations along the proposed route are already overcrowded and need increased capacity.

Station design

Some respondents say that platforms need to be wide enough to allow for large numbers of passengers at peak travel times. A few also mention the need for good quality platform surfaces without trip hazards.

A considerable number of respondents request that cycle and pushchair access is improved by removing steps, which could also help passengers with luggage. Several respondents suggest traffic flow regulation into and out of stations, including easily accessible drop-off points which could help to

reduce traffic obstructions. For example, they suggest separate entrances and exits similar to those at airports, which could help to regulate the flow of foot traffic throughout stations. They suggest that this could be of particular importance in the post-Covid-19 world. Quick access to trains and minimal walking distance around stations is a priority for some respondents, with many suggesting that connecting trains should arrive on the same or adjoining platforms. Additionally, some suggest the implementation of a 'slow lane' where people with disabilities, the elderly and those with limited mobility could move around the station at their own pace. A few respondents mention that last minute platform changes are challenging for deaf rail-users and should be avoided. Importantly, respondents ask that the EWR project is customer focused and aims to integrate with other transport systems in England to improve accessibility for all.

Environmentally conscious station design is important to a considerable number of respondents. They suggest thoughtful planting of appropriate trees, plants and flowers that encourage wildlife and improve biodiversity. Additionally, respondents prioritise carbon neutrality, suggesting stations should be built using carbon neutral materials and feature solar power panels to support EWR Co's net-zero ambitions. Many respondents comment that there is an opportunity to build both architecturally beautiful and functional stations.

Covered sections and weather protection

A considerable number of respondents mention the need for sufficient shelter from the weather throughout all stations, including over pedestrian walkways, bike storage areas, routes from bus stops to station entrances, and on platforms.

Information / announcements

Many respondents suggest that improvements can be made to information displays and announcements at train stations – the lack of clear information is a key concern. For example, respondents suggest that tactile maps and clear signage for the visually impaired could be beneficial, as well as presenting information in an easy-to-read font. Older passengers – who it is suggested might not be so comfortable with mobile technology and apps - could also benefit from clear information about cancellations or delays at the station. This also applies to deaf people, where information about delays solely communicated via audio announcement is inaccessible. Additionally, a few respondents suggest that signs could be available in more than one language and that customer information could be conveyed in a similar way to the London Underground.

On-station facilities

Waste and cleanliness

Several respondents request that stations have sufficient recycling facilities available, such as waste sorting bins for different materials. Some ask for

more bins to be provided in general, while a small number suggest that everything sold in the station should either be recyclable or compostable with no single use coffee cups available.

The cleanliness of stations is a concern for many respondents, such as the standard of hygiene in toilets and the general condition of stations.

Refreshments

A considerable number of respondents highlight the need for refreshments at train stations. Several also request that there are freshwater taps/drinking fountains freely accessible at all stations. Some respondents suggest that local businesses be given the opportunity to sell their refreshments at stations while others ask for mini food halls, like M&S or Waitrose. Additionally, some emphasise the need for healthy food options to be available while others prioritise fast food options. A small number suggest that catering outlets should be near platforms to minimise the risk of missing trains, while a few suggest the inclusion of pubs and/or restaurants would help to turn stations into destinations.

Shops

A considerable number of respondents make suggestions for shops and services they'd like to see at EWR stations, including newsagents; post offices; health services; card shops; bike repair shops; cash machines and supermarkets. Additionally, many say they would like to see independent and locally run shops.

WIFI

Several respondents suggest that free WIFI should be accessible throughout all stations. A few emphasise the need for strong connections and a quick login process.

Toilets / showers

A substantial number of respondents request more toilet facilities at train stations, which are free, clean, a decent size, accessible for all and available 24 hours a day. Many of these respondents also suggest gender neutral bathrooms should be available, while several others ask for toilet facilities to be provided on both the concourse and platforms. A few other respondents request access to showers, changing and baby facilities.

Current experience

Several respondents state that the current station experience is satisfactory. A few mention Woburn Sands, Royston, and Cambridge Central station as good examples, while others cite London St Pancras as a station to emulate.

Some respondents remark that the station experience is less relevant, with a few suggesting that the focus instead needs to be on train services.

Ticketing facilities

Ticket facilities are a concern for a considerable number of respondents. Many prefer staffed ticket halls, enjoying the human interaction; while others prefer ticket machines. Additionally, many respondents say more ticket machines are needed but are concerned that they can be unreliable. Respondents also express frustration that ticket machines can be difficult to use, suggesting multiple language options are needed and that the machines should be placed in the shade, so they are easy to read, with an easy user interface design. In particular, respondents emphasise that regardless of purchase method, buying train tickets should be a quick and easy process.

Timetables

Several respondents request clear information about timetables, particularly in relation to platforms and routes. They also ask that information is continuously updated via working, digital sign boards.

Safety

CCTV

Appropriate CCTV at all train stations is requested by many respondents, to protect vulnerable adults, children, and women; private property, like bikes; and to prevent petty crime. Several also suggest that the CCTV should be monitored continuously.

First and last mile

A small number of respondents voice safety concerns connected to approaching and leaving train stations (the 'first and last mile'), specifically insufficient lighting. Respondents also mention feeling safer when leaving a station that is busy. Additionally, a few respondents find station car parks unpleasant experiences, that are often not well lit. There are also requests to make station layouts and the approaches to stations safe and enjoyable for cyclists and pedestrians.

Fully gated

Some respondents request secure and gated stations. For example, all stations should have automatic ticket barriers to help prevent ticket fraud.

Lighting

A considerable number of respondents ask for good lighting in and around train stations, particularly in relation to security concerns at night. There are also requests for well-lit pedestrian crossings and car parks around the station. A small number suggest energy efficient lighting which also minimises light pollution.

Trespass and suicide prevention

A small number of respondents express concern about the potential for suicides to take place at stations. To mitigate this, they suggest: sufficient

barriers to prevent people jumping onto the tracks; not extending platforms too far beyond sight of other passengers and colleagues; and other suicide prevention measures like Samaritans posters, phones, and trained staff.

Other comments on safety

Many respondents mention feeling generally unsafe at stations, especially at night. Concerns focus particularly on women travelling alone and children. Additionally, a few respondents recommend: considering potential terror attacks at stations; increasing secure bike sheds for storage; emergency phones on platforms and wall mounted defibrillators.

Transport to and from the station

Bike/e-scooter hire

Several respondents suggest that bike and e-scooter hire is provided in main city destinations to help to encourage train use.

Bike parking

A large number of respondents request plentiful, free, and secure bike storage facilities, including covered bike parking. Many say that if more secure facilities were available, this could encourage more people to cycle, and in turn would help EWR achieve its net-zero target. Additionally, many respondents cite Amsterdam as an excellent example of good cycle facilities, where bikes are integrated into the wider transport infrastructure. Respondents also highlight the need for bike racks that cannot be unbolted from the ground, such as Sheffield bike stands that are concreted into the ground. Bike theft is a concern for many respondents, citing Cambridge North station as an example of where this is a problem. They suggest that 24-hour lighting on motion detectors and staffed CCTV would help combat this. Several respondents suggest that the whole process from bike parking to catching a train should take no longer than 5-10 minutes. In addition, some respondents request charging points for electric bikes.

Cycle routes

A substantial number of respondents request the prioritisation of cycle paths, suggesting that cycle routes could run adjacent to the train line. This would help to connect local areas to the station and encourage active travel, which could also help to support EWR Co's net-zero emissions ambitions. Additionally, many request that the cycle paths are well sign-posted and are lit at night.

Bus services

A substantial number of respondents comment on the importance of decent bus services, integrated with other transport links – suggestions include coordinating buses with train times and a 24-hour service. Many respondents also comment on the need for bus services to better serve rural areas, which could help to support EWR Co's net-zero carbon ambitions by reducing reliance on cars. Furthermore, many remark on the importance of frequent

services and that bus stops should be situated outside stations and easily accessible. Several others suggest either a park and ride bus service or the use of electric buses.

Adequate car parking

A large number of respondents comment on the need for ample car parking at stations, with many citing inadequate parking facilities at existing stations. Suggestions include creating multi-storey car parks to avoid parking in local residential streets and providing sufficient disabled parking. Whilst many respondents say that parking is necessary for people who cannot commute to the station via other means of transport, and that unless there is adequate parking, they will not use rail services, several others voice concern about an increase in parking as this could hinder EWR Co's net-zero carbon emissions target.

Car park pricing

A substantial number of respondents state that car park pricing needs to be reviewed and is too expensive given the service provided. Many suggest free or discounted parking for those travelling by train. A few suggest that fairer prices may encourage more rail use.

Electric vehicle charging

Many respondents request sufficient electric car charging points, especially as new petrol and diesel cars will no longer be sold from 2030.

Pick-up and drop-off

Many respondents state the need for accessible, spacious pick-up and drop-off areas that are free of charge. A few respondents suggest 'kiss and drop' style zones.

Access and interchange

A substantial number of respondents comment on the need for stations to be designed to easily connect with other modes of public transport. Many respondents suggest that cycling, walking, driving, and bus routes surrounding stations need to be improved to encourage the use of trains. Many also request that stations are within walking distance of town centres, with flexible forecourt space that will enable connection with other forms of transport.

Local traffic management

Many respondents suggest methods for local traffic management, such as parkway stations to keep traffic out of town centres; traffic calming measures on the approach to stations to make it safer for pedestrians; and one-way traffic flows at stations. Additionally, several comment on the need to separate buses, cars, cyclists, and pedestrians on the approach to the station. Keeping traffic to main roads, to avoid 'rat running' (the use of residential or smaller roads or other unintended short cuts instead of a main

road or route) is also a concern for some respondents.

Prioritising non-car methods

A considerable number of respondents voice support for prioritising non-car methods of transport to the station; with many suggesting that sustainable and active forms of travel are encouraged. They also comment that public transport needs to be cheap enough to encourage people to leave their cars at home. Several respondents suggest moving taxi ranks away from station entrances, replacing them with bus stops and bike storage facilities.

Taxi and car hire

Easy access to taxis is a priority for many respondents. Suggestions include better forecourts for taxis, which are closer to station entrances. However, a few respondents suggest that taxis cause congestion at stations and should turn their engines off rather than idling.

Walking

A considerable number of respondents mention they would like to be able to walk to EWR stations and that they would consider using trains more frequently if there were suitable footpaths.

Equestrian

A few respondents ask that existing travel routes that allow equestrian access are retained and enhanced if possible, ensuring riders are not hindered by further developments around stations.

2.3. Comments on the on-train experience

Question 4 asked for feedback about the on-train experience, particularly:

- How to create an engaging environment that suits the unique needs of customers, for example working; relaxing or being entertained;
- How to create a clean, safe, and secure environment for passengers and their belongings;
- What facilities and services would provide the optimal train experience for customers on the EWR route;
- What types of areas/spaces would they like to see on EWR trains other than seating and standing space;
- What on-train experiences might encourage customers to switch to rail from other modes of transport;
- If there are any examples of good seating layouts or on-train facilities from the United Kingdom or abroad;
- How to consider sustainability in the on-train environment; and
- How the on-train environment can support customers' wellbeing throughout their journey.

Question 4 received 3,460 responses which are summarised below.

Inclusivity

Many respondents suggest special design considerations for wheelchair access. Several suggest priority seating for pregnant people and the elderly; space for pushchairs; and adequate seating for people with disabilities. A similar number mention the need to consider access and usability for individuals with visual and hearing impairment.

Some respondents ask that facilities such as toilets and luggage areas are easily accessible to all. A few suggest the need for on-train ramps with these ramps being automated for easy access and autonomous use, with a similar number asking for on-train colleagues to support these needs.

A few suggest a carriage or other area for pets to travel with their owners.

Cycle access and storage

Respondents say accessibility for bikes is important, with a considerable number requesting enough space to bring bikes of all sizes onboard. Many respondents say that on-train storage or racks for bikes are safe and secure. Access to carriages exclusively for bikes is a priority for several respondents.

A small number of respondents suggest pre-booking spaces for bikes would be useful. However, others suggest that reservations are unnecessary if adequate spaces are provided, as this would overcomplicate travel planning.

Waste and cleanliness

Many respondents comment on the need for waste and recycling bins on the EWR trains several respondents adding that this would be required to help make travel sustainable. Several highlight that well-positioned bins would help reduce littering on board. A small number of respondents express concern about littering, with a few suggesting that those responsible should be fined.

Several respondents ask that bins are regularly emptied, and a small number suggest that larger bins would help keep up with demand during peak travel times.

Many respondents refer to the cleanliness of trains, with several suggesting that regular cleaning of carriages (including seats, windows, and bathrooms) is important. Many others raise the importance of hand sanitiser dispensers, particularly during Covid-19.

Seating capacity and passenger space

Respondents express concern about seating capacity. A considerable number believe there would be overcrowding during peak commuting hours. Many of these respondents claim that insufficient seating capacity on board may mean people have to stand during journeys. Some respondents express particular concern about how overcrowding might affect elderly people.

Several respondents suggest that overall space on trains is important, with some suggesting the need for appropriate space for passengers to move around freely and sufficient legroom for taller passengers. A few others suggest ample space is provided around doors, for standing. A few respondents state well-spaced seating is needed to maintain social distancing in relation to Covid-19.

Several respondents suggest using double decker trains to accommodate demand during peak hours and a few say more carriages are needed. However, several other respondents believe that the current train capacity is adequate, stating that the pandemic has led to many people working remotely, resulting in a reduced demand for rail services.

Safety

Many respondents express the need for reliable and high-quality CCTV on board for the safety of passengers. Several respondents raise safety concerns for women travelling at night.

Some respondents suggest that on-board security staff would offer a safe environment and combat anti-social behaviour, with a similar number suggesting the need for an emergency/panic button to alert staff. A small number highlight open carriages as useful for visibility and safety.

A few respondents suggest handle straps for use when standing to improve safety.

Families and children

Several respondents suggest dedicated family carriages to avoid noise bothering other passengers. A small number of respondents ask for an integrated play area for young children, with a similar number requesting adequate space for pushchairs. A few respondents suggest integrated entertainment systems, such as televisions; and others say that carriages should include tables so that groups can sit together. A few others ask for baby changing and breast-feeding facilities on board.

Carriage classes

Some respondents feel that first class carriages are unnecessary as they are often used less and potentially take space away from standard class seating. They suggest that standard seating across the train would help manage demand during short journeys.

Passenger comfort

A few respondents ask for a safe and efficient journey without anti-social behaviour, particularly alcohol consumption and smoking. Others suggest passenger comfort should be a priority. A similar number voice concern about the level of noise made by trains potentially impacting on health.

A considerable number of respondents express the need for comfortable, spacious seats. Many respondents suggest stowable tables on seat backs;

with a similar number asking for large windows, aligned with seats, to better experience the view whilst travelling.

The importance of adequate ventilation and climate control on board is highlighted by a considerable number of respondents. Most of these respondents suggest air conditioning and heating should be used to maintain a comfortable temperature on board. Some respondents suggest having windows that open (in light of the pandemic) would support the wellbeing of passengers.

On-train information and ticket purchase

Many respondents state the need for adequate signage for reserved seats as well as well-lit, easily visible journey information.

A few respondents suggest information about local attractions is provided on board, particularly for tourists travelling between Oxford and Cambridge. A similar number suggest a ticket office could be made available on board.

Power and internet connectivity

A substantial number of respondents state the importance of access to power sockets, in particular 240V plug sockets and USB charging points. The majority of these respondents feel these should be available at every seat, with a few suggesting that contactless charging would also be useful, and a few others proposing charging points for e-bikes and e-scooters.

A large number of respondents comment on the need for high quality, secure and easily accessible Wi-Fi throughout the train. A substantial number of these respondents also mention that Wi-Fi and seats with tables are particularly useful for those who wish to work on long train journeys. Some respondents suggest more space is provided for working on board such as dedicated carriages. Some respondents remark that access to 5G for Wi-Fi is inadequate, and others suggest strong mobile phone coverage would be useful in order to take calls when going through tunnels. A few respondents suggest that morning radio or news should be played on board.

Quiet carriages

The importance of dedicated quiet carriages is expressed by a considerable number of respondents. The majority suggest that distractions should be minimised, for example no phone calls, regular announcements, or alcohol consumption. This being particularly useful for those who wish to read or work during their journeys.

Catering

A substantial number of respondents would like on-board refreshments services providing food and drinks. The majority of these respondents suggest the refreshment service is delivered in the form of a café, trolley service, bar or buffet. A few say that access to a water point would be useful, whilst others suggest an on-board vending machine.

Luggage and storage space

A substantial number of respondents highlight the importance of luggage space, and some request space to store pushchairs and bikes. Others say that storage close to seats provides security for belongings. A few respondents say that overhead storage can be difficult, and that under seat storage for small items could be better. A few other respondents suggest lockers for storing smaller items.

Toilets

A substantial number of respondents stress the importance of having toilets available on board, suggesting that they should be available in all classes, and should be cleaned regularly. Some respondents highlight the need for accessible toilets.

Sustainability

Many respondents ask that eco-friendly materials are used for serving refreshments and that packaging is biodegradable or recyclable. Some respondents suggest encouraging people to travel with reusable cups, and others suggest avoiding single use plastic items altogether.

Current on-train experience

A small number of respondents say they think that the current on-train experience is satisfactory. Others feel that on-train experience is not an important factor when travelling without giving further details.

2.4. Comments on interaction with staff

Question 5 invited feedback on interaction with station and train staff, particularly:

- What attitudes and behaviours they would like to see EWR staff display to make the customer experience a positive one, whether this involves contact online, over the phone, at the station or on the train; and
- How and where they would like to have access to staff members on their journey and why, either in relation to virtual support or face to face contact.

Question 5 received 2,954 responses which are summarised below.

Staff availability

In stations

A substantial number of respondents would like staff to be available at stations to provide information about journeys or to help in other ways. Safety is a priority for many, who state that the presence of staff at stations is reassuring. A few respondents request that stations have a staff presence at all times for safety reasons. Many respondents say they prefer human interaction over virtual or automated interaction, with several respondents saying they prefer to buy their tickets in person. Several respondents mention

they would like a staff member to be available to help if they experience difficulties with ticket machines.

On-train

A substantial number of respondents comment on staff availability on trains. For many, the presence of staff members, other than drivers, who are available to provide information or to assist with problems (such as anti-social behaviour or customers feeling unwell) is a priority. A similar number of respondents believe the availability of staff on trains is important for security and safety, particularly on early and late services. Some mention that there should be multiple staff members walking through trains. A small number of respondents suggest providing a way of contacting an on-board staff member virtually, without having to press an emergency button.

Virtual interaction

Many respondents discuss virtual methods of interaction with staff while making journeys, with suggested methods including a dedicated app, online live chat, a telephone number, text, and train carriage intercom. Several respondents express support for online services such as service updates and ticket booking services. Some respondents stress the importance of a mix of face-to-face and virtual interaction. A few respondents express frustration at forms of virtual interaction, such as automated phone menus when calling an information line, and do not favour virtual interaction.

Support for disabled people

Staff who can provide support for disabled people are important for many respondents. Several respondents suggest that if stations and trains are well staffed, they could provide assistance to disabled people, for example with luggage or when boarding trains. Disability training for staff was a priority for some respondents. A few respondents mention the importance of having dedicated staff for disabled people.

On-train staff

A small number of respondents say that they would like on-train staff to be more understanding towards passengers who forget travel passes or who were unable to purchase a ticket at a station and say that it should be possible to purchase tickets on trains. A few respondents comment on train announcements, saying they should be clearer or less frequent.

No need for staff

Many respondents believe that there is little need for face-to-face interaction during journeys, with some saying they would prefer virtual interaction and automated systems; and some saying they would rather not interact with other people at all during their journey. A few respondents recommend using driverless trains for reasons such as lower running costs and train punctuality. Some argue that face-to-face interaction is only needed in certain areas, such as customer service points in stations, when making

purchases on board a train, and ticket inspection.

Attitudes and behaviour

Friendly and polite

Many respondents mention the importance of staff being friendly, welcoming, pleasant, and polite during their interactions with customers. Some respondents mention that they would like staff members to show a sense of humour. A small number of respondents give examples of places or businesses with friendly customer service that EWR should aim to emulate, such as the staff who work for London North Eastern Railway (LNER) and staff at Shelford station.

Competent and knowledgeable

Many respondents stress the importance of colleagues being knowledgeable or helpful in their interactions with customers. A few respondents specify that staff on telephone lines should be able to answer customer queries or direct them to the appropriate information.

Proactive and confident

Many respondents say that they would like staff to be proactive and confident in solving problems. Some respondents say that they would like staff to confidently enforce rules. A small number of respondents say that they would like staff to help with alternative forms of transport for customers affected by service disruption.

Strong communicators

Several respondents believe that staff should listen attentively to customer concerns and communicate in an informative, friendly, and professional way. Staff being patient and understanding when talking to customers, who may be stressed or confused, is important to a few; as is good communication in the event of a delay.

Equality and inclusion

Some respondents mention that promoting inclusive conduct among staff is important. Concerns include ensuring that staff have sufficient diversity and inclusion training; recognise that not all disabilities are visible; and treat all customers with respect.

Honest and transparent

A small number of respondents say that they would like staff to be open and honest.

Working conditions and diversity

Wages and working conditions

Some respondents make recommendations related to the wages or working conditions of staff, such as ensuring good rates of pay; providing mental health support; ensuring that colleagues are treated well by their managers;

ensuring colleagues feel valued and proud of their work; offering good training to staff; and offering fair employment and promotion opportunities to certain groups, such as young people or people with disabilities. Some suggest enforcing strict penalties against those who are rude to staff.

Diversity

A few respondents say that it would be good for the staff to be diverse, as this could make them more approachable.

Current experience

Positive feedback

Many respondents express satisfaction with their current experience of interactions with staff during rail journeys. Most praise railway staff for being helpful, friendly, hard-working, and polite.

Criticism

Several respondents criticise their current experience of interaction with staff during rail journeys. Criticisms include staff being rude, unhelpful, or insensitive. Other criticisms include poor enforcement of rules; concern about inadequate information being available to station staff; and criticism of rail services in general.

Other comments

Many respondents want staff members to be readily available to offer assistance and information to customers. Face-to-face interaction is important for many respondents, with several specifically expressing a preference for this over virtual or automated interaction. Several respondents mention that staff should be visible and easy to recognise. Some respondents comment that on existing services, staff presence is important for reasons of safety. Some respondents are concerned that a lack of staff can pose potential difficulties for customers, including the inability to find someone who can provide help and potential difficulties for those who lack digital skills.

2.5. Comments on customer information

Question 6 invited feedback on providing information to customers, particularly:

- What sort of information they find most critical when making a train journey;
- The best way to share travel information with customers as they arrive at the station or on the train;
- If there are other types of travel information not directly related to the train journey that would be helpful for EWR to provide before or during a journey; and
- How EWR could provide better or different customer information to help customers feel more relaxed and in control throughout their journey.

Question 6 received 3,038 responses which are summarised below.

Types of information

Live information

A large number of respondents highlight the importance of having up-to-date information about train services, potentially through a live route tracker using GPS technology, which could collect and share accurate information on estimated arrival times and delays. Many respondents ask for accurate information about seat availability on trains and several request information about the capacity, location, and cost of station car parking. Some respondents request large and visible clocks in each station.

Ticket and price information

A considerable number of respondents ask for clarity on ticket pricing and validity for different journeys.

Platform information

A substantial number of respondents request clear information about platforms is made available in advance of departure, such as how to get to platforms and how long it may take; platform changes; and where to stand on the platform in order to board the train at the correct carriage. These respondents also ask for clear information on the impact of delayed trains on further connections.

Other modes and interchange information

Many respondents ask for travel information for onward journeys via other modes of transport, including appropriate signage; timetables; online updates; local route maps for those without access to technology; and information on available facilities. Many respondents would like information on the fastest travel options for reaching popular destinations. Several respondents ask for information to be made available about amenities at stations, including opening and closing times; toilets; waiting rooms; and space for car and bike parking. A few respondents also suggest having comparative information on the speed of rail against other modes of transport to encourage more people to use trains.

Information about on-train facilities

Several respondents want information to be available about on-train facilities, such as: at-seat power sockets; Wi-Fi; refreshments; location and accessibility of toilets; storage; seat availability; and seat types such as forward or backward facing.

Other information

Other information requests made by respondents include:

- Many propose maps of the local area and tourist attraction information in stations;
- Several request information on the weather forecast in upcoming

locations;
- Some suggest providing screens to enable passengers to watch the news whilst on trains;
- A small number ask that information on traffic conditions in the vicinity of destination stations be made available;
- A small number request information about the carbon footprint and environmental impact that is being saved by travelling by train; and
- A few ask that information about how to travel safely is made available prior to travel.

Information delivery

Online and electronic

A substantial number of respondents suggest that customers could be notified about service changes by text, email, or app. These respondents also suggest a website to provide information about travel with real time tracking of trains, an online ticket booking service, and a chat bot for help. These same respondents suggest using QR codes as ticket replacements whilst recognising that this would require internet access on trains and in stations. In this regard, a few respondents highlight that not all customers will have access to technology and therefore alternatives would need to be available.

Within stations

A substantial number of respondents suggest having both internal and external information boards providing travel information, such as in car parks, on printed leaflets and at an information desk. In addition, clear signage showing the station layout should be available to ease navigation around stations, along with connecting platform and onward travel information with departure and arrival times. A considerable number of respondents ask for clear, readable, simple, informative, and sufficient signage.

On trains

A substantial number of respondents suggest that on-train information is provided via overhead signs showing information about on-train facilities; live route maps; and both visual and audible information on arrival times and upcoming stations. There should be clear information on carriages for services that may split on the journey.

Inclusivity

For accessibility, several respondents suggest braille; visual and audible announcements; textured walkways; multilingual information desks; clear signs that are accessible for neuro-divergent people as well as those who are colour blind; a mix of automated and in-person services; and fully accessible access to stations and trains for those with physical disabilities.

Satisfaction with current practices

Many respondents state that they have no strong views as they are satisfied with current practices for customer information.

Other comments on information delivery

A substantial number of respondents request that, in general, information is regularly updated, easy to access and accurate. Respondents ask that information is provided in advance of arriving at the station to prevent rushing to alight the train. Many respondents ask that announcements are clear, provide ample information about delays and cancellations, and that the announcements do not include unnecessary information and are not intrusive. A few respondents ask that the term 'passenger' is used rather than 'customer' when referring to station and train users. A few respondents ask for ease of access to information concerning refunds.

3. General comments about the East West Rail project

A very large number of respondents provide comments about the EWR project as a whole, as is summarised below. Where respondents have raised comments about potential impacts that are specific to a proposed route or alignment, these comments are reported in the appropriate section of this document.

Support

Many respondents express their general support for EWR Co's plans to construct a new line. Several other respondents suggest the proposed line should begin construction as soon as possible.

Environment and carbon

Many respondents express support for a possible reduction in carbon emissions from HGV and car use as a result of EWR providing better access to rail services.

Some respondents comment that the project could help the nation reach net-zero goals. A small number of respondents say that the new line would be environmentally friendly without being specific.

Improved access to employment

Some respondents think that a new railway would improve access to employment for commuters, reducing the need for a car. A similar number of other respondents believe that the proposals could offer a faster and more direct commute.

A few people express their support for the proposals because they could result in a cheaper and more environmentally friendly commute.

Freight

Several respondents make general comments of support for freight use on the proposed route. A small number of these respondents argue that freight use on the line should be pushed to maximum capacity.

Economic benefits

Many respondents support the perceived economic benefits that could arise from the development of EWR. They believe the project could support local and regional economic growth, encouraging investment and business interaction across the Oxford-Cambridge region; creating jobs; boosting housing development; encouraging tourism; and increasing connectivity to employment opportunities in cities. A few respondents comment that EWR may facilitate expansion of the "knowledge economy", and a few believe that EWR may counter potential negative economic impacts on the east of England from the HS2 development.

Traffic reduction

Several respondents think that the proposal would help to reduce road traffic. Some of these respondents state that many of the villages along the route have congested roads, and the proposed railway line would help alleviate this by encouraging train use. A few respondents say that they avoid travelling into Cambridge due to traffic, and say that if the proposals reduced traffic, they would be more likely to travel to Cambridge by car.

Route E

Several respondents support Route E. Some of these respondents claim this is a better option to the other options previously put forward. A few respondents comment that they are looking forward to the opportunities that the railway (through Route E) will bring. A few respondents also remark that Route E will best serve residents of Bedford, connecting them to Oxford and Cambridge.

Fast and convenient connections

A substantial number of respondents support the idea of a fast, convenient line between Oxford and Cambridge, and a small number say that the EWR route will be far quicker and smoother by rail than by road. Some respondents feel this line will encourage travel to leisure destinations and research sites along the route. A few respondents feel connections across country via Bletchley are beneficial as it potentially enables alternative routes to London and faster links to Luton Airport. A few other respondents believe that the proposals would increase ease of access to Great North Eastern Railway (GNER) trains north of Peterborough. Likewise, one respondent suggests that this proposal would provide better connectivity to Bury St Edmunds, Norwich, and Ipswich. Some respondents feel the proposals offer a much faster alternative to travelling to the west. Several respondents express support for much needed links to the east and west of England. One respondent feels that increased connectivity has been instrumental in the economic growth of Milton Keynes.

Property value

A few respondents believe that house prices in the areas being served by EWR will increase because these areas will become more desirable.

Concern

Project

A large number of respondents oppose the EWR project. A substantial number of these respondents request that the line not be built and ask for the plans to be dropped. Many believe the railway line is not needed or wanted by the general public, with several of these respondents claiming it would not provide any benefit to local residents; and a small number rejecting all options previously put forward by EWR Co. A small number draw comparisons between EWR and HS2, arguing that neither are supported by the general

public.

Need and demand

A very large number of respondents question whether there is still a need for EWR to be built and operated. Many of these respondents comment in general terms saying there is "no need" or that "the business case is not proven".

The majority of respondents who question the need for EWR suggest that the economic viability relies upon commuters using the route and feel that commuter numbers are likely to change as a result of changing work patterns and increased homeworking following the Covid-19 pandemic. Some of these respondents question whether EWR Co has revised the expected passenger demand in light of the pandemic. Several respondents feel that Cambridge and Oxford universities will collaborate via technology in the future, reducing demand for travel.

Some respondents feel that there are already strong road connections along the route and question why a rail line would be needed.

A large number of respondents feel that cars and vans are more convenient for most people because they provide door-to-door transport; and a considerable number say that car travel is cheaper and more convenient than rail. Some respondents who say that car travel is more convenient feel they would experience the negative impacts of EWR rather than any benefits. Other aspects people feel make cars more convenient include:

- Storage space;
- Less risk of transmitting contagious diseases such as Covid-19;
- The cost of parking at train stations; and
- Recent investment into road infrastructure making the routes convenient for drivers.

Several respondents also comment that electric vehicles will mean that public transport will be no better for the environment than private vehicles, which they feel negates the carbon benefit of the project.

Route E

A very large number of respondents do not support Route E being proposed as the preferred route option by EWR Co. Many respondents request that Route E be reconsidered, mentioning potential environmental impact, particularly through Bedford. Several respondents oppose the route due to certain areas the line would pass through, for example Brickhill, Clapham and The Eversdens. Some respondents think that it is a waste of money. A few respondents suggest returning to the alternative options previously put forward by EWR Co, referring to Route A as a more sensible route, running through flatter terrain.

Rights of way

A small number of respondents express concern about the need to preserve

current rights of way; with the majority concerned that existing routes might be altered; and that equestrians, pedestrians, and cyclists could be impacted. A few respondents say that if rights of way are changed, the historic routes should be protected.

Traffic and congestion

Many respondents express concern over the potential increase in traffic on nearby roads as a result of the new railway line and the diversion of traffic. Several respondents claim that the local roads along the proposed route are congested, and that the introduction of the new railway would exacerbate this. A small number of these respondents also say that minor village roads are not suitable for large amounts of traffic.

A few respondents express concern about traffic impacts during construction, claiming this would cause disruption for several years.

A few respondents express concern that additional congestion on roads could increase the risk of accidents, particularly for children travelling to and from school. A few respondents remark that additional traffic would be created by a greater number of people driving to stations at peak times, negatively impacting commuters, as well as local people wanting to access EWR.

A few others express concern about the potential noise and pollution from increased traffic and congestion.

Construction

Some respondents express general concern about the construction process. A small number of other respondents voice their concern about the environmental impact of using large amounts of concrete.

Property and property value

Some respondents are concerned about the impact the potential demolition of residential properties could have on effected residents. A few others say that their mental and physical health would be impacted if their homes were to be taken.

A small number of respondents express concern that their properties could be devalued.

Impact on other train services

A small number of respondents express concern that a new line could interfere with existing services, especially those serving small communities. A similar number express concern that Sandy station and Bedford station may have to close; that services may reduce at Fulbourn station and Cherry Hinton station; and that the construction of EWR could disrupt existing services to London.

Local community impact

A large number of respondents express concern about the impact of this project on the local community. Many respondents feel the construction of a new railway would make local areas less safe and clean. Many other respondents are concerned about loss of rural land and countryside that are used for recreation. Some respondents state the proposals would potentially impact the physical and mental health of local residents. Some other respondents feel that construction would create noise and disruption for local communities. A few respondents express concern about the route dividing communities and villages.

Some respondents think that if stations are built close to existing homes, residential parking may be used by commuters.

A substantial number of respondents feel the proposals do not benefit the surrounding communities at all.

Freight

A substantial number of respondents feel that residents living along the EWR route do not want freight trains to use it and question why the potential use of the line for freight was not mentioned during previous consultations. Some respondents feel the proposed route is unsuitable for freight because it travels through small villages and rural areas. Respondents voice concern that freight trains could lead to noise, air pollution and vibrations; and that they would operate more frequently at night, creating disturbance.

A considerable number of respondents suggest that if EWR is to be used for freight then a wider reassessment and separate discussion is needed. Some respondents think that passenger numbers will be lower than predicted by EWR Co, and that therefore more freight trains would be likely to use the line to maximise capacity. Several respondents say that at previous stages of consultation, it had not been said that the line would be used for freight, and this is felt to have been misleading.

Diesel trains and electrification

A very large number of respondents comment on the potential use of diesel trains on the line, with many suggesting the line should be electrified from the outset. Alongside general concerns about diesel trains, other issues raised include:

- Use of diesel runs counter to net-zero carbon emission targets;
- Electrification is necessary as diesel trains are due to be removed from service by 2040;
- Impacts of air pollution from diesel trains, particularly on young children where the proposed line runs close to local schools;
- Increased noise pollution from diesel trains;
- Diesel is a less efficient fuel than more renewable alternatives;
- Negative impacts on the health of people living nearby; and
- A less appealing visual appearance of the trains.

Environment, noise, and air quality

A substantial number of respondents comment on the perceived overall environmental impact of EWR and the need for this to be minimised as much as possible.

A substantial number of respondents comment more specifically about the potential carbon emissions the project. Many of these feel that the carbon cost of constructing EWR has not been included in emissions projections, before factoring in those generated through operation. They feel that a further carbon emissions impact assessment is needed.

Some respondents feel the proposed selection of Route E makes the challenge of creating a carbon neutral railway even more complex because gradient changes and other challenges along this route would require more energy use for construction and operation than an alternative, flatter route. Several of these respondents feel that proposals to use more rural land, and to increase tracks at various points along the route, would result in a greater carbon cost than currently anticipated. Other concerns about how EWR could impact net-zero targets include:

- Future emissions from new developments along the route;
- Bisecting rural communities would increase car travel and reduce travel by foot; and
- Vehicles idling at level crossings would contribute to increased emissions.

A considerable number of respondents express concern that the countryside and visual landscape would be negatively impacted by EWR, Respondents feel that green spaces are important for people's mental health and are concerned about the landscape being irreversibly altered.

Some respondents feel that elements of constructions such as viaducts and embankments would have a negative legacy.

A considerable number of respondents express concern about the level of noise that would result from EWR, comparing the current quiet rural nature of some areas along the route, with the perceived potential for regular noise from the trains. Other concerns respondents raise include noise from construction, station announcements and late night train services; as well as how effective proposed mitigation measures would be.

Many respondents express concern that EWR would cause air pollution or decrease air quality. Some feel this could result from a greater number of vehicles idling whilst level crossings are closed, with several expresses particular concern about the impact of this on the health of people living nearby.

Many respondents express general concern about the impact on local habitats and wildlife of the construction and operation of the line. Specifically, some respondents comment on impacts on:

- The amount of time woodlands take to develop;
- The inadequacy of proposed planted areas to replicate ancient woodland;
- The lack of a Strategic Environmental Assessment;
- The impact on Priority Habitats; and
- The impact on species who rely on sound and could be disturbed by noise from construction and trains.

Impact on farmland

Several respondents feel that much of the land required for EWR will be agricultural land, and voice concern about the impact of this. They express concern about disruption to farmland during construction, and the potential loss of land as a result of the rail line.

Cost and fares

A substantial number of respondents express concern about the overall cost of the project and question whether it is value for money. Many of these respondents raise this in general terms or compare the project to other projects such as HS2, arguing both will go over budget.

Several of these respondents feel Route E is inappropriate route as it is one of the most costly options. They feel the construction of the route and the various gradient changes would add extra cost and question whether this analysis, as well as the cost of mitigation measures, has been included in cost projections. A few respondents comment on additional costs the scheme may incur, such as the relocation of utilities and infrastructure.

Many respondents express concern about the level of fares for EWR. They think that unless a reasonable price is set the train will be under used, with others expressing concern that prices will rise to try and cover the cost of constructing and operating the route.

Local/national economy and businesses

Many respondents express concern that EWR would damage the local economy and businesses along the route due to potential impacts on property along the route; or by bisecting communities, thus restricting customer access to businesses. Some respondents comment on the potential negative impact on farms and businesses established to support local farms. Some respondents feel that instead of regenerating town centres, such as Bedford, the line would discourage people by dividing towns and limiting access for local people to shops and services.

Several respondents express concern that the EWR project is too focused on a narrow corridor, which they feel is relatively affluent and which has existing strong connections. They suggest that this is not in line with the Government's "levelling up" agenda. Respondents identify northern areas that may be more in need of investment in rail services. Some respondents feel that the money spent on the EWR project should be used to ensure the whole country recovers from the pandemic.

Suggestions

Powering trains

A very large number of respondents comment on the fuel sources for the EWR trains, suggesting the using of electric rather than diesel trains, with particular reference to using renewable energy and hydrogen. Some respondents suggest using battery-powered trains to reduce the need for overhead wires (in the case that the railway was electrified). Most of the respondents who comment on this topic query why a new line would be built without electrification from the outset, considering the current global push towards net-zero carbon emissions. They say that the technological challenges presented by electric trains should be overcome to support the intended longevity of the route. Several respondents are sceptical that the route would be able to be electrified after construction.

Modern trains

Some respondents suggest that the route only be used by new and modern trains, to make use of innovations in efficiency and design, as well as ensuring a modern and comfortable experience for potential customers.

Assessments required

A considerable number of respondents suggest assessments that EWR Co should carry out to provide full information on the impact of the proposals. These include:

- Strategic Environmental Assessments;
- Assessments on the impacts on groundwater;
- Economic assessments;
- Conservation assessments; and
- Air quality assessments.

Compensation

Many respondents suggest that EWR Co compensate communities along the route for the potential inconvenience caused by construction.

Potential extensions

Many respondents suggest that EWR be extended. Suggested extensions include running to Norwich; Ipswich; Reading; Swindon; Bristol; Cardiff; Aylesbury and Birmingham.

In particular, several respondents express a desire for the line to run “coast-to-coast" from Bristol to Norwich, and a small number support an “Aylesbury Spur” to connect Aylesbury more directly with Oxford.

Alternative suggestions and innovations

Many respondents offer alternative suggestions or innovations for the route and track itself. These include:

- Running the whole route in a tunnel;
- Using signalling to ensure flow of existing rail traffic;
- Using sustainable, recycled and/or recyclable materials to construct the track;
- Creating light rail networks for the towns and cities along the route;
- Running the track along roads for the whole length of the route;
- Using routes from previous consultations, such as Route C;
- Using what remains of the Varsity Line;
- Redeveloping existing tracks between Oxford and Cambridge, such as Hitchin-Luton;
- Making the track as straight and level as possible;
- Adding a "cut-and-cover" tunnel, particularly around Carriage Drive in Section D, and;
- Running a cycleway adjacent to the whole route.

Engaging with local people

Many respondents request that EWR Co gives more consideration to the opinions of local people. These respondents feel that residents in the affected areas would know best where to place the track to minimise overall disruption.

Environmental mitigation

Many respondents suggest EWR Co carries out rewilding programs to offset potential damage to nature and habitats from construction. These respondents suggest that this rewilding, as well as tree planting to contribute to carbon offsetting, be carried out adjacent to the track in order to further contain and mitigate the impacts of the line, capturing emissions and reducing noise and visual disturbance. Several respondents also suggest that EWR Co use rewilding to ensure a net gain of biodiversity in affected areas.

4. Section A: Oxford to Bicester

Section A of the consultation invited feedback on the EWR proposals between Oxford to Bicester.

There were two open questions in this section; the table below shows the number of responses to each.

Question	Number of responses
Question 7: What is important to consider during development of the proposals for the railway in the Oxford to Bicester area?	2,074
Question 9: Please tell us why you have ranked the proposed concepts above and provide any other comments.	1,498

Table 6: Number of respondents directly answering each question

4.1. Comments on Oxford station

Question 7 invited feedback on what respondents think is important to consider during development of the EWR proposals for the Oxford to Bicester area, including the proposals for Oxford, Oxford Parkway and Bicester Village stations; and the options for the level crossing at London Road in Bicester.

This question received 2,074 responses, which are summarised below.

Support

Several respondents support plans to increase capacity at Oxford station with some expressing concern about existing capacity issues. Several of these specifically support the new platform and the improvements it will make to reliability and connectivity.

A small number of respondents express general support for Oxford's inclusion on the EWR route with a few respondents citing local economy and connectivity benefits.

Concern

A few respondents express concern about the potential disruption caused by adding new tracks and platforms, specifically to the Port Meadow nature reserve; Beckett Street car park; and local properties and monuments. A few other respondents question whether the land can withstand additional platforms.

The potential impact EWR services may have on current passenger and freight services is a concern for a few respondents, including GWR and GB Rail Freight. GWR specifically notes that an additional track at the east side of the station would come at the expense of current sidings prioritised to

enable electrification of their service. They also mention that their current infrastructure plans may impact EWR's ability to stable stock overnight. GB Rail Freight requests a flexible layout to accommodate three freight trains an hour, calling for EWR Co to provide enough platforms to the east, and the ability to use EWR lines for freight to Bletchley.

A small number of respondents raise general concerns about the potential environmental, noise and visual impacts of increasing train services at Oxford.

Suggestions

Several respondents argue that Oxford station needs to be well connected to the centre with sustainable transport links, such as bus routes including park and ride services; and more secure cycle storage facilities.

Several respondents suggest potential improvements to the accessibility of the station, including additional entrances/exits, increased use of the western entrance/exit, improved footbridges, and measures to reduce crowding around ticket barriers. Meanwhile, some respondents suggest changes or improvements to the station facilities, including better toilets, covered areas on platforms and more shops.

Some respondents suggest additional track and platform changes, such as additional platforms at Oxford station; provision of four tracks south of Oxford; electrification of the lines; and amendments to the existing platform design to provide greater capacity. A few respondents suggest redesigning particular bridges such as the bridges over Castle Mill Stream and over the Oxford Canal near Wolvecote.

A small number of organisations call for future discussions or co-operation around any works which might take place at the station, including Oxfordshire County Council, Oxford City Council, Network Rail, Highways England and the Canal and River Trust.

Other suggestions include the timing of services to align with onward connections; services to Abingdon, Cowley, Didcot, Reading or Swindon in lieu of a turnback facility south of Oxford; a station design that reflects Oxford's heritage; and adequate car parking.

4.2. Comments on Oxford Parkway station

Support

Some respondents express support for the proposals to increase capacity at Oxford Parkway station, with the majority supporting the plans for more car parking. A few respondents say they approve of the Oxford Parkway proposals in general, and a few others support the improved connectivity they think EWR services would bring to a growing local community.

Concern

Some respondents express concern about the potential environmental

impact of a bigger car park, with a small number saying this would increase light pollution, car use and emissions. Some respondents believe that EWR Co should provide infrastructure which encourages access to the station by bus, cycling or walking. A few respondents say that impacts on biodiversity should be addressed by planting trees and hedges; and providing artificial nesting sites.

A few respondents feel that current station parking is adequate, with a few suggesting that the need for increasing parking at the station should be reassessed.

Impacts on other timetabled services is a concern for a few respondents.

Suggestions

Several respondents say that there needs to be better integration with sustainable forms of transport at Oxford Parkway station, such as more bus services stopping near the station entrance, and better pedestrian and cycling routes. Many of these say that this should be prioritised over additional parking.

However, some respondents suggest that more parking will be needed, with a small number proposing a 'twin deck' car park with multiple levels.

Some respondents suggest covered platforms and waiting areas should be provided at Oxford Parkway station.

Other suggestions include a waiting room; an improved footbridge; more services stopping at the station; a more secure car park; and more ticket machines.

4.3. Comments on Bicester Village station

Support

A small number of respondents welcome Bicester Village station's inclusion on the EWR route, citing benefits for Bicester's local amenities and businesses; and greater connectivity to the east and west. A few respondents praise the potential for creating a strong sustainable transport network and reducing congestion on roads. A few other respondents voice general support for the proposed improvements.

A small number of respondents support the plans to increase car parking, citing current capacity as an issue.

Concern

Some respondents express concern about the potential impact of additional EWR services at Bicester Village, with a few saying the station or the town lacks capacity. Concerns include additional traffic; congestion at the station; noise for residents close to the line. A few respondents also raise concern about an increase in tourism and feel the impact on residents is ignored.

A small number of respondents oppose proposals to increase parking at the station, due to the potential impact on net-zero targets, land take and air quality (given its proximity to the air quality management area). The majority of these respondents call would prefer sustainable travel modes to Bicester Village station to be prioritised, or for existing infrastructure to be used.

Suggestions

Several respondents request better connections between Bicester, the station, and Bicester Village, particularly bus services and pedestrian routes for local residents.

Some respondents suggest potential locations or designs for a new car park at Bicester Village station and request free parking for station users.

Some respondents propose measures to control passenger flows at the station, including improved signage; clear announcements in multiple languages; barriers; and new platform designs.

A small number of respondents express a preference for the use of Bicester North for EWR trains, or a direct connection to this station.

Other suggestions include more sheltered areas at the station and on platforms; improved facilities, including toilets and footbridges; renaming Bicester Village station to Bicester Town, Bicester London Road, Bicester South or Bicester Central; and coordination with other infrastructure plans, such as the Cherwell District Council Local Plan or Bicester's Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan.

4.4. Comments on London Road level crossing

Question 8 asked respondents to rank their preference for the proposed concepts for the level crossing at London Road in Bicester. The six concepts presented were:

- Concept 1: An accessible bridge for non-motorised users;
- Concept 2: A road underpass at London Road;
- Concept 3: A road bridge at London Road;
- Concept 4: A road underpass alongside London Road;
- Concept 5: A road bridge alongside London Road; and
- Concept 6: Alternative road crossing locations.

Question 9 asked respondents to explain their ranking and provide any other comments, including alternative suggestions. This question received 1,498 responses, which are summarised below.

4.4.1. Responses to the ranking options question

To analyse the response data, scores were allocated to the different ranks to provide an average score as outlined in the introduction and methodology section ('Responses to closed questions').

Overall, 658 respondents express a preference on at least one concept.

However, one respondent gave the same level of preference to multiple concepts. These are not included in the data below; however, their views have been considered as part of our analysis to the open questions.

Since not all respondents ranked each concept, the total number of respondents selecting each rank is not necessarily equal to the number of responses to this question.

Table 7 below shows the average ranking score for each concept, with Concept 2 being most preferred and 6 being least preferred. On this basis Concept 2 was the most popular overall concept with the lowest average score.

Concept	Average ranking score
Concept 2: Road underpass at London Road (online[1])	2.69
Concept 3: Road bridge at London Road (online)	3.00
Concept 4: Road underpass alongside London Road (offline[2])	3.26
Concept 1: Accessible bridge for non-motorised users	3.36
Concept 5: Road bridge alongside London Road (offline)	3.71
Concept 6: Alternative road crossing locations	4.28

Table 7: Respondents' average ranking of Concepts 1-6

Figure 5 below shows a breakdown of how respondents ranked each of the six concepts. The first part of each bar on the left-hand side represents the number of people that ranked that concept as first preference, followed by second preference and so forth, across to the right-hand side.

Concept 1 (an accessible bridge for non-motorised users) received the most first preferences overall, however it also received the second highest overall sixth ranking preference. As a result, Concept 2 (road underpass at London Road), Concept 3 (road bridge at London Road) and Concept 4 (road underpass alongside London Road) all have a better average ranking score as they receive more second, third and fourth preferences than Concept 1. Concept 2 received the highest number of first and second rankings.

Concept 6 (alternative road crossing locations) was the least popular option receiving the greatest number of fifth and sixth preferences. It also received the lowest combined first, second and third preferences.

[1] Online refers to construction in the same location as, or as part of, existing infrastructure.

[2] Offline refers to construction in a location separate from the existing infrastructure.

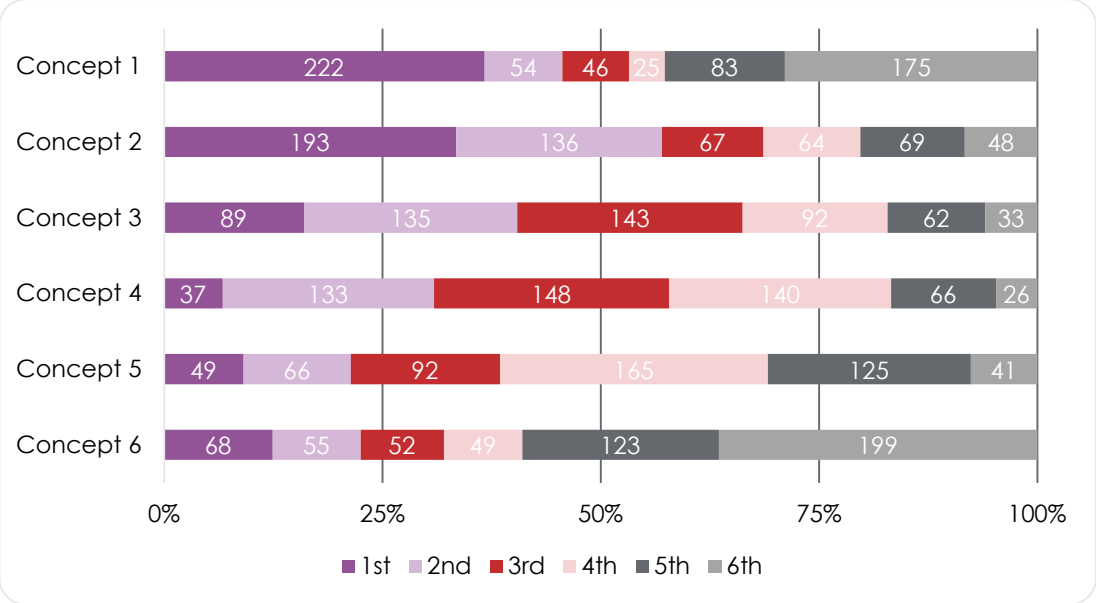

Figure 5: Breakdown of how respondents ranked Concepts 1-6

4.4.2. Comments on Concept 1

273 respondents comment on Concept 1: An accessible bridge for non-motorised users.

Support

Several respondents voice general support for Concept 1, with a similar number emphasising the importance of safe and convenient pedestrians and cycle access. These respondents say that it would reduce traffic and encourage the use of alternative transport. They sometimes add that there are other routes available for cars to access Bicester town centre.

A small number of respondents argue that Concept 1 would be the least disruptive to the local area, while a few say that they support this concept because it would be cost-effective.

A few respondents say Concept 1 could support the pedestrianisation of the area, including Bicester Market Square. A few claim that Concept 1 would reduce traffic pollution in the area, while a similar number say that it would make the area safer for non-car users.

Concern

Some respondents express general opposition to Concept 1. Several suggest that it would divide Bicester, reducing access to shops, medical care, and other services. Some of these respondents feel that residents of Langford Village or the new developments at Graven Hill would be particularly affected.

Several respondents are concerned about the potential for increased congestion in the wider area if Concept 1 is implemented as drivers would be required to take longer routes, for example on the Launton Road; the A421 and the A41; and in the town centre. A few respondents add that the

use of these alternative routes could increase pollution and carbon emissions.

A small number of respondents express concern about the accessibility of the bridge for those with reduced mobility or for cyclists. These respondents say that the bridge and ramps should be wide enough for a range of users, as well as appropriately lit.

A small number of respondents state that the journey times for emergency services would be affected if this concept was implemented.

Suggestions

Several respondents suggest the provision of an underpass for non-vehicular users instead of the bridge as it would be easier to use, less visually intrusive and cheaper to build. These respondents mention examples of successful underpasses in the Netherlands and France.

A few respondents ask that local people are made aware of any road closures that will be undertaken during the construction period and that roads are kept open where possible for pedestrians and cyclists.

4.4.3. Comments on Concept 2

32 respondents comment on Concept 2: Road underpass at London Road.

Support

A small number of respondents voice general support for Concept 2, with some saying it would be less disruptive or expensive than other concepts.

Concern

A few respondents oppose Concept 2, stating it would be disruptive and expensive. A similar number express concern about the potential social and environmental impacts; or about the design, which they feel would require northbound drivers to user a longer alternative route.

4.4.4. Comments on Concept 3

22 respondents comment on Concept 3: A road bridge at London Road.

Support

A few respondents express support for Concept 3, with some of them adding that they feel it would be safer for road users and pedestrians.

Concern

A few respondents oppose Concept 3, saying it would be disruptive and expensive. A similar number of respondents express concern about the potential social and environmental impacts; and the requirement to close the junction for up to two years during construction.

4.4.5. Comments on Concept 4

27 respondents comment on Concept 4: A road underpass alongside London Road.

Support

A small number of respondents support Concept 4 because as it would allow continued access across the tracks, including during construction.

Concern

A small number of respondents oppose Concept 4, suggesting that it would be disruptive and expensive, and that the proposed route for the underpass would impact negatively on non-vehicular users, particularly those with physical disabilities.

4.4.6. Comments on Concept 5

25 respondents comment on Concept 5: A road bridge alongside London Road.

Support

A small number of respondents support Concept 5 because it would not require the closure of the existing crossing during construction. Some of these add that there is sufficient space alongside London Road, and that existing properties, including listed buildings, would not be impacted.

Concern

A small number of respondents oppose Concept 5 as they feel it would be disruptive and expensive, and that the proposed route for the bridge would impact negatively on non-vehicular users, particularly those with physical disabilities.

Suggestions

A few respondents suggest that use of a low-lying bridge would reduce disruption during construction.

4.4.7. Comments on Concept 6

A total of 83 respondents comment on Concept 6: Alternative road crossing locations.

Support

A small number of respondents voice general support for Concept 6. A similar number say this concept would be value for money; safer for road users; and would improve access to the town centre.

Some respondents express support for particular proposed locations for the alternative crossing. A small number feel that Gavray Drive would be convenient, particularly for residents of Langford, commenting that there was an earlier intention to install a crossing at this point. A few support it

being located parallel to the London to Birmingham railway line; while a similar number say that Charbridge Way would be the least disruptive.

Regarding potential crossings to the west of the existing crossing, a few respondents support a new crossing near Bicester Village to provide a link to the A41.

Concern

Several respondents state their concern about Concept 6, with most saying level crossings are dangerous and should not be considered. A few respondents give other reasons for concern, such as inconvenience to motorists and non-vehicular users; increased traffic; and that it would not reduce car usage.

A small number of respondents express concern about particular proposed locations for the alternative crossing, suggesting the development at Gavray Drive constitutes a barrier to a crossing; a link to the A41 could lead to an increase in traffic; and the Charbridge Way option could be inconvenient, expensive and subject to flooding.

A few respondents say not enough detailed information had been provided.

Suggestions

A few respondents suggest providing a free bus link to take people through the crossing, using accessible vehicles.

4.4.8. Other comments relating to London Road level crossing

494 respondents make general comments about the London Road level crossing, as summarised below.

Support

Access

Several respondents emphasise the importance of continued access for motorists and non-motorised users across the train tracks at London Road. Some have a clear preference for the offline[3] options but comment that disruption should be minimised whilst any work is ongoing. Some say that a crossing that enables a constant flow of traffic (such as a bridge or underpass) would reduce congestion and be easier for pedestrians and vehicles. A few indicate a slight preference for the bridge option, citing pedestrian safety.

Replacement of the level crossing

A small number of respondents support the replacement of the level crossing at London Road, claiming that the current level crossing is dangerous and causes delays. A similar number of respondents express support for the

[3] Offline refers to construction in a location separate from the existing infrastructure.

proposals in general terms, without favouring any particular concept.

Support for a bridge

Many respondents support the use of a road bridge in general terms, without specifying a concept, often suggesting that a bridge is preferable to a level crossing. Some of these believe a bridge would be safer than an underpass, while a smaller number believe that a bridge would be cheaper or easier to implement.

Support for an underpass

Several respondents support an underpass in general terms, without specifying a concept, often stating that it would have less of a visual impact than a bridge. A small number of these feel an underpass would be safer or easier to use than a bridge, especially for non-vehicular users, and would have less of an impact on local residents and businesses, including noise.

Concern

Retaining the existing crossing

Some respondents support retaining the existing crossing as they feel it is a vital link to and from Bicester. However, a similar number of respondents feel that the length of time that the crossing would be closed each hour is unacceptable. They comment that under current conditions the crossing is already a bottleneck and that the new rail services will cause further congestion.

Safety and pollution

Safety and pollution are concerns for a few respondents, who believe that the current speed limit on the road speed is too high, and that the volume of HGV traffic should be limited. Safety of pedestrians and cyclists, day and night, is a concern for a small number of respondents, who feel that a bridge with pedestrian and cycle access would be preferable.

Traffic

A small number of respondents suggest that a lack of effective planning for junctions and level crossings around Bicester has contributed to the current traffic issues, and that any solution should balance the needs of the rail line and the needs of the community.

Access

Access to and from Bicester is a concern for several respondents, with comments that any road closure would increase traffic and remove a key access point to and from the town, including for emergency vehicles and public transport. A few are concerned about how any loss of vehicle access to the town could affect house prices.

Congestion to the south of Bicester is a concern for a few respondents, due to potential population growth brought by new development. They refer to the need for improved infrastructure and transport links to Bicester Village

station. A few respondents highlight that the level crossing is important in enabling pedestrian and cycle access to shops, schools, and other amenities in Bicester for residents who do not drive.

Construction

Some respondents are concerned about the potential negative impact of construction work, for example increasing their commute or causing stress to those living nearby. Access to train services during construction is a particular concern for a few respondents, as is continued pedestrian access to Bicester town centre. A few ask for a Bicester to Oxford service to be provided by bus or train throughout the construction period.

Local environmental, landscape and property

A few respondents think that every concept would have an impact on the local environment and landscape, and on local properties; these respondents say the detours that motorists would have to make (both during construction and subsequently) would impact on local air quality.

A few respondents comment on the impact some of the concepts would have on the Bicester conservation area, for example the demolition of properties of architectural interest during construction. Some respondents are concerned about reducing access to key community assets, such as local sports facilities.

Concerns about a bridge

A small number of respondents say that they are opposed to a bridge generally, without referring to a specific concept.

Several express concern that a bridge would be visually intrusive, while smaller numbers refer to potential noise and traffic pollution.

A small number say that they believe a bridge would be expensive to build, and a similar number feel there is insufficient space for it.

A few respondents argue that a bridge would be difficult for pedestrians and cyclists due to vehicles, wind and it being a longer route than the current level crossing. A similar number of respondents say that a bridge would impact on homes and the use of amenities in the area, such as Garth Park.

A few are concerned that construction would cause disruption to local communities and road users, as well as impacting on air quality.

Concerns about an underpass

A few respondents say they are opposed to an underpass generally, without referring to a specific concept.

Some are concerned that an underpass would become a location for antisocial behaviour and may be unsafe for pedestrians; while a smaller number think an underpass would be at risk of flooding, given previous flooding in the area.

A small number of respondents suggest construction would be expensive, while others feel there is not enough space available. A few say an underpass would be unsightly.

A few are concerned that the construction would cause disruption to local people, businesses, and train passengers.

Tourism

A few respondents are concerned about the potential increase in tourism in the area due to the new rail link making the area less peaceful.

Other concerns

Some respondents feel that none of the proposed concepts are suitable, as they do not sufficiently compensate for the closure of the level crossing or promote active travel.

Suggestions

Accessibility

A small number of respondents suggest that any new crossing should be safe and convenient for residents who have a range of accessibility and mobility needs, allowing for easy access to the town centre and Garth Park. These respondents suggest that people with physical disabilities, or who have pushchairs or bikes, may not easily be able to use steps or a lengthy ramp. A similar number argue that there should be a separate crossing for non-vehicular users.

Signalling improvements

Some respondents suggest improvements should be made to the signalling at the level crossing instead of closing it, for example the length of time the barriers are lowered should be minimised through use of updated technology (as experienced elsewhere).

Alternatives to proposed concepts

Several respondents offer suggestions for alternatives to the concepts offered, including:

- Reducing the number of trains on the track;
- Lowering or raising the station and tracks, or moving the station to the other side of the A41;
- Providing a bridge for bus use only;
- Diverting London Road through Bicester Village;
- Keeping the existing crossing, preventing its use by private vehicles, or placing it in a cutting;
- Installing a pedestrian underpass;
- Implementing a 20-mph speed limit;
- A proposed loop road around the Graven Hill estate from the A41; and
- Keeping the level crossing but adding a bridge for non-motorised users.

Alternative routes and crossings

A small number of respondents suggest an alternative route for a new crossing, including:

- A bridge over the existing station car park, with a junction allowing drivers to turn towards the town or the station; and
- A road tunnel from Mallards Way to Station Approach, with a separate crossing into Garth Park for non-motorised users.

A small number of respondents suggest a separate crossing for pedestrians and cyclists, ideally close to the station. They say that an overground option would be the safest approach.

A few suggest temporary crossings during construction would ensure non-motorised users have access to Bicester. Respondents mention Launton Road Bridge as a possible alternative; ask for the existing pedestrian bridge at Bicester station to be freely available; or suggest a temporary platform at Gavray Drive.

Suggestions about a bridge

A small number of respondents make general suggestions about bridges, saying that any bridge should have an attractive design, measures to mitigate noise, and a reduced speed limit. They suggest the bridge should not be too high but should allow for overhead wires to be added to the railway track in future.

Suggestions about an underpass

A few respondents make general suggestions about underpasses, such as having an attractive design and appropriate lighting; measures to mitigate noise; and a location close to the station. A similar number ask that it be installed so as not to restrict itself or the train line in the future.

Other suggestions

Other suggestions made by a few respondents include: maintaining the Bicester-London train service at all times, or providing a bus service for the route; encouraging a reduction in road use and preventing HGVs accessing the town centre and residential areas.

4.5. Other comments related to Section A

Support

Several respondents provide general support for the proposals presented in Section A, with a few specifically citing the benefit of increased connectivity.

Concern

Several respondents raise environmental concerns about the introduction of EWR to the area including potential impacts on wildlife, air quality, uptake of land and the countryside. A few respondents ask that EWR Co provide further details on these aspects.

Several respondents express general concerns about the potential impact of EWR including:

- Local impact on communities and residents' wellbeing;
- Noise levels, with a few requesting noise barriers are installed along the line;
- Disruption to existing services;
- Demolition and loss of local properties;
- Disruption to local roads, including congestion;
- Affecting existing paths and bridleways; and
- Pedestrian safety.

A small number of respondents highlight concern about the project costs. A few question the need for proposed improvements to this section of the route. Of these, a few state that stations in Section A are already adequate, whilst others ask EWR Co to reassess predicted passenger numbers.

Suggestions

Several respondents state that EWR Co needs to consult local residents in Oxford to Bicester on any change proposed.

A few respondents suggest adding stations and routes along Section A including stops at Islip; Oxpens; extending to Aylesbury from Bicester; and reinstating the Cowley branch line and the Great Central corridor.

5. Section B: Bletchley and the Marston Vale Line

Section B of the consultation asked about Bletchley and the Marston Vale Line, including proposals related to:

- Existing stations on the Marston Vale Line;
- Alternatives to existing level crossings at:
- Fenny Stratford;
- Bow Brickhill;
- Browns Wood;
- Pony;
- Woburn Sands existing crossings;
- Aspley Guise and Husborne Crawley level crossings;
- Husborne Crawley Footpath No. 10 and Station Road in Ridgmont level crossings;
- Lidlington level crossings;
- Millbrook (Station Lane);
- Green Lane;
- Woottton Broadmead (Broadmead Road);
- Wootton Village;
- Kempston Hardwick,
- Woburn Road; and
- Bedford Carriage Sidings.
- Delivering improvements to the Marston Vale line;
- Delivering works to Bletchley Station; and
- Reinstating a second track at Fenny Stratford.

The table below shows the number of responses to each of the open questions in section B of the consultation. Responses relating to the proposed options for level crossing on the Marston Vale Line are presented in Section 5.2.

Question	Number of responses
Question 10: What do you think is important to consider when developing our proposals for the Bletchley and the Marston Vale Line area?	1,882
Question 12: Please tell us why you have ranked the proposed options for the existing stations above as you have and provide any other comments:	1,551
Question 30: Please tell us why you have ranked the proposed Marston Vale Line upgrade options above as you have and provide any other comments.	1,038
Question 32: Please tell us why you have ranked the proposed Fenny Stratford additional track options above as you have and provide any other comments.	972

Table 8: Number of respondents directly answering each question

Question 10 asked respondents what they think are the most important considerations in the development of proposals for the Bletchley and the Marston Vale Line area.

In particular, respondents were asked what EWR Co needs to take into account:

- In relation to the existing stations on the Marston Vale Line and whether they should be kept open or consolidated through closure and relocation;
- In relation to alternatives to existing level crossings;
- In delivering the improvements to the Marston Vale Line;
- In delivering works to Bletchley Station; and
- In relation to the impact of reinstating a second track between Bletchley and Fenny Stratford.

Question 10 received 1,882 responses. Comments made by respondents are summarised in this chapter under the relevant topic.

5.1. Comments on existing stations on the Marston Vale Line

EWR Co needs to invest in the Marston Vale Line to support the introduction of a fast, reliable, and frequent service between Oxford and Cambridge. As part of this investment EWR Co identified two ways this section of the line could be upgraded:

- Option 1: The existing hourly stopping service would continue to serve all Marston Vale Line stations, with a new limited-stop EWR service calling at two stations – Woburn Sands and Ridgmont – four times every hour;
- Option 2: There would be five new merged stations on the Marston Vale Line – all five would benefit from at least two EWR services every hour, and some would have four. This would mean more communities have access to more frequent and faster services, direct to more locations.

Question 11 asked respondents to rank these options on a scale from 1 to 2 where 1 indicates the most preferred and 2 indicates the least preferred option. Question 12 asked respondents to explain why they had ranked the options in that way, as well as any other comments they may have about the proposed options for the Marston Vale Line.

5.1.1. Responses to the ranking options question

To analyse the response data, scores were allocated to the different ranks to provide an average score as outlined in the introduction and methodology section ('Responses to closed questions').

Overall, 1,028 respondents express a preference on at least one option.

Since not all respondents ranked each option, the total number of respondents selecting each rank is not necessarily equal to the number of responses to this question.

Table 9 below shows the average ranking score for each option. On this basis, Option 1 was the most popular overall with the lowest average score.

Option	Average ranking score
Option 1: Retain existing service (in a modified form) and introduce limited-stop Oxford to Cambridge services alongside it, calling at Woburn Sands and Ridgmont	1.39
Option 2: Provide a more frequent, faster service with some new and relocated stations and improved community access	1.53

Table 9: Respondents' average ranking of options

Error! Reference source not found. below shows a breakdown of how respondents ranked each of the two options. The first part of each bar on the left-hand side represents the number of people that ranked that concept as first preference, followed by second preference across to the right-hand side.

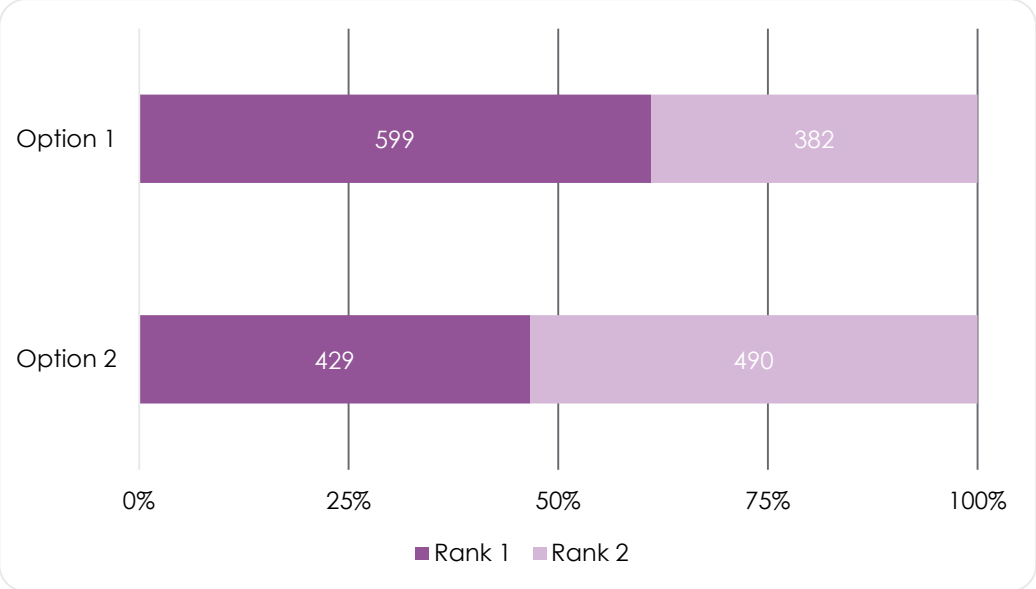

Figure 6: Breakdown of how respondents ranked options

Option 1 received the most first preferences, with 58% of respondents who selected at least one option selecting it as their preferred option.

Overall, a small majority of respondents who express a ranking option selected Option 2 as their least favourite option.

5.1.2. Comments on Option 1

Support

Many respondents express general support for Option 1, primarily because this option retains existing stations. Many respondents believe that local stations provide better accessibility for local residents. Several respondents emphasise the need to maintain pedestrian, bus, and cycle access to stations, and have concerns that relocating stations would promote car use, which may negatively impact upon the environment. Some respondents suggest that improving the local service might increase local demand, while a few respondents comment that closing local stations would be a mistake, reminiscent of the Beeching cuts.

Usage and connectivity

Several respondents emphasise the widespread use of local stations by students, whilst some respondents emphasise commuter usage. A small number of respondents highlight the potential importance of local stations in maintaining rural connectivity, particularly for older people and in areas where alternative modes of local transport are often poor or non-existent. A small number of respondents suggest that accessibility is more important than journey speed.

Reuse of existing infrastructure and stations

Many respondents support Option 1 because it uses existing infrastructure, such as stations and tracks. As such, they believe less land would be impacted compared to station relocation plans proposed under Option 2.

This is viewed as positive and beneficial for the countryside. A few respondents comment that Option 1 is more in line with Milton Keynes Council's mission to make Milton Keynes a leading green and cultural city in the world. Some respondents also believe that using the existing infrastructure would be less expensive than the proposed relocation of stations in Option 2.

Several respondents view the retention of local stations as less disruptive to local residents and to the surrounding area, including to road networks, compared to Option 2.

Environment

Several respondents think Option 1 would be better for the environment on the basis that Option 1 would not require rural development on the scale that respondents envisage under Option 2 and would preserve wildlife corridors. Some respondents believe Option 1 would have a less detrimental impact on the environment because they view local rail use as a more environmentally friendly mode of transport than alternatives such as cars.

Journey time

A small number of respondents emphasise the need for rail journeys to be quicker than Option 2 if Option 1 is selected. Most respondents support speeding up the longer journeys on the line, with a few commenting that competitive journey times may be more of a necessity on longer routes. Conversely, a few respondents suggest speeding up the local stopping service. In addition, a few respondents hope that realignment and faster trains could benefit journey times for all services on the line, with suggestions including implementing electric trains, which they believe would accelerate more quickly.

A small number of respondents believe that passing loops could improve overall service speed and reliability.

Complementing other developments

In terms of consistency with other developments, a few respondents remark that there has been a large amount of housing development in areas such as Stewartby and Kempston Hardwick, and that expansion is expected in Aspley Guise. Respondents comment that this might increase use of rail services, potentially making it more desirable to maintain stations in these areas. In addition, GB Railfreight remarks that it is essential that consistency with freight services is considered along the whole line.

Concern

Some respondents believe that local usage of the Marston Vale Line will be limited, and that this should be considered in decisions concerning station closures and service frequency. As a result, a few respondents suggest it may not be cost-effective to operate numerous smaller stations.

Some respondents raise concerns that local services on the Marston Vale Line will be slower than at present under Option 1, with a small number of respondents expressing concern that an already slow, inadequate, or unreliable service may worsen.

A few respondents express concern about the introduction of passing loops, highlighting the potential negative impact on the reliability of services, as well as on the environment.

Suggestions

Some respondents make recommendations for passing loop placements, whilst others suggest that:

- Passing loop design should consider freight suitability;
- The design of passing loops should actively consider minimising extra journey time for local people; and
- International technological advancements should be considered alongside passing loops.

A few respondents make recommendations about the type of services proposed. These include requesting an additional stop on the fast service, marketing Ridgmont station as a park and ride, and implementing request stops to improve the speed of the stopping service, although it is acknowledged that this may impact on arrival times at stations further along the route.

Ridgemont station relocation

Many respondents express concern about the proposed Ridgmont station relocation, highlighting potentially detrimental impacts on local businesses and the nearby heritage centre. A small number of these respondents also raise concerns about access for motorised vehicles, cyclists, and pedestrians. They remark that local roads could become congested and that the proposed relocation is not pedestrian or cyclist friendly, necessitating new paths.

A few respondents comment that bus routes would need to be rerouted or developed to serve the new relocated station.

A few respondents remark that there is little planned local residential development. Conversely, others comment that there is more commercial development planned near to the existing station and one respondent claims that the proposed station location is in an area with planned development.

A few respondents raise concerns about potential negative impacts on local conservation areas, with others requesting that relocation proposals consider facilitating access to the Bedford to Milton Keynes Waterway Park.

A few respondents suggest that alternative passing loop locations would remove the need to relocate the station. A few respondents also question the inclusion of Ridgmont on the faster route, given its perceived

inaccessibility and the distance from current and future housing developments.

Existing stations

Fenny Stratford station

Several respondents support the retention of Fenny Stratford station. A small number of respondents value the station as a necessary amenity which is well used by local residents. Station use by workers and those accessing a retail and exhibition centre to the south of Milton Keynes are also mentioned by a few respondents as reasons for supporting the retention of Fenny Stratford station. Simpson and Ashland Parish Council voice support for Option 1 because they perceive connectivity at Fenny Stratford as potentially desirable for future demographics in the area. A few respondents express concern that closing the station may negatively impact the value of their property.

Bow Brickhill station

Some respondents support retaining Bow Brickhill station, particularly because of its current use by local workers. A few of those respondents believe that more local workers could be encouraged to use the railway if the service was improved, and that closing the station would increase car use and exacerbate current congestion problems. A few respondents raise concerns about the potential impact of closing Bow Brickhill station on the connectivity of planned developments, notably nearby housing and warehouses. A few respondents comment on the lack of alternative public transport options, stating that the one bus per hour currently available would not be close enough for workers at the planned warehouse development, as well as raising concerns about potential severance of residents from neighbouring towns. A few respondents also mention the station's use for access to local leisure opportunities, such as Caldecotte Lake.

Woburn Sands station

Many respondents support retaining the current Woburn Sands station, with many of them remarking on its historical significance as part of the town's heritage. Many respondents believe the current central placement of the station is favourable because it is accessible for pedestrians. Several respondents express concern that the proposed relocation site may be inaccessible by foot or bicycle, and so could be unsuitable for those without cars, particularly following the closure of the local bus service. A potential increase in car use is concerning to several respondents because of associated negative impacts such as traffic, parking, and pollution.

Some respondents believe Woburn Sands station would be used more frequently following improvements to the EWR line. Several respondents comment that the local station is particularly vital for students and workers, as well as being frequently used for leisure trips such as into Milton Keynes. Several respondents support the use of nearby brownfield sites to extend the

platform and develop infrastructure that may be required, such as station buildings and parking facilities.

A few respondents remark that retaining the existing Woburn Sands station would create less damage to surrounding green spaces than relocating the station. Several respondents comment that they are unable to see any benefits of relocating the station. A few respondents raise other concerns regarding the proposal to relocate the station, including potential impacts on local businesses and house prices, as well as remarking that the proposals must take into account the South East Milton Keynes (SEMK) development plans.

Aspley Guise station

A small number of respondents support retaining the existing Aspley Guise station because it serves local residents and visitors to a local animal rescue centre.

Lidlington station

A small number of respondents voice support for retaining Lidlington station in its current location, viewing the station as integral to the local community. A few respondents raise specific concerns about dividing communities by reducing accessibility to stations, particularly for more elderly residents If the station is not retained.

Stewartby station

Some respondents support retaining Stewartby station in its present location, largely because of its utility for those attending Kimberley College. Respondents suggest students at the college are currently the largest single user group on the Marston Vale Line.

Millbrook station

A small number of respondents want to retain Millbrook station in its current location to maintain resident connectivity as well as access to leisure facilities such as The Forest Centre & Millennium Country Park, and the Forest of Marston Vale. A few respondents attribute current low passenger numbers to poor services.

Kempston Hardwick station

Despite an acknowledgement that current passenger numbers are low, a few respondents support retaining Kempston Hardwick station based on projected local growth and suggest that proposals should benefit local warehouse workers.

5.1.3. *Comments on Option 2*

Support

A substantial number of respondents voice general support for Option 2, with some commenting that usage of the current line is low and fewer stations could be more optimally located. A few respondents believe it is sensible to concentrate new stations in populous areas.

Service and station improvements

Regarding the proposed train service, some respondents believe that the relocation of stations would open up travel options and provide journeys that are faster, more frequent, and more reliable, with a few respondents remarking that fewer stops are preferable. Many respondents believe that Option 2 will provide a rail service that is more frequent or reliable, and some of these respondents suggest that this would increase usage.

Several respondents believe Option 2 provides more direct trains to Oxford and Cambridge.

Some respondents view merged stations as an upgrade, mentioning modernisation, parking, shelter, staffing, accessibility, and greater prospects for future expansion. Several respondents believe that by creating new stations, Option 2 will provide improved, modern facilities, including car parking and bicycle storage.

Economic benefits

A small number of respondents feel Option 2 might create better economic prospects for residents, positively impact property values, lead to improved housing and community provision, and be generally better for residents.

Increasing rail use

A few respondents believe that relocation of stations may make rail travel a more attractive option over road travel and hope that stations will align to other public transport options for connecting journeys.

Journey times

Many respondents support Option 2, believing that consolidating stations and reducing stops would speed up journey times. Some respondents remark that Option 2 would attract new rail users, and a few respondents claim that although some people would have to travel further to a station, many rail users would still see a reduction in their overall journey time.

Many respondents voice support for Option 2's consistency with local developments, particularly housing developments, with some respondents suggesting the rail network should reflect both current and future populations. In turn, a few respondents remark that improved connectivity could spur further housing and economic growth. A few respondents also perceive greater opportunities for improvements to public transport under Option 2.

Other comments

Some respondents comment on other perceived benefits of Option 2, with a few respondents remarking positively that fewer trains would pass through stations such as Woburn Sands compared with Option 1. A few others suggest Option 2 could avoid possible negative impacts such as increased traffic delays on local roads around the existing stations that might occur under Option 1.

A small number of respondents support Option 2 in terms of cost, largely because they view operating and maintaining fewer stations as less expensive.

A few respondents believe that first mile / last mile station connectivity improvements would be facilitated under Option 2, possibly through coordination with other schemes or through investment. A few respondents also support plans under Option 2 to build stations on straighter parts of the tracks, on the basis that this would improve safety and make boarding trains easier for those in wheelchairs or with mobility difficulties.

Woburn Sands station

Several respondents support the proposed relocation of Woburn Sands station. The current site is viewed as constrained by surrounding development, which could pose a challenge for future growth and connectivity to other modes of transport. Some respondents view the relocated station as positively aligned with the South East Milton Keynes housing development whilst also serving the existing community, and having the potential to align with future mass rapid transit development. A few respondents hope that the new station would be as close as possible to the existing location, and others hope it will provide have good accessibility for all types of vehicles. A few respondents suggest relocation would reduce the time that crossing barriers at Newport Road are down, and others view the development as in line with aspirations to reduce car usage.

Stewartby station

Several respondents express support for the proposed Stewartby station relocation, some of whom believe it would serve more of the local population, could boost employment and development in the area, or may reduce car travel into Bedford. Siting the station on the old Brickworks is viewed positively by a few respondents who feel this avoids some of the adverse environmental impacts of other station relocations, but a few respondents say proposed housing in this area must be considered. A few respondents comment on station connectivity, mentioning the need for foot and cycle links, ease of transfer to the proposed station at Wixams, and suggest that funding for parking at the existing Kempston Hardwick station should be retained and utilised for the new Stewartby station. A few respondents believe this station should be included as a stop on the faster route.

Lidlington and Millbrook stations

Some respondents voice support for the proposed consolidation of Lidlington and Millbrook stations, noting that the new station could serve proposed housing developments nearby. A few respondents support the search area proposed and a few support bypassing the village and building the new station outside the village. A few respondents also highlight the importance of access to the new station from Marston Moretaine.

Ridgmont station

Some respondents support the proposals for the Ridgmont station relocation, suggesting the new location would better enable a transport interchange, with mentions of road links and possible park and ride schemes. A few respondents also mention plans for improving connectivity between the old station and nearby villages, which they hope would be carried forward and implemented around the new station. A few respondents support the relocation for other reasons including the potential for future growth, minimising impact on green belt land to the south of the railway and for the benefits to traffic in Aspley Guise.

Concern

Many respondents voice general opposition to Option 2, and specifically to station closures and relocations.

Many respondents raise concerns that Option 2 could have potentially negative impacts on local communities, including students and businesses. A small number of respondents raise concerns about the perceived inaccessibility of relocated stations for some people, and highlight the potential negative impacts that community severance could have on mental health. A few respondents comment that relocation proposals must cater for existing communities, whilst other respondents say that proposed and newly built housing developments should be considered. Concerns about safety and the impact on quality of life from services running through villages are raised by a few respondents.

Traffic and travel to stations

Several respondents raise concerns that Option 2 could lead to increased car use and therefore traffic levels due to increased journey times to relocated stations by bicycle or on foot. Some respondents remark that this would negatively impact congestion on already busy roads, negatively impact the environment, and contradict net-zero carbon goals.

A small number of respondents suggest that increased parking will be required if more people have to drive to stations. A few respondents remark on the potential cost of parking and believe that parking provision will increase the station's footprint. A few respondents think that once in the car, people are likely to drive further to a larger station or complete their whole journey by car, in part because driving to stations will incur additional costs. A small number of respondents remark that increased distance to stations

may negatively impact on connectivity for those without cars and suggest that public transport links to new stations would require consideration. However, a few other respondents comment that public transport connecting residents to stations would still generate more traffic on local roads compared to pedestrian access, and others suggest that such links would not be commercially viable due to the low population density in certain areas. A few respondents encourage using the findings emerging from England's Economic Heartland's work on first mile/last mile (FMLM) connectivity, in order to develop improvements concurrent with Option 2. Central Bedfordshire Council and Milton Keynes Borough Council state that they require assurances of station connectivity and requisite funding as a condition of support for Option 2 and propose discussions with EWR Co to ensure that stations achieve the most appropriate FMLM infrastructure. Central Bedfordshire Council state that colleagues in Bedford also share this position.

Environment

Several respondents voice environmental concerns about the proposed construction of new stations, including possible carbon emissions and impacts on the countryside, greenfield land, and housing. A small number of respondents are concerned that the relocation of stations will result in increased emissions from car journeys to new stations, and through the creation of increased parking facilities. Central Bedfordshire Council request information regarding environmental constraints that may require consideration in tandem with plans, and they also draw attention to a proposed parkland corridor that has safeguarded routing.

New infrastructure

Some respondents express concern about the disruption caused by the construction of new infrastructure under Option 2. They request consultation, assurances of mitigation including traffic management and adequate funding – with one respondent making these a condition for continued support of the proposal.

Noise

A few respondents express concern about potential noise impacts of the train service, particularly relating to speed, time of day, freight services, and whether diesel or hybrid trains are used. A few of these respondents request mitigation, such as lower speed limits through residential areas.

Need and cost

Some respondents do not see the justification for, or the benefits of, Option 2 proposals, including plans to build new stations and increase train frequency. Some respondents voice concern about the cost of the project compared to Option 1, and most of these respondents question the cost-benefit analysis associated with Option 2.

Local amenities and identity

A few respondents believe that Option 2 would negatively impact local amenities situated close to the current stations.

A few respondents express concern that station relocations could encourage new housing developments, which they believe could negatively impact on the local culture and identity. A few other respondents support consideration of housing developments when deciding on new station placements.

Concerns about station closures and relocations

Many respondents are concerned about the proposal to close local stations which they feel are important to local communities. Several respondents remark that local people would have to travel further to access new rail stations, which they view as inconvenient and likely to sever communities.

A few respondents voice concern about the safety of longer journeys for local residents using rural footpaths with potentially inadequate lighting to travel to and from stations in the evenings.

Some respondents comment that merging stations would likely lead to increased use of other transport, especially cars, since public transport is felt to be extremely limited in many areas. A few respondents remark that alternative transport to new stations does not feature in the proposals. A few respondents also believe that an increase in car use would have a negative impact on the environment, traffic, parking facilities, and local residents. In light of this, a few respondents suggest that proposals to close local stations go against environmental policies.

A few respondents raise concerns that station closures could have a negative impact on the local economy and prohibit the expected local growth of businesses and housing. A small number of respondents question the need for station closures, whilst a few suggest that rail usage figures should be factored into decision making. Some also question why Woburn Sands and Ridgmont stations have been selected for inclusion on the faster route, when other stations are said to have higher usage figures.

Woburn Sands station

A substantial number of respondents raise concerns about the proposed relocation of Woburn Sands station, with many respondents suggesting that the search area identified by EWR Co is either inaccessible, or less accessible, for pedestrians and cyclists compared to the current location. Several respondents believe that car usage would increase, which they suggest may reduce rail usage as well as having other negative effects. The proposed relocation is viewed by several respondents as having no benefit for residents of Woburn Sands and the surrounding areas. Some respondents are concerned about possible negative impacts the new location could have on students using the station to access education, and about the new station cutting residents off from their local community and neighbouring areas. Regarding the proposed search area, a small number of respondents

raise concerns about greenfield sites, farms, outdoor amenities, woodlands, and conservation areas. A few respondents claim that the proposal would not create new development opportunities but would instead compete with other plans for land in search areas. A few respondents raise concerns about local businesses, which they believe may be negatively impacted by Option 2, and a few believe the proposals will impact the character of the area. General disruption is a concern for a few respondents, as are trains coming through the village at high speed.

Stewartby station

Concerns about the Stewartby relocation are raised by several respondents, with some suggesting that the journey time for students to nearby schools would increase, which may in turn discourage rail use and instead promote car journeys. A few respondents suggest that the proposed relocation would be less convenient for residents of Stewartby, Kempston, and people in the developing Wixams area. Other concerns raised by a few respondents include potential negative impacts on nearby woodlands and conservation areas, the safety of the walking routes to the new station, and potential negative impacts on local businesses if train times do not adequately align with shift patterns.

Lidlington station

Several respondents raise concerns about the proposed Lidlington relocation noting that it may divide the village, cut through green spaces and woodland, and be less accessible for residents. A few respondents are concerned about possible noise and vibration from trains and construction. The implementation of a footbridge to join the platforms is a concern for a few respondents because of perceived negative visual impact. The speed of trains is also a concern for a few respondents, with a few suggesting that rerouting around the village would be preferable. The Central Bedfordshire Council state that they will not support any changes unless the bypass line at Lidlington is implemented.

Suggestions

Many respondents make general suggestions relating to station relocations, including remarks on potential train schedules, which stations should feature as stops on the faster route, new station locations and the considerations they believe should be factored into such decisions.

Many respondents emphasise the importance of good access to new stations via roads and paths, and suggest including Redway-style links for cyclists, new footpaths, car parking provision, and bus links to the new stations.

Some respondents make suggestions for additional or alternative stations, with a small number voicing support for a station close to the Interchange Retail Park in Kempston.

A small number of respondents suggest that new stations should have specific facilities, such as bike storage and car parking.

Station specific suggestions

Woburn Sands station

Several respondents provide suggestions about the proposed Woburn Sands relocation. These include extending the current station, and, if the platform is too short, instructing passengers on where to disembark. A small number of respondents request that if the station is moved it be kept as close as possible to the current station for easy access by local people. A small number of respondents make location suggestions, and O&H Land states a wish to work with EWR Co to find a suitable location, as the search area falls on land that they own.

Stewartby station

Several respondents make suggestions about the placement of the proposed Stewartby relocation and suggest that access be considered to locations including Kimberley College, the Wixams development, the proposed Brickworks development, and the Forest Centre at Marston Moretaine. A few respondents comment on the need for footpaths and cycle paths to the station. A few respondents request that train schedules conveniently link with class start and end times for Kimberley College. Regarding the station itself, a few respondents request that it provide shelter and be well lit for passenger safety. Creating travel links between the relocated Stewartby Station to a planned station at Wixams is also suggested by a few respondents.

Ridgmont station

Several respondents make suggestions about the proposed Ridgmont relocation, particularly in reference to station placement and connectivity with other transport infrastructure such as park and ride schemes, the proposed mass transit system, and Redway routes. A few respondents suggest the proposed relocation could prevent local development and reroute fast traffic which currently cuts through the area.

Lidlington station

Several respondents make suggestions about the Lidlington relocation. These concerns include that relocating the station could divide the village, that Millbrook Station be expanded instead, and that station access be considered. Such access considerations include suggestions from a few respondents that transport links to Marston Moretaine be provided, the station be situated between Lidlington and Marston Moretaine to serve both areas, bridleways be considered, and adequate access for pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicular traffic be provided. Central Bedfordshire Council also makes specific recommendations regarding access.

Kempston Hardwick station

A small number of respondents comment on the potential Kempston Hardwick relocation. Suggestions include locating the station at Kempston, and ensuring the station serves nearby housing developments and the retail park and has connectivity with the Midland Mainline Station to be provided at Wixams.

5.1.4. Other comments related to existing stations on the Marston Vale Line

Support

Several respondents make comments indicating general support, including support for improving the service, both option 1 and 2, or aspects of both options. A few respondents believe that improving reliability and connectivity will be beneficial and increase opportunities for local people. Some respondents provide general support for increasing the speed and frequency of trains.

Concern

Several respondents generally oppose the proposals. This includes citing opposition to both option 1 and 2, to station closures, to fast trains travelling through villages, and to any development.

Local community

Many respondents are concerned about the potential impact of the proposals on local people, particularly community division, disruption from construction and fast trains in the area, and general concerns about quality of life. A few respondents request as little disruption as possible and suggest coordination with other major construction in the area will help to minimise disruption.

A few respondents worry about the negative impact of construction on whole villages, including noise, dust, and vibration.

A few respondents raise concerns that proposals could negatively impact their properties and land either through compulsory purchase of their land or without further clarification.

Existing rail use and infrastructure

Some respondents are concerned about general impacts on current rail use and existing infrastructure, including during the periods when changes are implemented.

Several respondents comment on the existing stations, including the lack of facilities such as parking, poor traffic management, and low passenger use. A few respondents believe that low usage is partly due to a lack of promotion and a lack of reliability because of being a low priority for the operator. A few respondents cite the lack of bus services between the

villages and poor pedestrian access as contributing factors. A few respondents comment that the current service is needed by students and schoolchildren. There are also calls from a few respondents that alternative uses be found for existing station buildings, particularly those that are designated buildings.

Planned developments

Several respondents mention concerns about new housing developments, including how planned developments will impact rail use and suggest this should be factored into decisions about the retention of stations. A few respondents are concerned about potential overdevelopment, which they associate with a loss of character. A need to research new and planned housing is mentioned by a few respondents, remarking that the 2011 Census data is outdated, and that EWR Co's proposals appear to compete with housing plans in some instances.

Environment and landscape

Several respondents raise general concerns about potential negative environmental impacts, including on air quality, the countryside and local forests, wildlife, and biodiversity. A few respondents remark that carbon net-zero ambitions seem unachievable.

A few respondents are concerned about potential negative impacts on the landscape, believing that areas could be 'sunk under concrete'. The visual impact of the physical infrastructure and the railway line.is also cited.

Cost

A small number of respondents raise general concerns about the cost of the project, including compulsory purchase, compensatory payments, whether the cost is justified by passenger numbers, and the possibility of going over budget. A few respondents suggest investing in future-proofing the service.

Fares

A small number of respondents also comment on the cost of fares (as high prices deter usage), and potentially implementing price reductions due to the inconvenience that upgrades will cause to passengers.

Noise and vibration

A small number of respondents voice concerns about potential noise and vibration from construction, fast trains, and freight trains. A few respondents suggest that mitigation would be needed.

Roads, footpaths, and amenity

A small number of respondents suggest that concerns about roads and paths need consideration, including traffic changes due to construction and operation, walking, and cycling links, and the retention of resident parking.

A few respondents raise concerns that the proposals have the potential to impact negatively on local amenities and recreation.

Suggestions

Many respondents make suggestions about upgrades to existing stations, such as the development of nearby brownfield sites in order to extend platforms and to develop facilities such as parking and improving accessibility. Such considerations are often offered as support for expanding the current stations rather than building new ones in different locations.

Several respondents outline alternatives to both Option 1 and Option 2. These include different train frequencies, retaining alternative or more stations than those proposed, faster services stopping at stations in addition to those suggested, building a new station at Bedford Interchange Retail Park, building railway cuttings, creating a separate transport hub, rerouting around Lidlington, and creating a hybrid option that merges aspects of Options 1 and 2.

Some respondents suggest integrating proposals with local services and onward transport, including from stations to local areas, and connecting to north-south lines from existing stations to other major cities. A few respondents make specific suggestions, including new roads, bus links, and a Sunday service.

A small number of respondents suggest mitigation measures to reduce noise impacts, with a few respondents suggesting slower train speeds – particularly through villages – and potentially reducing train frequency at unpopular times.

A few respondents suggest closing Kempston Hardwick, Millbrook, or Aspley Guise.

Some respondents request more detail about the proposals to existing stations on the Marston Vale line, including service demand forecasting, construction plans, precise station locations, traffic modelling, environmental constraints, the economic case, and the considerations that have factored into the proposal process.

5.1.5. Comments on Bletchley station

Support

Some respondents express general support for EWR Co's proposals for Bletchley station, with a few of these respondents commenting that they expect the proposals to be a boost to the local economy.

Several respondents support the addition of an eastern entrance, as they feel this will better connect the station to the town, the bus station, and the college.

Concern

Some respondents make general comments about the existing station. They feel it is an unpleasant station from a customer perspective and lacks facilities, such as parking. They suggest significant investment in the existing

infrastructure will be needed. A small number of respondents feel it is only being used to reduce the cost to EWR Co.

A few respondents express concern about the impact the proposals could have on the local community. This includes concern about the level of noise from construction, any mitigation against the noise impacts and concerns about the impact the modifications could have on pedestrian routes near the station. A small number of respondents express concern that the proposals will make it more difficult for vehicle traffic to travel around Bletchley.

A few respondents express concern that the current station is inadequate from an accessibility perspective and feel that this is addressed as part of the proposed works.

Suggestions

Several respondents make suggestions about the station and the general design of Bletchley station. Some of these make comment in general terms that EWR Co should invest in "improvements" to the station. Some respondents make more specific suggestions about what the improvements should be, these include:

- Improved lighting around Bletchley station;
- Step-free access;
- Covered escalators;
- Maintained entrances to the station from both the eastern and the western side;
- Improved capacity at the station, such as via an extra platform;
- Improved interconnectivity with other train services and bus services;
- Improved facilities, such as toilets, refreshments, and car parking; and
- Incorporating the history of Bletchley Park into the station.

Finally, a few respondents feel that more detail is needed about the proposed improvements to Bletchley station, in particular what the improvements will be and how they will integrate with local infrastructure plans and facilities such as the Cemex plant.

5.2. Comments on level crossings on the Marston Vale Line

As part of the proposed EWR line, several level crossings on the Marston Vale Line would need to be closed or upgraded. The table below shows the number of responses to each of the open questions in this section.

Question	Number of responses
Question 13: Fenny Stratford: vehicular traffic – three options	1,118
Question 14: Fenny Stratford: pedestrians and other non-vehicular road users	1,082
Question 15: Bow Brickhill (V10 Brickhill Street)	1,086
Question 16: Browns Wood	1,017
Question 17: Pony	984
Question 18: Woburn Sand existing crossings	1,149
Question 19: Aspley Guise and Husborne Crawley level crossings	1,017
Question 20: Husborne Crawley Footpath No. 10 and Station Road in Ridgmont level crossings	972
Question 21: Lidlington level crossings	989
Question 22: Millbrook (Station Lane)	959
Question 23: Green Lane	953
Question 24: Wootton Broadmead (Broadmead Road)	931
Question 25: Wootton Village	914
Question 26: Wootton Village	924
Question 27: Woburn Road	912
Question 28: Bedford Carriage Sidings	922

Table 10: Number of respondents directly answering each question

5.2.1. Comments on Fenny Stratford: vehicular traffic level crossing

Question 13 asked respondents to provide their views on the proposed options for the Fenny Stratford level crossing for vehicular traffic. The three options presented were:

- Option 1: No new road;
- Option 2: The southern option; and
- Option 3: The northern option.

Question 13 received 1,118 responses which are summarised below.

General Comments about the proposals

Support

Some respondents express support for the closure of the Fenny Stratford vehicular traffic level crossings. A few respondents suggest the level crossings are currently unsafe and experience limited use.

Concern

Several respondents express their opposition to the closure of any level crossings.

Some respondents, including Milton Keynes Borough Council and Simpson and Ashland Parish Council, are opposed to all three of the proposed vehicular level crossing plans.

Several respondents express concern about the potential impact on traffic in the local area because of plans for road developments and the closure of level crossings. These respondents express particular concern about the possible increase in congestion on Staple Hall Road, Simpson Road bridge, and Bilton Road.

Some respondents state the existing infrastructure in Fenny Stratford cannot handle the extra strain of more local, commuter, and HGV traffic.

Community severance is a concern for some respondents. These respondents suggest that level crossing closures will divide Fenny Stratford and restrict access to local businesses and amenities.

A few respondents express concern that local congestion would spike without adequate off-street parking provision. They state that a lack of parking would create safety concerns for pedestrians.

The potential impact of traffic on noise and air pollution is a priority for a few respondents.

Suggestions

A small number of respondents comment that a road bridge is preferable as an alternative to all three proposals. A few other respondents suggest a pedestrian underpass or footbridge would alleviate access issues for local people. A similar number of respondents claim that an alternative route would be better. In particular, they state that a route is required which avoids the narrow canal bridge on Simpson Road.

Comments about Option 1

Support

A small number of respondents express general support for Option 1. Specifically, a few of these respondents claim the option is the most practical choice to avoid the creation of a 'rat run' (the use of residential or smaller roads instead of a main road or route) in the area.

Concern

A few respondents oppose this option without offering further information.

Several respondents raise concerns about potential increases in traffic and congestion. A similar number of respondents express specific concern about the possible impact of HGV traffic upon residential areas, particularly Staple Hall Road. Some other respondents express concern that the width of Staple Hall Road would exacerbate congestion – these respondents claim a lack of off-street parking means the road is already congested. Milton Keynes Borough Council objects to the proposal due to possible HGV traffic on Staple Hall Road.

A small number of respondents also claim that Staple Hall Road has an HGV ban in place. Potential disruption to emergency vehicle access due to congestion is a concern for a similar number of respondents.

Comments about Option 2

Support

Some respondents voice general support for Option 2. A small number of these respondents state the southern option is the most favourable alternative to avoid the possible impact of HGV traffic on Staple Hall Road.

A few respondents claim that Option 2 is the most environmentally friendly of the three options.

Concern

A few respondents object to Option 2 in general terms without providing further details.

Similar to Option 1, a small number of respondents express concern that possible increased HGV traffic on Staple Hall Road would cause congestion and hinder access for local residents. A few respondents express specific concern that existing infrastructure is not suitable for Option 2, as the 7.5t

limit, single-track canal bridge on Simpson Road would be unsuitable for HGV traffic.

Milton Keynes Borough Council says the proposed access routes to Simpson Road industrial units would be too narrow for two-way HGV access, potentially posing a risk to pedestrians.

Comments about Option 3

Support

Some respondents express general support for Option 3. A small number of respondents support this option because it would reduce HGV traffic on Staple Hall Road and reduce congestion on residential streets.

A few respondents state that Option 3 would be the least disruptive choice for the local community when compared to the alternatives.

Concern

Concerns over project feasibility are raised by some respondents. These respondents claim that the land designated for development under Option 3 is already being used for construction. Specifically, some other respondents state the area around the Fenny Lock roundabout is being used for a new industrial unit development.

A small number of respondents express concern that the 7.5t limit, single-track Simpson Road bridge is an unsuitable route for HGVs.

A few respondents identify the possible impact of rerouting traffic on congestion and pedestrian safety as a concern.

5.2.2. Comments on Fenny Stratford: pedestrians and other non-vehicular road users level crossing

Question 14 asked respondents to provide their views on the proposed options for the Fenny Stratford level crossing for pedestrians and other non-vehicular road users. The three options presented were:

- Option 1: No new construction/works;
- Option 2: The footbridge option; and
- Option 3: The diversion option.

Question 14 received 1,082 responses which are summarised below.

General comments about the proposals

Support

A small number of respondents express general support for the closure of the Fenny Stratford pedestrian crossings. A few of these respondents express their support with the caveat that safer crossings for pedestrians should be prioritised.

Concern

Some respondents feel the level crossing in Fenny Stratford should not be altered. A small number of other respondents specifically object to all three of the proposed options.

Many respondents express concern about the pedestrian crossing proposals for Fenny Stratford. For some of these respondents, safety is of significant concern. These respondents express concern that pedestrian safety would be compromised in any option utilising canal tow paths and proposals to use the canal tow path would potentially restrict access for the large elderly demographic in the area. A few other respondents claim that the lock gates in Fenny Stratford are unsafe for the public to use, and increased use would disturb canal users.

A small number of respondents voice concern that the proposals would impact upon general access around the village. A few of these respondents claim that the proposals are 'out of touch' and fail to consider the local demographic and geographic context.

Non-motorised access is of particular concern for a small number of respondents. A few respondents voice concern that the lock gate and tow path are unsuitable for cycle access and crossing. A few other respondents feel the plans do not give sufficient consideration to horse riders.

For a small number of respondents, the potential impact on journey times is a concern. A few of these respondents comment that average journey times would potentially increase by between 10 and 30 minutes.

A few respondents feel that the crossing options would impact wildlife and the landscape.

A few respondents suggest there is no need for level crossing alterations as Simpson Road currently sees a limited amount of traffic. A few other respondents claim the curvature of the track in Fenny Stratford means high-speed trains would not be able to travel at full speed through the village, therefore reducing the need for level crossing closures.

Suggestion

A small number of respondents provide general suggestions for the pedestrian crossing alterations. A few of these respondents suggest that a pedestrian bridge would be the ideal solution in all three options. A few other respondents claim that an upgrade to the existing level crossing would be a better alternative.

Comments about Option 1

Support

A few respondents express general support for Option 1, with some of these commenting that the option is the least disruptive to the local area when compared to the other options.

Concern

A small number of respondents express general opposition to Option 1. Of these respondents, a few voice their direct opposition to possible increases in journey times as a result of the proposal.

Potentially longer journey times are a concern for a small number of respondents. A few of these respondents claim that Option 1 would potentially increase journey times by between 10 and 20 minutes. A few other respondents express concern that the swing bridge proposed as a means to cross the canal is often impassable for up to an hour when in use.

A small number of respondents are concerned that the canal tow path route would not be suitable for pedestrian use. In particular, a few respondents claim the narrow path and swing bridge crossing would make disabled access extremely difficult. A few other respondents express concern that the steep bank leading up to Lock View Lane would be difficult to traverse, especially in poor weather.

A few other respondents express concern that Option 1 has the potential to pose safety risks. In particular, a few respondents claim that the tow path is uneven and narrow. A few other respondents also claim that adverse weather conditions would make the tow path icy and/or dangerously slippery. The need for improved lighting along the canal is also highlighted by a few other respondents.

Suggestions

A few respondents suggest that improved pedestrian access should be guaranteed as part of the proposal.

Comments about Option 2

Support

Several respondents express general support for this Option 2. Some of these respondents claim that the footbridge option is the best alternative when compared to the other options.

A small number of respondents comment that Option 2has the potential to provide the most convenient access for pedestrians. More specifically, a few of these respondents voice their support for the suitability of a bridge for cyclists and people with restricted mobility. Milton Keynes Borough Council supports this option, with the caveat that ramp access is provided.

A few respondents support the potential reduction in community severance and journey time that Option 2 provides. Other respondents state that Option 2 is the safest proposal, because it would create distance between pedestrians and the canal.

Concern

A few respondents feel that Option 2 could limit access for those with restricted mobility such as the elderly and people with physical disabilities. A few of these respondents note that the proposed bridge would require ramp access rather than steps.

A few respondents voice their concern that the proposed bridge would result in the unnecessary destruction of nearby commercial properties. A few other respondents feel that the visual impact of a new bridge would not be consistent with other local developments.

Suggestions

A few respondents suggest the existing crossing could be used as a location for the proposed footbridge. These respondents claim that this would be a more favourable alternative to the demolition of buildings. A few other respondents suggest that ramp access would be beneficial for cyclists and physically disabled members of the community.

A few respondents suggest the creation of a dedicated cycle route.

Comments about Option 3

Support

This option is supported in general terms by a small number of respondents. Option 3 is the preferred option for a few other respondents because of the potentially lower cost in comparison to other options.

A few respondents cite better access to the village and reduced community severance as a reason that they support Option 3.

A few other respondents support Option 3 because they feel this option has less impact on the visual landscape of Fenny Stratford. A few of these respondents claim that they can only support this option if steps are taken to ensure visual attractiveness of the diversion.

A few respondents believe that this option would be the least disruptive proposal to the local community.

Concern

A small number of respondents express general opposition to Option 3. Of these respondents, a few voice their direct opposition to possible increases in journey times as a result of the proposal.

Safety is a concern for a small number of respondents. Specifically, that the narrow tow path's proximity to the water's edge and mooring equipment such as ropes would potentially endanger pedestrians. A few other respondents believe that the canal route would be too remote, even if more lighting was provided.

A small number of respondents express concern that the canal tow path would not be accessible to disabled people, the elderly, or those with cycles

and pushchairs. A few other respondents believe that Option 3 has been planned without an understanding of local demographics.

A few respondents are concerned about the possible impact on canal users of pedestrian use of the tow path. These respondents believe that the existing canal service station cannot be relocated. The Canal and River Trust expresses concern that pedestrian use of the tow path would restrict narrowboat access to the pump house. They also believe that increased tow path use would disturb the privacy of moored residents.

A few respondents express concern that Option 3 would increase light pollution. A few other respondents believe the proposal is unfeasible because the west of the canal currently has no public access.

Suggestions

A few respondents suggest the provision of cycle routes alongside the tow path. A few other respondents suggest that tow paths should be improved in any scenario where pedestrian use would increase. The Canal and River Trust suggest that EWR Co and the local community would benefit from further engagement. They believe that possible collaboration would allow EWR Co to plan resurfacing and widening of the existing tow path.

5.2.3. Comments on Bow Brickhill level crossing

Question 15 asked respondents to provide their views on the proposed options for the Bow Brickhill level crossing. The four options presented were:

- Option 1: A new road from Station Road roundabout to the south of the railway, to the Water Mill roundabout on Caldecotte Lake Drive. The new bridge over the railway would be to the west of the existing level crossing;
- Option 2: A new road between Station Road and Tilbrook roundabout. There would be a new junction on Station Road, and a new exit would be added to Tilbrook roundabout. The new road bridge would go over the railway to the east of the existing roundabout;
- Option 3: a new road between Station Road and Tilbrook roundabout. There would be a new junction on Station Road, and a new exit would be added to Tilbrook roundabout. The new railway would be on a bridge over that new road, to the east of the existing level crossing; and
- Option 4: a new road bridge over the railway immediately adjacent to the existing level crossing. Changes would need to be made to the junction between Brickhill Street and Caldecotte Lake Drive and the junction between Brickhill Street and Station Road.

Question 15 received 1,086 responses which are summarised below.

General comments about the proposal

Support

Many respondents share their support for the closure of the Bow Brickhill level crossing and for it to be replaced by a bridge or underpass wherever possible as they believe level crossings are bad for both road and rail traffic.

Concern

Some respondents oppose the closure of Bow Brickhill level crossing and do not believe that the EWR line will bring any benefits for them or the local area.

Several respondents share concerns about the options offered for the Bow Brickhill level crossing, particularly regarding access for horses and bridleways. Additionally, a few express concern about pedestrian access, remarking that safety and convenience for pedestrians should take priority over rail. Others comment on the closure of the V10 road at Bow Brickhill, claiming it would cause "chaos" to the area by increasing journey time and traffic. The preservation of wildlife and historical sites is also a priority for a few respondents who comment about the potential damage caused by construction.

Suggestions

A few respondents suggest an extension of the V11 road seems more "sensible."

A few respondents prefer an underpass to a bridge as they believe an underpass would reduce noise and may have lower maintenance costs. A small number of respondents state that they want EWR Co to build a bridge that follows the line of the existing road (V10 / Brickhill Street) over the existing level crossing. Additionally, a few suggest a crossing point for cars at Bow Brickhill to mitigate traffic issues, while others suggest a dual carriageway.

A few respondents share other suggestions, including:

- Protecting the existing environment;
- Ensuring access to both pedestrians and vehicle traffic;
- Maintaining a vehicular crossing point for the V10; and
- Considering the local population and their needs.

Comments about Option 1

Support

Several respondents express general support for Option 1.

Concern

A few respondents oppose Option 1 as they believe it could create a bottleneck of traffic through a housing estate, potentially causing noise, pollution, and disruption. The cost of creating a new road and bridge

adjacent to the Caldecotte Lake Business Park is also a concern. Respondents also oppose this option because they claim that the gradients and road curvatures are steeper than standard and therefore, may not meet the regular standards for roads.

Suggestions

A few respondents suggest road network adaptations such as parking for the local business park and station access on Brickhill Road.

Comments about Option 2

Support

Some respondents support Option 2, suggesting it would be less costly and less disruptive to the local area as the new road bridge passes over the railway.

Concern

A few respondents oppose Option 2 as the new road bridge would be close to the village, disrupting the local community. Respondents also comment that Option 2 could divert traffic from the A5, potentially increasing traffic, noise, and pollution on Station Road.

A few respondents express concern about Option 2 due to the visual impact on the countryside, resulting from high sided vehicles passing over the bridge as well as the potential noise intrusion. The impact on the business park at Tilbrook is also a concern for respondents. Additionally, a few comment that Option 2 could make the junction more complex, leading to further traffic congestion.

Comments about Option 3

Support

A small number of respondents support Option 3 on the basis that it minimises the amount of new road construction. While a few respondents think that an over bridge would be unsightly, it would not affect many people's day-to-day life, so on balance express support for Option 3.

Concern

A few respondents oppose Option 3, claiming it presents more issues than any other option. As such, they do not want Option 3 to be considered. Concerns focus on the potential negative impacts on farmland and flooding issues due to the low-lying nature of the land, compounded by the road being lower. Other respondents raise concerns about the potential increase in traffic as well as vehicles colliding with the proposed underpass or bridge, potentially resulting in delays to rail services. Respondents also comment on the potential negative impact on the business park at Tilbrook.

Comments about Option 4

Support

Many respondents voice support for Option 4. A few respondents believe that it would reduce the environmental damage, cause the least impact to surrounding areas while retaining the grid road network. A few other respondents support Option 4 as they feel it would effectively divert the traffic away from the Station Road and provides a connection to the A5. A few respondents think that Option 4 offers the best long-term solution among the options as the volume of traffic generated by the other options would be too high.

Concern

A few respondents express concern about the cost of Option 4, claiming that it is the most expensive option. Respondents comment on the proposed road bridge and re-alignment of Caldecotte Lake drive which could significantly impact on the development of Caldecotte Site C, with the potential to sterilise large parts of the site. Given the possibility of a complimentary development to the business park and other surrounding businesses, they believe Option 4 could impact upon the efficient operation of the surrounding area in both land use and highways terms.

Additionally, a few comment on the design of the bridge while others express concern over the closure of Brickhill Street while the work is carried out; which could cause extra journey time. Additional concerns focus on housing developments in the area, effects on Milton Keynes Development Partnership (MKDP) land and Tilbrook business park.

Suggestion

A few respondents suggest a bridge should be constructed to the west of the current V10 road. Other suggestions include ramps from the bridge down to the platforms, steps for pedestrians and cycle lanes and Redways for cyclists.

5.2.4. Comments on Browns Wood level crossing

Question 16 asked respondents to provide their views on the proposed options for the Browns Wood level crossing. The three options presented were:

- Option 1: A new stairs-only footbridge at the location of the existing crossing, which is appropriate as the existing footpath which provides access to the bridge is not suitable for people with limited mobility;
- Option 2: A crossing in the same location as the existing level crossing, but this option would include ramps to allow people with limited mobility to access the footbridge; and
- Option 3: A new footpath under the railway at the location of the existing level crossing.

Question 16 received 1,017 responses which are summarised below.

General comments about the proposal

Support

Some respondents believe closing the crossing until firmer plans for future developments are in place is sensible.

A few other respondents support the closing of the crossing, on the condition that it is replaced by an underpass or bridge.

Concern

Some respondents state they do not feel there is a need to alter the level crossing.

Convenience and safety of pedestrians are concerns for a few respondents, while others express concern about horse and cycle access. A few respondents comment on the potential impact of traffic being pushed through residential areas, negatively affecting the local community due to increased noise and air pollution. Additionally, respondents raise safety concerns about proposed underpasses, which may be dark, and encourage EWR Co to consider an overground option. Impacts on ancient woodland, the proposed cost, potential impacts on quality of life, local businesses and employment are also concerns for a few respondents.

Suggestions

A few respondents suggest an extension to the V11 road as an alternative to the three options presented in the Consultation Document. They propose that the V11 road could be modified to become a dual carriageway across the railway line from the H10 road southwards to meet the new H11 road, providing an alternative to the V10 route and Bow Brickhill level crossing. Additionally, there are suggestions that the option chosen should be in proportion to the crossing usage and that the crossing should also accommodate cyclists and pedestrians. A few respondents prefer an underpass as an alternative, as it would have the least impact on the local area, while others suggest a bridge which is accessible to both pedestrians and traffic.

Comments about Option 1

Support

Some respondents express support for Option 1 as they believe it is the cheapest and easiest option, while reducing the need for land acquisition.

Concern

A few respondents feel that Option 1 would not offer comprehensive accessibility for all and as such would not be a viable option.

Suggestion

A few respondents suggest a footbridge should be provided with steps and ramps to maximise accessibility.

Comments about Option 2

Support

Some respondents support Option 2, believing it would be less disruptive. A few respondents also support this option on the basis that it would improve access by providing ramps for less mobile users.

Concern

A few respondents comment about the cost of Option 2, while other respondents express concern that the footpath could be difficult for people with limited mobility. Additionally, the potential negative visual impact resulting from Option 2 is a concern for a few respondents.

Comments about Option 3

Support

Some respondents support Option 3, believing it is the most accessible and least disruptive to the area, while a few other respondents support this option as they feel it would be cheaper to build and have less visual impact.

Concern

A few respondents are concerned that the underpass would not integrate ecologically with the surrounding green space and would, which would potentially make the footpath unusable for people with limited mobility. A few other respondents raise concerns that underpasses are dark and could potentially be vandalised. Respondents also oppose Option 3 as unnecessary.

Suggestion

A few respondents suggest linking Option 3 to Redways in Browns Wood, and a new Redway into Woburn Sands, providing a new cycle route into Milton Keynes from Woburn Sands.

5.2.5. Comments on Pony level crossing

Question 17 asked respondents to provide their views on the proposed options for the Pony level crossing. The three options presented were:

- Option 1: A new bridge over the railway at the site of the current crossing. The bridleway would be ramped to the north and south to allow for all forms of non-vehicular use. To the north of the railway this ramp would be made up of a steel structure, with a sound-deadening non-slip surface. To the south of the railway, they would use an earth embankment to build the ramp to the bridge over the railway;
- Option 2: A very similar option, except the bridleway ramp to the north

of the railway would be moved away from residential properties by placing it in agricultural land to the east; and
- Option 3: An underpass in the same position as the current crossing.

Question 17 received 984 responses which are summarised below.

General comments about the proposal

Support

Several respondents express support for the closure of the level crossing. A few respondents state they support the closure providing a form of crossing remains in place. Additionally, a few respondents support the proposals due to safety concerns regarding level crossings.

Suggestion

A small number of respondents suggest either a bridge or underpass as an alternative crossing, while a few respondents do not express a preference for either option. A few respondents are concerned that horses would be spooked by an underpass. Furthermore, a few respondents comment on the importance of listening to local people, especially horse riders, regarding the suitability of the proposed crossing designs for equestrians. A few respondents ask for more information about the difference between Option 1 and 2.

Concern

Some respondents are opposed to the proposed changes to the level crossing, with particular concerns about the potential disruption that construction works could cause to public rights of way.

A small number of respondents express concern about accessing the crossing on horseback, suggesting horses could be spooked by trains while crossing the proposed bridge. Additionally, other respondents express concern about the accessibility of the proposed types of crossing, particularly for people with disabilities and cyclists. Preserving the environment is a priority for a few respondents, who mention maintaining wildlife corridors, prioritising carbon neutrality, and considering livestock and horses grazing nearby.

Finally, a few respondents are concerned about the impact a new crossing could have on the local community. Specifically, the potential impact on access for housing developments on both sides of the track.

Comments about Option 1

Some respondents support Option 1 because, in their view, this option would cause the least amount of damage to the surrounding green space and follows the line of the present crossing. Furthermore, a few respondents express support for a bridge but highlight the importance of accessibility for bikes, wheelchairs, and pushchairs.

However, access for non-motorised users is a concern for a few

respondents. In particular, the potential for horses to spook on the bridge as trains pass underneath them. The potential noise generated from a bridge crossing is also a concern for a few respondents.

Additionally, respondents mention concerns about the visual impact a steel structure could have on the neighbouring properties.

Comments about Option 2

Some respondents express support for Option 2, with a few commenting that, for horse riders, bridge crossings are preferable to an underpass. A few respondents also support Option 2 as it is slightly further away from residential properties and therefore would have less impact on the local community.

A few respondents express concern about further diversions of the existing bridleway, potentially requiring users to double back on themselves.

Comments about Option 3

Some respondents support Option 3. A small number support the underpass as they feel it is most suitable for horses as they cannot see or be spooked by the trains. A few mention the elevated nature of the current level crossing, meaning the underpass would not need to be very deep while other respondents state that Option 3 would have less impact on local residents. A few respondents suggest that the underpass should be well lit, at an appropriate gradient and have a suitable non-slip surface. The length should also be kept to a minimum with the exit remaining visible. The underpass should also be accessible for horse riders, cyclists, and pedestrians.

However, a few respondents have concerns about the amount of open space that could be lost by building an underpass. Additionally, a few respondents are concerned about the potential for drainage problems as a result of Option 3. This includes comments about the route being impassable in the winter and the need for permanent water pumps to prevent flooding, which could become a maintenance liability. A few respondents are concerned about anti-social behaviour and safety if using an underpass at night.

5.2.6. Comments on Woburn Sands existing level crossings

Question 18 asked respondents to provide their views on the proposed options for the Woburn Sands existing level crossings. The two options presented were:

- Option 1: A new road around Woburn Sands and a new School Crossing bridge; and
- Option 2: Keeping Woburn Sands crossing with a new Woodleys Farm bridge.

Question 18 received 1,149 responses which are summarised below.

General comments about the proposal

Support

Some respondents support the closure of the level crossings, without providing further clarification for their support.

Concern

Many respondents oppose the closure of the level crossing with some expressing concern that the closure would split the community and reduce accessibility to facilities and amenities south of the track for residents living to the north, with specific reference to potential impacts on Edgewick Farm (without providing further detail). Respondents also suggest that by reducing access journey times would increase for both pedestrians and road users.

Many respondents reject both of the proposed options. A small number worry about the possible negative impact on the surrounding environment, countryside, and historic towns. A similar number of respondents state that the proposal would divide the community and have a possible negative impact on health.

Many respondents express concern that the closure of Woburn Sands level crossing would split the community and disrupt access to local amenities such as health services and the local high street. Some respondents are concerned about limited pedestrian and vehicular access to areas south of the railway, and do not feel the proposed footbridge is an adequate solution. Congestion and increased car use are a concern for some respondents who highlight the possible negative impact on the environment. A Few other respondents comment on the potential negative impact on emergency service response times.

Several respondents voice concern about the possible adverse impact of the closure of Woburn Sands level crossing on the local community. Some express concern about the negative impact of closing the school crossing by Network Rail as they feel this creates a safety risk for local school children.

A few respondents believe that a possible increase in traffic could lead to an increase in air pollution.

Some respondents remark that the closure of public footpaths by Network Rail has increased pedestrian journey times, especially the closure of the school crossing in Woburn Sands. It has resulted in residents and school children using the main road crossing, which these respondents claim is more dangerous. They also voice their concerns over the possible negative effects of future potential crossing closures.

A small number of respondents express concern about the potential negative economic impact on businesses on Woburn Sands high street if the level crossing is closed.

Some respondents voice concern about possible negative impacts on the local environment. A small number of respondents express concern about

the potential negative consequences for local wildlife and habitats, in particular. A small number of other respondents suggest that there would be an increase in the local community's carbon footprint. A few respondents highlight the possible negative impact on access to public footpaths. A small number of respondents suggest that improving existing rail links instead of creating a new one would be a greener alternative.

Many respondents are concerned about the impact on local allotments. They claim that the allotments have a positive impact on the health of local people and help bring together the local community, as such several oppose the proposal to build a road through Edgewick Farm and the local allotments. A small number express concern that the proposed road would significantly reduce the number of green spaces in the local area, which they comment are already below the average number in the wider Milton Keynes area. A few respondents voice concern that EWR Co's proposed route would prevent the development of the country park set out in the South East Milton Keynes Development Framework.

Several respondents believe there would be a potential negative impact on the identity of the local community and in particular local towns such as Woburn Sands, Bow Brickhill, Wavendon and Aspley Guise area, commenting that the proposals threaten a long established, thriving community.

Some respondents feel there is a lack of information in the Consultation Document about the Woburn Sands crossing. A few voice concern about the possible negative impact on traffic and comment on the absence of a traffic survey. A small number of respondents feel that EWR Co's planning process does not consider the views of local people or their knowledge of the area and fails to recognise potential negative impacts on the community. A small number of respondents suggest that a bridge would be a good solution to solve issues related to the closure of the level crossing.

Some respondents believe the closure of the Woburn Sands level crossings and foot crossings would reduce the safety of pedestrians and cyclists. They claim pedestrians would need to use the road crossing which they feel is more dangerous. Some respondents are especially concerned about the safety of local school children using the busy road crossing. Some respondents state that high volumes of traffic would reduce the safety of pedestrians and cyclists and have a potential negative impact on their health.

Several respondents voice concern about the possible negative impact of the Woburn Sands level crossing closure on traffic flow and movement, and fear that it would lead to traffic rerouting onto other local roads which they believe are unable to cope with high volumes of traffic. They claim it would cause heavy congestion on roads like Bow Brickhill Road, Theydon Avenue, The Leys and Hardwick Road. Some respondents state that Hardwick Road would be an unsuitable road for diverted traffic as it only has one lane. A few respondents suggest that the local traffic problems could worsen after the

new development of 3,000 homes in the local area.

Suggestions

Several respondents ask that EWR Co and Milton Keynes Council consider the views of the community and respect their needs. Some respondents propose further analysis and consultation involving the local community, Milton Keynes Council and Woburn Sands Town Council.

With regard to improving the existing crossing, some respondents comment that improved time management of train schedules would ensure that the level crossing can be kept open for longer than proposed in the Consultation Document. Some respondents suggest improving technology, barriers and signalling to address the issue of the barrier closure. A small number comment that a redesign of the Woburn Sands level crossing would be beneficial, whilst a few believe a locking gate would prove useful to help increase the safety of pedestrians using the School Crossing and prevent its closure.

A small number of respondents suggest relocating the railway route. A few suggest rerouting the railway to pass under Newport Road, as they believe this would remove the need for a crossing. A few question the need for the number of trains per hour passing through Woburn Sands and suggest having only two trains per hour passing through Woburn Sands.

Many respondents offer alternative road network adaptations to help manage a potential increase in traffic.

In response to the proposal to move Woburn Sands station, several respondents argue that this is not necessary. They believe there is ample space adjacent to the station which can be acquired and used to improve the station and its facilities. Some also state that the current platform could be extended using land north of the line. A few disagree however and state a new station would need to be built.

A few respondents suggest building a platform at Woburn Sands station on the opposite side of the road to help reduce the time of the crossing closure. A small number of respondents support the proposal for a country park in the South East Milton Keynes Development Framework as they believe it would have a potential positive impact on the local community.

Many respondents suggest that an underpass or bridge should replace level crossings to help reduce local traffic.

Several respondents support the idea of building a footbridge to provide safe pedestrian and bike access over the Woburn Sands Road. Several of these respondents are particularly supportive as they believe it is very important to provide school children access to a safe crossing over a perceived busy, dangerous road. A few respondents support a footbridge to provide access for wheelchairs, pushchairs, and mobility scooters.

Comments about Option 1

Support

A small number of respondents support Option 1 as it would provide pedestrian access with a ramp. A few respondents support Option 1 as they believe it would keep existing and planned new communities connected.

Several respondents support Option 1, but some supportive respondents request some modifications to the proposed plans.

A few respondents remark that Option 1 would be safer for pedestrians and drivers. Several respondents support Option 1 as it would reduce the impact of traffic in Woburn Sands.

Concern

Many respondents express general opposition to Option 1 without offering any further clarification. Where respondents have gone into detail their concerns are outlined below.

Impact on emergency services

Some respondents believe that the closure of the level crossings would lead to a lengthy diversion and increase the journey times for emergency services, with potential negative impacts on the health of the local people.

Local community

Many respondents express concern that the closure of the crossings in Option 1 would divide the community and cut off villages from each-other, in particular Woburn Sands and Wavendon. They believe local residents would be cut off from amenities located in the central part of Woburn Sands and in Aspley Heath including local shops, businesses, schools and GP surgeries. Many express their concern that the poor pedestrian access would force more people to use their cars. Several claim this would cause an increase in traffic in the area. Several voice their concern that the crossing closures would potentially prevent children from walking to school and would increase car usage.

Accessibility

Some respondents feel that the level crossing closures would impact older residents with limited mobility or who do not have access to a car, isolating them from the community and potentially negatively impacting their health. A few respondents ask if the proposed footbridge would have ramp access for wheelchairs and people with disabilities.

Economy and value for money

A few respondents comment that option 1 is a misuse of money whilst another respondent believes it would be preferable to maintain the existing road link via the Newport Road.

Many respondents state that the closure of the level crossings in Option 1

would have a potential negative impact on the local economy in particular businesses on the Woburn Sands high street, including Frosts, The Stables, and the Woburn Sands Emporium. These respondents claim the closure of the level crossings would lead to an increase in journey times, deterring local people from travelling to the local high street and local businesses.

Environment

Several respondents have concerns about the potential negative impact on the environment, with some expressing concern about the possible reduction in green spaces in the area. A small number highlight the possible negative impact of traffic on pollution levels and the health of local residents. A similar number of respondents believe that increased noise impact would impact on the tranquillity of the area and negatively impact residents. A small number of respondents voice concerns about the potential impact on the countryside and the woods, including Wavendon Woods. A few respondents comment on the potential risk for local habitats and wildlife.

Amenities

A substantial number of respondents voice concern about the potential negative impact to the local community of building a road through Edgewick Farm and the allotments. A considerable number of respondents oppose the removal of this green space as many believe it would have a potential detrimental impact on the health of residents who use Edgewick Farm and the allotments for recreation. Many other respondents are concerned about the potential negative impact on dog walkers who they suggest frequently use the area.

Many respondents believe the closure of Woburn Sands level crossing would divide the local community. Several state that it would disrupt village life and a similar number believe local businesses and the local high street would suffer financially, as some residents would not be able to easily access them.

Need

Several respondents believe there is no need for either the whole project, or the option of closing the road crossing and constructing another bridge this project and that it would not serve any purpose for the local villages. A small number comment that the speed and frequency of trains on the EWR line at Woburn Sands is not dependant on permanently closing the Woburn Sands level crossing.

Homes and property

A small number of respondents have concerns that local property values would decrease as a result of Option 1 and highlight the potential noise from trains. A few respondents believe some properties would need to be demolished and would be disruptive to local residents.

Traffic

A substantial number of respondents express concern about the potential for increased traffic, especially on local residential roads like Theydon Avenue, Hardwick Road, and The Leys, and they believe diverting traffic onto these roads would not be feasible. Several respondents are concerned about the increased air pollution as a result of increased traffic, and the possible negative impact on the health of local people. Some believe that building a road through Edgewick Farm and allotments would not address the road traffic bottleneck, just move it further down the road. Several respondents feel that the closure of Woburn Sands level crossing would reduce road access to Milton Keynes for Woburn Sands residents. Some residents voice their concerns about the increase in noise pollution due to a potential increase in traffic, and fear that this would have adverse impacts on the quality of life of local people.

Suggestions

Some respondents suggest building a footbridge, with a small number proposing a new footbridge at the old school crossing. A few respondents feel that this would improve safety and make it easier for pedestrians, especially school children, to cross the railway without interacting with heavy traffic at Woburn Sands level crossing.

Comments on Option 2

Support

Some respondents support keeping the Woburn Sands level crossing open, as outlined in Option 2, because of the benefits to motorised users. Some other respondents support Option 2 as the level crossing would allow pedestrians and cyclists to cross the railway and provide a vital link across the line for the community.

Many respondents prefer Option 2, with several respondents commenting they would prefer to have the road crossing closed 40 minutes every hour than be permanently closed.

Many respondents support Option 2 as they believe it would have a possible positive impact on the local community. Several respondents prefer Option 2 rather than permanently closing the level crossings. Some respondents state that Option 2 would discourage traffic and therefore create a safer environment for pedestrians.

Concern

Several respondents oppose Option 2 without providing further context.

A few respondents express concern regarding the potential delay to emergency services which could result from the crossing being closed for 40 minutes every hour.

A few respondents have concerns about the cost of Option 2 and whether it

would be a cost-effective investment.

A few respondents are concerned that Option 2 would block a north exit from Woburn Sands town and would negatively impact the economy of the local high street.

Some respondents believe that having the barrier down for 40 minutes every hour would cause disruption to road users and pedestrians. A small number of respondents express concern over the impact on pedestrian access and journeys. A few respondents also express concern that there is no proposed footbridge.

A few respondents argue that it is highly unlikely that many trains would be using the EWR line and therefore there is no need for Option 2.

Many respondents fear that increased barrier closure times would lead to more traffic on local roads. A small number of respondents worry about the potential impact of increased traffic on pollution levels.

Suggestions

Several respondents support the proposal for a road bridge or underpass rather than a level crossing to enable flow of traffic. A few respondents suggest a footbridge for pedestrian access over the crossing.

Some respondents suggest building a bypass to improve traffic on local roads whilst a small number of respondents believe changes to current roads would help alleviate traffic.

Several respondents suggest a footbridge, however some of those respondents suggest having the footbridge near the old school crossing.

Several respondents believe better management and level crossing scheduling would allow for level crossing closure times to be kept to a minimum. Some respondents argue that reducing the number of trains would also help reduce level crossing closure times.

A small number of respondents request more information. A few specify the need for traffic surveys and landscape drawings.

5.2.7. Comments on Aspley Guise and Husborne Crawley level crossings

Question 19 asked respondents to provide their views on the proposed options for the Aspley Guise and Husborne Crawley level crossings. The two options presented were:

- Option 1: A new road around Aspley Guise village to the east; and
- Option 2: Aspley Guise closure with no replacement.

Question 19 received 1,017 responses which are summarised below.

General comments about the proposal

Support

Several respondents express general support for the closure of the Aspley Guise level crossing without providing further details. A small number state that their support for the closure is dependent on an alternative crossing being provided.

Concern

Several respondents oppose the proposal to close the Aspley Guise level crossing, stating that it should remain in place. Additionally, a few respondents oppose the proposal for an overpass.

Some respondents express concern about the closure of the level crossing, with a few objecting in strong terms. Reasons include fears around the community being divided and potentially longer journey times at extra cost to drivers. Additionally, access for non-motorised traffic is a concern for some respondents, particularly the impact of the level crossing closure on pedestrian and equestrian access across the railway, as well as the potential impact on cyclists where alternative road routes may be unsafe. Respondents also voice concerns about the possible negative impact on the local community as a result of the level crossing closure, particularly the potential for increased development from Milton Keynes, the risk of damage to the village and the break-up of long-established communities. Furthermore, some respondents state that the proposals do not account for increases in traffic and the impact this would have on local roads. In particular, these respondents comment that the centre of Aspley Guise village does not have the infrastructure to support more traffic.

A small number of respondents express concern about the potential consequences of new development on the environment. Concerns focus on inadvertent effects on the countryside, wildlife, mature trees, and biodiversity within the conservation area, alongside fears that the potential environmental damage outweighs the benefits of the project.

The feasibility of the development is a concern for a few respondents, particularly the changing gradients along the track and the resulting potential challenges for bridge construction.

A few respondents highlight the need to listen to local residents, claiming that Aspley Guise Parish Council does not effectively represent local feelings on alternatives to the level crossing.

A few respondents comment on the potential poor performance, effectiveness and speed of proposed options compared to the current level crossing.

Road safety is a concern for a few respondents, in particular that closing level crossings would lead to an increase in traffic.

Suggestions

Some respondents ask for a bridge or underpass to be built in place of the level crossing. Suggestions range from a road bridge over the railway track, to a pedestrian underpass as a less intrusive alternative. A small number of respondents suggest that a footbridge should be built to allow the continuation of cyclist and pedestrian crossings. Additionally, a few respondents support an underpass to allow badgers to cross. Whereas other respondents suggest that a change in gradient along the track would mean that a bridge would need to be a flyover.

A small number of respondents suggest either improving the existing level crossing or re-siting it, referencing advances in technology that allow more efficient and reliable signalling. Additionally, a small number of respondents suggest that a link between the north and south of the village could be facilitated by a road through the 'Triangle' site, utilising the proposed developments from Hayfield Consortium's infrastructure. A few respondents suggest criteria for the choice of bridge or underpass; emphasising either the option that is least impactful or cheaper.

Comments on Option 1

Support

Several respondents support Option 1, citing the importance of replacing the Aspley Guise level crossing with a means of continued crossing. Furthermore, a few respondents support Option 1 for safety reasons, particularly for cyclists.

Concerns

Some respondents object strongly to the proposed road link and bridge with a few suggesting it is an unnecessary expense.

Several respondents mention concerns about the potential environmental impacts of Option 1. This includes a small number of remarks about the impact on wildlife such as, stag beetles, bats, deer, foxes and birdlife like yellow hammers, sparrow hawks and tawny owls. A small number of respondents express concern about the potential impact on mature trees and woodland areas as well as the possible impact on wildlife corridors.

Some respondents also express concern about the impact Option 1 could have on the local community. A few comments focus on the potential negative impact of cutting off the northern side of Berry Lane from the railway, while a few respondents mention the negative impact on the village environment. A few state Option 1 would exacerbate a loss of village identity and encourage unwanted future development projects.

Some respondents state concerns regarding an increase in traffic as a result of Option 1. A small number of respondents claim this option encourages traffic down Salford Road, potentially turning a narrow road into a rat run with no viable means of widening the road. A few other respondents

comment that Salford Road could become dangerous and create a problem for the smooth flowing of traffic through the square in the centre of Aspley Guise. A potential increase in traffic-related noise is mentioned by a few respondents along with concerns about longer journey times for the route to Woburn Sands.

A small number of respondents claim Option 1 could have an adverse impact on their property and land. This includes impacting potential future property sales, a reduction in property values and the possible loss of houses and adjoining land.

A small number of respondents express concern about the cost of Option 1. This includes a few remarks about the negligible benefit for local taxpayers and significant expenditure for land acquisition and construction.

Suggestions

Due to the shared ownership of property and land along Berry Lane, a few respondents suggest that negotiations regarding future construction needs should occur with all property owners on the lane, emphasising the importance of not disconnecting the village. Additionally, a few respondents highlight the importance of a new bridge and road being wide enough to allow for safe cycling.

Comments on Option 2

Support

Several respondents support Option 2 because they feel it is the least destructive option, more cost effective and has least impact on village way of life and the residents. Some respondents support Option 2 because it diverts through traffic away from the centre of Aspley Guise village. Respondents caveat their support, emphasising the importance of minimising HGV traffic through the village centre and on the narrow roads around the village. Option 2 is also supported by a small number of respondents due to its lesser impact on the landscape and the environment. This relates, in particular, to maintaining the rural character of the area north of the railway and protecting the green space of the village.

Concern

Some respondents express concern about Option 2, particularly in relation to the longer journey times and cutting off businesses and residents north of the railway line. A few respondents mention concerns about insufficient access for cyclists.

A small number of respondents voice concerns about increases in traffic resulting from Option 2, particularly the potential for more traffic in the village centres of Aspley Guise and Woburn Sands to make roads increasingly unsafe.

A few respondents state strong objection to Option 2.

Suggestions

A small number of respondents ask for pedestrian and cyclist access to be retained over the railway, with a few suggesting a footbridge with ramps and steps.

5.2.8. Comments on Husborne Crawley Footpath No. 10 and Station Road in Ridgmont level crossings

Question 20 asked respondents to provide their views on the proposed options for the Husborne Crawley Footpath No. 10 and Station Road in Ridgmont level crossings. The three options presented were:

- Option 1: Husborne Crawley Footpath No. 10 diversion via A507;
- Option 2: A new footbridge at Husborne Crawley Footpath No. 10; and
- Option 3: Husborne Crawley Footpath No.10 diversion via Ridgmont Station Road.

Question 20 received 972 responses which are summarised below.

General comments about the proposals

Support

Some respondents express their general support for any of the three options. A few respondents specifically support the closure of existing level crossings, provided adequate footbridges are built to grant access to non-motorised users.

Concern

Some respondents oppose the proposed three options and state that they do not want any changes to occur, but do not provide further explanation.

Some respondents express concern that none of the proposed options provide sufficient access across Ridgmont for non-motorised users, specifically horse riders and wheelchairs. A small number of respondents raise concerns about access for motorised users, due to the potential diversion of traffic onto already congested roads as the result of the proposed level crossing closures.

A further few respondents express general concern about the impact the EWR line may have on the local community and a few respondents comment on a general need for car parking facilities.

A few respondents express concern about the potential transportation of toxic waste along the railway line through Ridgmont, and their preference for the most environmentally friendly option of the three proposed.

Suggestions

Instead of closing the existing level crossings in Ridgmont, a small number of respondents suggest that the level crossings could be replaced with a road

bridge or train underpass to avoid viaducts and large embankments. A few respondents suggest that the level crossings could be renovated. A few respondents ask that an alternative location be chosen to avoid all potential disruption from the EWR line, and a few respondents ask that local people are consulted on the decision between the proposed options.

Comments on Option 1

Support

Of the three options proposed for Ridgmont, a small number of respondents state that Option 1 is preferable.

Concern

A few respondents express concern that the A507 is too busy to act as a suitable diversion footpath for non-motorised users, raising concerns about the safety of implementing Option 1. A few respondents express concern that the detours offered for motorised users for Option 1 are too long.

Suggestions

A few respondents suggest an alternative route for the footpath proposed in Option 1 if Ridgmont station is to be relocated by altering the stretch of road between The Square at Aspley Guise and the Mill Way/Salford Road/Berry Lane junction to grant access north of and parallel to the railway line.

Comments on Option 2

Support

A small number of respondents offer their support for Option 2 without providing further details. A few respondents express their support for Option 2 as they feel it is the least disruptive to pedestrians and offers access routes for non-motorised users. A few respondents support the option on the basis that it may be the cheapest of the three options.

Concern

A few respondents oppose Option 2 as access to the proposed footbridge would on be via stairs, limiting access for those with limited mobility.

Comments on Option 3

Support

A small number of respondents express general support for Option 3 over the other proposed options without providing further details. A smaller number of respondents offer their support for Option 3 as it offers the shortest diversion for non-motorised users. A few respondents support this option as the use of ramps would provide access for all non-motorised users, making it inclusive.

5.2.9. Comments on Lidlington level crossings

Question 21 asked respondents to provide their views on the proposed options for the Lidlington level crossings. The two options presented were:

- Option 1: New road around Lidlington immediately to the west of Lidlington; and
- Option 2: Retention of Lidlington Station Road level crossing.

Question 21 received 989 responses which are summarised below.

General comments on the proposals

Support

Some respondents express general support for the proposed options but provide no further information. A few respondents do not agree with level crossings, hence their support and a few respondents support relocating the railway line (as a 'third' option) so that it goes around, rather than through, Lidlington, to prevent disruption to the village. These respondents specify diverting the line at Marston Road and re-joining the original route at the Forty Steps.

Concern

Many respondents state that they oppose both options presented for Lidlington with some specifying they would prefer to keep the level crossings without providing further information.

Many respondents have concerns about the impact of closing the Lidlington level crossings on the local community, with specific reference to isolating Lidlington from other villages, and the inconvenience to residents of potentially dividing Lidlington. Several respondents also express concern that if the village were to be divided, access for residents to amenities such as the Thomas Johnson Lower School and The Green Man pub would be limited. A few of these respondents highlight the potential inconvenience caused by the proposed closure of the level crossing for up to 40 minutes every hour, causing further access concerns for residents and others who may travel through Lidlington. A small number of respondents express concern that the closure of level crossings would reduce access for non-motorised users in Lidlington, as the proposed alternative footpaths, which includes footbridges, would not be fully accessible to the elderly, people with disabilities, and horses.

A few respondents mention that closing level crossings in Lidlington may increase road traffic and highlight the impact that this would have on residents of Whitehill, a private road maintained by its residents. A few other respondents have safety concerns around using roads for cycling if there is increased traffic as a result of the closures. A small number of respondents voice concern that there may be reduced access across Lidlington for motorised vehicles, including emergency services. A few respondents express concern about the potential lack of car parking

facilities at the proposed new Lidlington station.

Some respondents highlight the potential negative impact of the proposed services running through Lidlington on wildlife, biodiversity, and the greenbelt. A small number of these respondents relate this environmental impact to the construction of proposed access roads. A few respondents raise concerns about a potential increase in air pollution as a result of longer motorised journeys using the proposed detours.

A few respondents express general concern that the increased noise caused by the EWR line may cause disruption and alter the character of the village.

Suggestions

Many respondents suggest that EWR Co should relocate the line to go around the village of Lidlington, rather than through it, to prevent disruption. They suggest they would not support the scheme under the current proposals. Respondents specify that a relocated route should not disrupt allotments, and some suggest that the route could return to its original proposed location at Marston Vale. A few respondents believe that the railway line would be more useful if the route were diverted to accommodate Central Bedfordshire Council's current project to develop a town on the edge of Lidlington.

A small number of respondents suggest that bridges or railway underpasses could be introduced as an alternative to level crossing closures to avoid dividing Lidlington. A further small number of respondents suggest the existing level crossings could instead be renovated using modern technology. A few respondents suggest introducing footbridges to reduce the potential accessibility issues in Lidlington. If the crossings were to close, a few respondents suggest that road networks could be adapted to reduce potential increases in traffic.

Finally, a small number of respondents request that the views of local people are fully considered before any action is taken, and a few respondents ask for further detailed information about the potential changes to services at Lidlington.

Comments on Option 1

Support

Some respondents offer general support without giving specific reasoning. A small number of respondents offer support specifically to replace level crossings with readily accessible bridges. A small number also express support due to the increased access that the proposed footpaths may provide to non-motorised users. A few respondents express their support for Option 1 due to the ease it would give residents in travelling across Lidlington.

Concern

A small number of respondents state that they oppose Option 1 without offering further information.

Several respondents express concern that Option 1 may change the character of Lidlington and divide the community, creating inconvenience for its residents.

Some respondents express concern that the construction and operation of the EWR line may interfere with the ability to sell their houses, and a few respondents are concerned about the demolition of homes. There is distinct concern for the residents of Bye Road due to proposals to make it a narrower, one-way road. This, alongside the potential closing of level crossings in the village, leads several respondents to express their concern that there will be an increase in traffic.

Some respondents also express concern that Option 1 would have a negative impact on the environment, specifically wildlife, biodiversity and woodland, and a few respondents state that Option 1 may lead to disruptive vibration and noise pollution.

Suggestions

A few respondents offer an alternative route for a new road in Lidlington passing around the east side of the village to prevent the potential disruption to village life and farmland. A few of these respondents suggest that this diversion should begin at the junction of Sheeptick End and Thrupp End.

Comments on Option 2

Support

A few respondents voice support for Option 2 because it could be more convenient for road users, maintaining road connections and access across Lidlington.

Concern

A few respondents state that they oppose Option 2 without providing further information.

A small number of respondents raise concerns about safety in relation to keeping one level crossing open, due the concentration of motorised and non-motorised traffic at one crossing. A few respondents also express safety concerns related to the possibility of high speed trains through the centre of Lidlington.

A small number of respondents voice concerns about dividing the village and causing disruption and delays for the local community. A few respondents express concern that Option 2 may cause an increase in traffic travelling through the one remaining level crossing, which would be closed for most of the hour, between the two halves of Lidlington, and so cause disruption. The respondents highlight the negative impact this would have on

the school -run and emergency services.

Suggestions

A few respondents offer suggestions for diverting traffic, including retaining the level crossing and building a railway bypass, and diverting road traffic via the A507.

5.2.10. Comments on Millbrook (Station Lane) level crossings

Question 22 asked respondents to provide their views on the proposed options for the Millbrook (Station Lane) level crossings. The three options presented were:

- Option 1: A new road bridge over the railway southwest of Millbrook station;
- Option 2: A new road underpass southwest of Millbrook station; and
- Option 3: A new road bridge over the railway to the northeast of Millbrook station.

Question 22 received 959 responses which are summarised below.

General comments on the proposal

Support

Some respondents express general support for the proposed options, with a further small number of respondents specifically expressing support for closing the Millbrook level crossing without providing further information.

Concern

Several respondents oppose this proposed closure. A few of these respondents believe that the level crossing should remain open because of its good safety record and there would be less disruption to local residents.

A small number of respondents express concern about the potential negative impact the proposed options could have on access, including road connectivity, bridleways, cycling and pedestrian safety. Similarly, a small number of respondents express concern that any proposed alternative to allow vehicles to cross the railway line could lead to an increase in traffic, causing disruption on the roads and reducing safety for pedestrians, cyclists, and horse riders.

A small number of respondents express concern that the proposed bridges may disrupt the visual landscape of the town.

A few respondents express concern about the potential negative impact the proposals may have on the environment in terms of habitats, wildlife, and biodiversity. These respondents also state that they support the option that would have the least impact on the environment.

A few respondents express concern about the capacity of car parking

facilities without identifying a location and a few respondents also express concern regarding the safety of a 400KV overhead line running through the village.

Suggestions

A few respondents suggest that the views of Millbrook residents should be fully considered before definitive decisions are made. A further few respondents suggest rebuilding and renovating the current level crossing rather than closing it, and a few respondents propose keeping the station in its current location.

A few respondents suggest closing both the level crossing and the road that would allow traffic to cross the railway line in order to encourage travel through recommended routes, rather than cutting through villages such as Millbrook.

Comments on Option 1

Support

Some respondents express their general support for Option 1 without providing further detail. A similar number of respondents convey their support specifically for the new road bridge over the railway southwest of Millbrook station, proposed in Option 1. A few respondents support this option due to it potentially having the smallest detrimental impact on the Millennium Country Park, compared to the other options. A few respondents support Option 1 as it may provide shorter journey times compared to Option 3. A few other respondents support Option 1 due to the potential to cause fewer drainage issues, and hence reducing the risk of flooding.

Comments on Option 2

Support

Several respondents express their support for Option 2. A small number of those respondents specify that their support is due to the potential implementation of an underpass, which may be the least visually intrusive, alternative to level crossings and a few respondents prefer Option 2 as it may be the least disruptive once constructed.

Concern

A few respondents oppose Option 2 as they do not favour the proposed footpath through a road underpass and the complications that may arise through construction.

A further few respondents express concern about the potential flood risk that proposed underpass may cause if Option 2 were to be implemented.

Comments on Option 3

Support

A small number of respondents express support for Option 3., with a small number of these respondents specifically supporting the potential implementation of a bridge - provided that it is fully accessible to both motorised and non-motorised users. A few respondents attribute their preference for Option 3 to the reduced disruption this option may cause during construction.

Concern

A few respondents express their general opposition to Option 3.

A small number of respondents express concern about the potential disruption that may occur if Option 3 is implemented, since it requires the use of land from the Millennium Country Park. Another small number of respondents believe this option may have a detrimental impact on the environment, including farmland, local habitats, wildlife, and the Millbrook station gardens.

A few respondents have concerns that Option 3 seems to be unnecessarily expensive and complex. A further few respondents express concern that Option 3 may not enable passengers to cross from one platform to another, and hence may be ineffective.

5.2.11. Comments on Green Lane level crossings

Question 23 asked respondents to provide their views on the proposed options for the Green Lane level crossings. The two options presented were:

- Option 1: A new bridge to the north of Green Lane; and
- Option 2: An alternative new bridge to the north of Green Lane.

Question 23 received 953 responses which are summarised below.

General comments on the proposals

Support

Some respondents express general support and remark that either Option 1 or Option 2 would be acceptable, whilst some other respondents express their support for a bridge at Green Lane. A few of these respondents suggest that a bridge is needed for the increasing levels of traffic, whilst a few respondents also highlight that a bridge should also accommodate pedestrians and cyclists. Additionally, a few of these respondents argue that a bridge is a better option than a level crossing or underpass.

Concern

Many respondents express concerns about the proposals, with some raising potential local community impact. A small number of respondents state general dissatisfaction with the plans.

Some respondents also state opposition to the proposals, suggesting that the existing level crossing should be kept. Some of these respondents generally oppose a new crossing, however a few specify that the existing crossing should be maintained and remain in use. A few respondents also suggest that the area should be left undeveloped.

Local community

A few respondents have concerns about the excess noise from HGVs using the crossing, whilst a few other respondents suggest that the proposal would cause too much disruption to the local communities. A few respondents also state their concern that the proposals could be disruptive to or impact on safety for local college pupils.

Environment

A small number of respondents express concern about potential damage to the local environment resulting from the proposals. A few respondents suggest that they would not want to lose the vegetation or farmland. A few also comment that they would prefer for the area to be kept green.

Access

A few respondents have concerns about the potential access issues to the Energy Recycling Point (ERP) with suggestions that access to the new ERP may be compromised and HGV access should be considered. A few respondents also suggest that access for horses is a concern, whilst a few also comment on the potential access concerns if new housing developments are built in the area. Lastly, a few respondents are concerned about the loss of walking and/or cycling routes between Stewartby and the Forest of Marston Vale Millennium Country Park.

Respondents outline concerns regarding general access, car parking and the station in general. A few of these respondents raise concerns about Green Lane being used for construction access and the existing plans for use of the land, citing proposals in the Bedfordshire Waste Local Plan to use this land for municipal waste.

Parking and station relocation

A few respondents raise concerns about the need for a car park and a few respondents raise whether the station will be moved to a new site in future.

Need

A few respondents express concern about the general need for changes to Green Lane level crossing and highlight that the need may require reassessment, whilst a few others suggest the proposal will have an impact on existing views toward the lake.

Suggestions

A small number of respondents highlight that EWR Co should listen to the local people.

A few respondents also suggest that a suitable crossing for non-motorised users should be considered, particularly with the potential housing developments to be built at either side.

A few respondents consider funding provision to be important, suggesting that the ERP and Millbrook Power should pay for the changes under 'development gain' provisions.

Meanwhile, a few respondents suggest that an underpass may be more beneficial to the proposals, and a few argue that an alternate location should be considered, particularly to take into account HGV traffic and road safety.

A few respondents also suggest an alternative option but do not specify any further detail.

Comments on Option 1

Support

Some respondents express support for Option 1 in general terms without providing further information. A few respondents support this option as they believe that it will avoid potential access issues to the energy recovery plant, and a few others claim that it will avoid the potential the loss of surrounding mature vegetation. Some respondents mention a preference for a bridge at the Green Lane crossing. A few respondents express their support claiming that a bridge would accommodate current high levels of traffic, and a few others believe that this option would be safer for pedestrians, especially unaccompanied younger people.

Concerns

A few respondents have concerns about high sided vehicles travelling to and from the ERP that would have to cross the bridge, remarking that the alternative southern route would be marginally better.

Suggestions

A few respondents suggest that Rookery South Energy Recovery Facility should be consulted on detailed designs of new road layouts, as the new access road on the north side of the realigned Green Lane would encompass a 90+-degree left-turn that could form a turning circle for vehicles.

Comments on Option 2

Support

A small number of respondents give general support for Option 2, however a few support this option in order to avoid the removal of vegetation. There are suggestions that access issues would be mitigated if this option was adopted and a few believe this option to be more beneficial for access to the Energy Recovery Plant (ERP) and walking routes.

Concerns

A few respondents suggest that the removal of vegetation would be avoided with the first option, making Option 1 more attractive. Furthermore, a few respondents are concerned that Option 2 would lead to more HGV traffic travelling past houses in Green Lane.

Suggestions

A few respondents suggest that the waste generated from the new ERP should be transported by rail rather than vehicles to reduce traffic on roads.

5.2.12. Comments on Wootton Broadmead level crossing

Question 24 asked respondents to provide their views on the proposed options for the Wootton Broadmead level crossing. The two options presented were:

- Option 1: Broadmead Road – a bridge to the northeast would provide a new public highway bridge just to the northeast of the existing level crossing. Broadmead Road would be realigned to pass over the new bridge; and
- Option 2: Broadmead Road – a bridge to the southwest would provide a new public highway bridge just to the southwest of the existing level crossing. Broadmead Road would be realigned to pass over the new bridge.

Question 24 received 931 responses which are summarised in below.

Support

Some respondents support the proposals in general terms, sometimes indicating that they have no preference between the options presented, whilst some respondents indicate support for a bridge specifically or argue that all level crossings should be replaced by bridges.

A small number of respondents specifically support Option 1. A few argue that it would be a less costly or hazardous option as it avoids landfill; that it would provide better access to nearby land; or that the farmhouse affected by this proposal is in poor condition.

Meanwhile, a small number of respondents specifically support Option 2. A few say that it avoids the need to acquire and demolish a farm building.

Concern

Some respondents oppose the proposed options or say that the crossing at Wootton Broadmead should be left unchanged. A few raise concerns about local access, including for agricultural purposes, and potential damage to the environment or habitats.

Suggestions

A few respondents suggest that the views of the local community should be considered or that the design of any bridge should accommodate pedestrians, equestrians, and other non-motorised users. A few respondents also make specific suggestions related to the design of the proposed bridge.

5.2.13. Comments on Wootton Village level crossing

Question 25 asked respondents to provide their views on the proposed option for the Wootton Village level crossing which involves building a new footbridge at the same location as the existing crossing and diverting the footpath over the bridge.

Question 25 received 914 responses which are summarised below.

Support

Closing the crossing has the support of a small number of respondents who comment that closure and a suitable replacement that is accessible to all is preferred.

Concern

A small number of respondents oppose the proposals and say that the crossing should remain unchanged. A few respondents note that there is not a need to make changes.

Access is a concern for a few respondents, who say that the bridge should be accessible to disabled people and have ramps in place. The need to accommodate horse riders and all non-motorised users is also highlighted. Disruption to local residents caused by more frequent trains is a concern for a few respondents as well as potential damage to green belt land.

A few respondents express concern about the potential environmental impact of the closure of Wootton Village level crossing and comment that they prefer a solution that causes the least environmental damage.

Suggestions

A small number of respondents suggest the crossing should be replaced with a road bridge or train underpass and that this would avoid large embankments or viaducts. A few respondents suggest that the bridge should be painted green to blend in with the environment. A few others suggest that there should be no footbridge.

A few respondents note that local residents are best placed to comment on the proposal and that their views should be considered.

5.2.14. Comments on Kempston Hardwick level crossing

Question 26 asked respondents to provide their views on the proposed options for the Kempston Hardwick level crossing. The three options presented were:

- Option 1: A previously consented bridge at the level crossing, diverting Manor Road over this bridge;
- Option 2: A bridge to the southwest of the crossing; and
- Option 3: A bridge to the northeast of the crossing.

Question 26 received 924 responses which are summarised below.

General comments on the proposal

Support

Some respondents express general support for the proposals, while others qualify their support on the basis that the crossing is replaced by a bridge. A few respondents support the crossing closure because of safety concerns.

Concern

Some respondents state general opposition to the closure of the Kempston Hardwick level crossing.

A small number of respondents raise concerns about access for non-motorised users, particularly in relation to pedestrian, horse, and cycle access.

A few respondents have concerns about station access due to limited parking and the design of the approach road. Project cost, local community impact and environmental impacts are also concerns for a few respondents.

Suggestions

A small number of respondents question the need for a station at Kempston Hardwick.

A small number of respondents suggest an alternative station location at Wixams, Bedford South or Kempston Retail Park.

Additionally, a few suggest car parking facilities at Kempston Hardwick Station. A few others remark on the importance of listening to local views.

Comments on Option 1

Some respondents express general support for Option 1. A few qualify their support on the basis that this option involves acquiring less land.

Comments on Option 2

Support

A few respondents express general support for Option 2. A few express support for Option 2 as they believe traffic would be minimised. Others believe Option 2 would have the least impact on the local community compared to the other options.

Concern

A few respondents oppose Option 2 because of the impact on the open countryside.

Comments on Option 3

Support

A few respondents support Option 3 because of the reduced travel time to London.

Concern

A few respondents express concern that Option 3 does not appear to allow for the continued use of Kempston Hardwick station.

5.2.15. Comments on Woburn Road level crossing

Question 27 asked respondents to provide their views on the proposed options for the Woburn Road level crossing. The two options presented were:

- Option 1: The previously consented footbridge would provide a new footbridge at the end of Chantry Road. The footpath would be diverted over this bridge; and
- Option 2: The alternative footbridge would shorten the length of diversion required for the footpath by turning the stairs on the southeast side of the railway to face in the opposite direction.

Question 27 received 912 responses which are summarised below.

Support

A small number of respondents support proposals for a footbridge and a small number of respondents express support for either option. Some respondents prefer Option 2, and a few respondents comment that this option may reduce diversions. A few respondents express a preference for Option 1.

Concern

A few respondents express concern that the Woburn Road level crossing should not be altered. Access to the footbridge is a concern for a few.

respondents, who comment that the footbridge should allow access to horse riders and cyclists. A few respondents express concern regarding accessibility for disabled people and suggest that ramps be included. A few respondents

discuss the possible impact of the proposals on the roads, commenting that there could be increased traffic and longer journeys, and express concern regarding the closure of Woburn Road.

Suggestions

A few respondents suggest that local residents are best positioned to respond to the proposal and their views should be considered.

A few respondents also suggest a station to serve Woburn Road, Kempston and the Interchange Retail Park.

5.2.16. Comments on Bedford Carriage Sidings level crossing

Question 28 asked respondents to provide their views on the Bedford Carriage Sidings level crossing. The options for the crossing will be developed at the next stage.

Question 28 received 922 responses which are summarised below.

Support

A small number of respondents express support for relocating the carriage sidings and say that it is necessary.

Concern

Several respondents oppose any changes made to the level crossing, with a few respondents commenting that moving the level crossing is not cost effective.

Disruption to local residents and commuters caused by moving the level crossing is a concern for several respondents. While others express concern that the level crossing should remain in place as it is easily accessible. The environmental impact of removing sidings is a concern for some respondents.

Suggestions

A small number of respondents suggest that level crossings should be replaced with a road bridge or underpass to avoid large embankments or viaducts.

A few respondents suggest various alternative locations for the sidings: north of Bedford, St John's area, near the A421 and Wixams, an area of unused railway land between Cauldwell Street and Ampthill Road.

Modernisation in the form of electrification is suggested by a few respondents, who comment that relocating the carriage sidings would require an extension of electrification and that the sidings should be modernised.

A few respondents make suggestions for repurposing the carriage sidings, including replacing with a restaurant, as a looping facility, for existing

developments, an intermodal rail freight terminal, housing development, and a new alignment for passenger and freight services.

5.2.17. Other comments related to level crossings on the Marston Vale Line

Some respondents express concern about changes to level crossings in general terms, mentioning the potential negative impact on access, the environment, and the importance of safety for those using the alternative crossings.

Accessibility

Several respondents have concerns about accessibility of railway crossings. In particular, these respondents highlight:

- The need for accessible, safe, and convenient crossings for all motorised and non-motorised users;
- The need for underpasses to be wide enough and high enough for safe passage for pedestrians, cyclists, prams, wheelchairs, and horse riders;
- The need to integrate crossings with current roads, paths, and bridleways, and strengthening rights of way by upgrading paths and increasing connectivity to stations;
- A request for minimum detours from the current crossing routes and for non-motorised user routes to be maintained;
- The importance of increasing sustainable transport alongside government targets, especially when there is additional housing development planned; and
- The need to ensure that the closure of level crossings does not create access issues for people with disabilities, resulting in people being cut off from amenities and services.

Impacts on the local area and communities

Many respondents express concern that the closure of level crossings will create a barrier, dividing parts of communities and the subsequent negative impact this would have on community life. Some respondents express concern the closing the level crossing could have a negative impact on businesses and access to agricultural land. A few respondents express concern about the potential negative visual impact on the local area and landscape from the construction of bridges and underpasses. However, a few respondents welcome the closure of level crossings in order to improve safety.

Engaging with the local community

Several respondents highlight the importance of working alongside local people and businesses to decide on the best solution for replacing or improving level crossings in each place, to best meet local need. A few respondents also mention the importance of providing local people with advance information of diversions during the progress of works.

Locating alternative crossings

The location of alternative crossings is a concern for some respondents, who state that the new crossings should be as close as possible to the current crossings, as this will help avoid long detours, cutting through community open spaces such as allotments, and increased congestion on roads, footpaths, cycleways, and bridleways. Some respondents believe that there would be challenges with current road infrastructure when relocating the crossings and therefore question the potential benefit of changing the crossings.,

Need for changes to crossings

Some respondents question the need for removing or changing the level crossings, believing that they are working and will cope with increased rail traffic. These respondents also question the need for the rail link in general terms, commenting that there are already good transport links and that the level of demand claimed by EWR Co needs further investigation. A small number of respondents express concern that removing all the level crossings is an unnecessary expense which could be avoided.

Some respondents feel that some level crossings should be kept open, especially where there are no reasonable alternatives.

Safety

Some respondents support the removal and replacement of level crossings in the interests of safety. However, a few other respondents mention that local roads and paths also have safety concerns which must be addressed if level crossings are to be closed. Others note safety concerns due to increased traffic where level crossings are closed.

Traffic and congestion

Some respondents express concern about the potential negative impact of changes to level crossings, and necessary diversions, on the current road infrastructure, traffic, and congestion. Several other respondents oppose the closure of level crossings, they believe that the crossings are working well and support efficient travel between places for motorised and non-motorised traffic.

Some respondents mention the importance of promoting active travel, suggesting that access across the railway line should be prioritised for pedestrians and cyclists.

Alternative crossing options

Some respondents comment in general terms that all level crossings should be replaced with alternative crossings such as bridges and underpasses, which they believe are safer and more efficient to keep traffic flowing. A few others suggest using cuttings to lower the railway in the landscape.

Many respondents support the use of bridges to replace level crossings in

general terms. Several of these respondents highlight the importance of making bridges accessible for motorised and non-motorised travel, and some respondents believe that bridges are safer for pedestrians and non-motorised traffic, and a few other respondents mention the benefit that bridges would bring by reducing congestion and avoiding large embankments for trains.

Many respondents voice support for closing level crossings, with some suggesting that safer alternatives, such as bridges, should be put in place. A few others suggest that removing level crossings would be beneficial, claiming that they currently cause traffic delays.

Several respondents express general support for the use of underpasses, including a few respondents who mention the lower visual impact on the landscape when compared with embankments and bridges. Some respondents specifically mention the importance of space for pedestrians as well as horse riders.

5.3. Comments on the Marston Vale upgrade

The railway line between Bletchley and Bedford would require significant modernisations to enable the faster and more frequent trains connecting Oxford to Bedford and Cambridge. Irrespective of the precise concepts and options selected, parts of the EWR line would need to be closed during construction and testing. EWR Co has considered the existing plans that have been developed for this section of the railway and identified three options:

- Option 1: A series of short blockades;
- Option 2: A prolonged blockade; and
- Option 3: A mix of short and long blockades.

Question 29 asked respondents to rank the proposed options on a scale from 1 to 3 where 1 indicates their most preferred and 3 indicates their least preferred option. Question 30 asked respondents to explain why they ranked the options in that way as well as any other comments they may have about the Marston Vale Line upgrade.

5.3.1. Responses to the option ranking question

To analyse the response data, scores were allocated to the different ranks to provide an average score as outlined in the introduction and methodology section ('Responses to closed questions').

Since not all respondents ranked each concept, the total number of respondents selecting each rank is not equal to the number of responses to this question.

Table 11 below shows the average ranking score ascribed to each option. On this basis Option 3 was the most popular overall with the lowest average score.

Option	Average ranking score
Option 3: A mix of short and long blockades	1.86
Option 2: A prolonged blockade	2.02
Option 1: A series of short blockades	2.04

Table 11: Respondents' average ranking of Options

Figure 7 below shows a breakdown of how respondents ranked each of the three options. The first part of each bar on the left-hand side represents the number of people that ranked that concept as first preference, followed by second preference and so forth, across to the right-hand side.

Option 1: A series of short blockades received the highest number of first preferences as well as the highest number of third preferences suggesting it was something of a polarising option.

Option 3: A mix of short and long blockades received the lowest overall first preferences however it received less than half as many third preferences as either Option 1 or Option 2 suggesting many respondents feel this is the 'least worst' of all options.

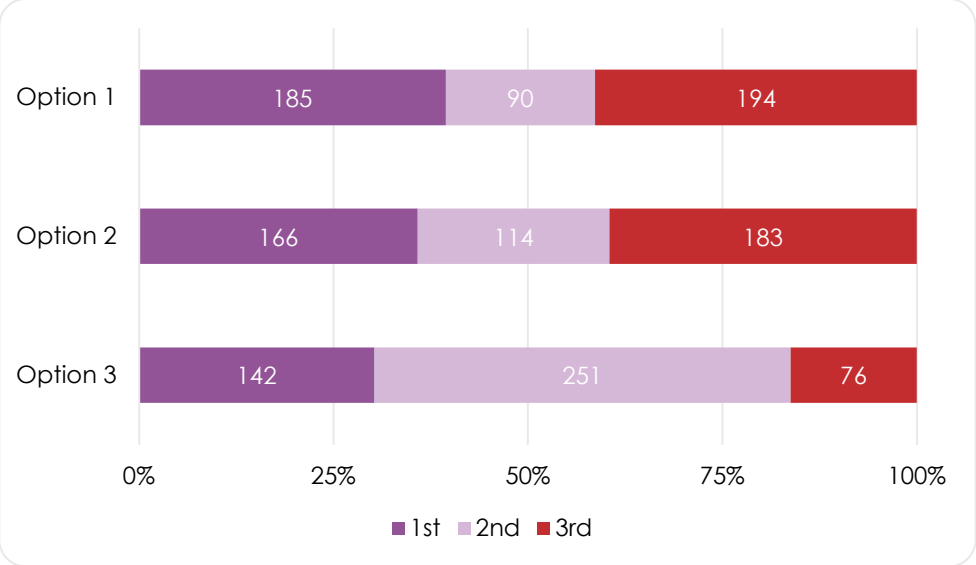

Figure 7: Breakdown of how respondents ranked Options

5.3.2. General comments on the proposals

Concern

A small number of respondents voice overall opposition to the options proposed.

Some respondents express concern about potential disruption resulting from construction, including to existing rail and freight services, and to motorised and non-motorised users. A similar number of respondents voice concern about the potential impact that construction would have on local residents and their localities, including Woburn Sands, Lidlington, and Bow Brickhill. A few other respondents express concern over potential negative

environmental impacts of the project, in particular to wildlife, rural areas and air quality. A few other respondents suggest choosing the option that would be least detrimental to the environment.

Suggestions

Some respondents suggest that construction is conducted as quickly as possible. A few other respondents suggest conducting construction work on weekends and during the evenings in order to minimise the disturbance to the local community.

5.3.3. Comments on Option 1

Support

Many respondents express support for Option 1, with several remarking that it offers the least disruption. Some of these supporters praise the option for retaining continued service throughout construction, and a few other respondents argue that it is the most convenient option.

Concern

A few respondents oppose Option 1, suggesting it is not a feasible option.

Some respondents express concern over potential disruption from Option 1, including a lack of certainty over the length of the proposed blockade, and potential disruption from weekend closures. A few respondents also voice concern over the potential costs of Option 1.

Suggestions

A few respondents suggest that construction should take place during school holidays as many students use the railway line in term time, and whilst a few respondents suggest overnight works, a few other respondents voice concern over night-time construction.

5.3.4. Comments on Option 2

Support

Many respondents support Option 2, remarking that it is the most efficient option. Many others support it as the least disruptive option, as they feel that a prolonged approach facilitates consistency and enables users to plan around the blockade. A few of these respondents also specify that the line currently experiences minimal use, and therefore a prolonged blockade will cause minimal disruption. Several other respondents support Option 2 as potentially having the lowest cost.

Concern

A few respondents oppose Option 2, as they remark that a prolonged blockade would become normalised and cause continued disruption.

Several respondents express concern over potential disruption from a prolonged blockade, including to freight and road users, students, and

emergency vehicles. Regarding alternative road transport, a few other respondents voice concern over potential increased road congestion from a bus replacement service. However, a few other respondents support bus services as these are already in use along the line, but these respondents remark that such support is conditional on a reliable, efficient service.

Suggestions

A few respondents request more information about the potential length of time of the blockade, and a few other respondents suggest that construction occurs during off-peak times.

5.3.5. Comments on Option 3

Support

Several respondents remark that Option 3 minimises disruption, including to motorised and freight users. Some other respondents support keeping the railway open as much as possible to avoid road congestion and the use of alternative road transport. A small number of respondents support Option 3 as the best compromise of all three options.

A few respondents support this option as they mention that it enables different lengths of blockades to be applied to different sections of the line, depending on what works best. A few other respondents suggest construction work takes place on weekends.

Concern

A few respondents express concern over Option 3, suggesting it will be inefficient and hard for users to keep track of when blockades are taking place. A few respondents oppose Option 3, as they suggest that a mixed approach may be too confusing.

5.4. Comments on additional track at Fenny Stratford

Between Bletchley Station and the A5 trunk road near Fenny Stratford there is a section of single track. EWR Co suggests a second track is needed to increase capacity in this area.

There are four bridges that carry the railway line over the River Ouzel and local roads (the Saxon Street dual carriageway and the A5 east of Fenny Stratford). These bridges were built to carry only one track; therefore, EWR Co would need to make changes to allow for both tracks.

EWR Co is considering two options for these bridges:

- Option 1: Building new bridges next to the existing bridges to carry the new track; and
- Option 2: Replacing the existing bridges with wider bridges that would carry both tracks.

Question 31 asked respondents to rank the proposed options on a scale from 1 to 2 where 1 indicates their most preferred 2 indicates their least preferred

option. Question 32 asked respondents to explain why they had ranked the options in that way as well as any other comments they may have about the Fenny Stratford additional track.

5.4.1. Responses to the ranking options question

To analyse the response data, scores were allocated to the different ranks to provide an average score as outlined in the introduction and methodology section ('Responses to closed questions').

Overall, 400 respondents express a preference on at least one option. Since not all respondents ranked each option, the total number of respondents selecting each rank is not necessarily equal to the number of responses to this question.

Table 12below shows the average ranking score ascribed to each option. On this basis, Option 2 was the most popular overall with the lowest average score.

Option	Average ranking score
Option 2: Replacing the existing bridges with wider bridges that would carry both tracks	1.38
Option 1: Building new bridges next to the existing bridges to carry the new track	1.57

Table 12: Respondents' average ranking of Options

Figure 8 below shows a breakdown of how respondents ranked each of the two options. The first part of each bar on the left-hand side represents the number of people that ranked that concept as first preference, followed by second preference across to the right-hand side.

Option 1 received fewer first preferences than Option 2, with 57% of respondents who gave a ranking score to Option 1, placing it as a second ranked option.

Option 2 received more first preferences than Option 1, with nearly two thirds (62%) of respondents who gave a ranking score to Option 2 selecting it as their first preference.

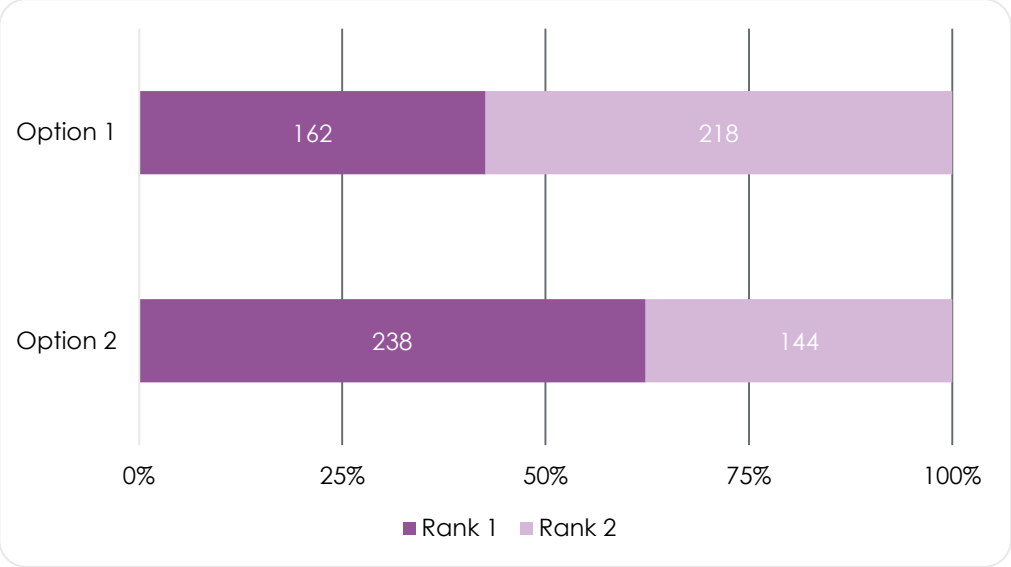

Figure 8: Breakdown of how respondents ranked Options

5.4.2. General comments on the proposals

Support

An additional track has the support of a few respondents who say that it would increase train capacity and help mitigate delays.

Several respondents support an additional track in general and say that it would improve operation of the EWR line.

Concern

A small number of respondents oppose the proposal and comment that there is no need for an additional track or new bridge. A few respondents comment that historic buildings would be impacted and that these buildings must not be affected.

A small number of respondents express concern for cost, commenting that they prefer the lowest cost option.

Disruption is a concern for a few respondents who say that consideration must be given to the impact on existing roads and railway, the environment and local residents when expanding or rebuilding the railway bridges.

A few respondents express concern that building an additional track may not be feasible.

A small number of respondents express concern about the impact an additional track would have on the community and local people and comment that they prefer the option that would be least disruptive. These respondents comment on the potential impact of increased traffic and say that elderly residents would have less access to local facilities.

A few respondents express concern about the impact a second track may have on existing infrastructure and reference the four bridges carrying main roads in the local network.

Impact on the environment is a concern for a few respondents, who comment that they prefer whichever option will have the least environmental impact and that damage to the environment should be minimised. A few respondents express concern for trees located where the additional track would be built.

A few respondents express concern about how the new bridge might look and comment that a landmark bridge is preferred over a plain concrete bridge.

Noise is a concern for a few respondents who comment that they want more information on EWR Co's plans to minimise noise from trains running close to surrounding properties.

A few respondents express concern about impact on nearby properties and comment that these properties may be impacted by noise pollution and that they do not want any properties to be demolished unwillingly. They also question if land would need to be purchased for this proposal.

A small number of respondents express concern about impact on roads, footpaths, and cycleways, commenting that it would be preferable if more space is given for cyclists and pedestrians and that there could be increases in traffic or possible severance of footpaths. A few respondents comment that they cannot support the proposal unless it can ensure that spatial provision for future road widening requirements will not be impacted.

A few respondents note that an additional track is not needed, and comment that a single track is sufficient.

Suggestions

A few respondents suggest that the responsible engineers are best placed to make an assessment on this proposal.

The Canal and River Trust asks that a potential pedestrian route alongside the bridge deck to be used by rail personnel complies with its code of practice.

A few respondents suggest that a new chord could be constructed from the Down Cambridge Flyover line and double track could run over a low-level bridge and Redway tunnel. A few respondents suggest a reinstatement of double track at Fenny Stratford.

A few respondents suggest further consideration of costs and suggest performing a cost benefit analysis.

Quick and efficient construction is a suggestion of a small number of respondents, who express preference for whichever option is quickest and involves the least amount of construction.

A few respondents request the following information:

- Whether EWR Co would plan to purchase more land in the area to facilitate this proposal;

- Measures EWR Co proposes to minimise noise pollution from trains running close to surrounding properties;
- The impact of the reinstatement of the second track has on existing infrastructure;
- A comparison of projected traffic to current traffic;
- Designs for track layout and bridge options; and
- More detailed mapping and habitat assessments.

5.4.3. Comments on Option 1

Support

There is support for Option 1 from some respondents who say that it will cost less to build a second bridge than to change the existing bridge. There is a similar level of support from respondents who feel that building another bridge would be quicker and easier and that it is better to have a new bridge than an older one. Many respondents support Option 1 because they see it as the less disruptive option, several commenting that it would involve less construction and avoid demolishing the existing bridge, and that services can continue to run while a second bridge is being built.

Concern

A few respondents express concern that the proposal would lead to further expansion.

The visual impact of an additional bridge is a concern for a few respondents, who say it will look unsightly.

A few respondents oppose Option 1, saying that they do not favour two bridges and that a second bridge may cause environmental damage.

Suggestions

A few respondents state that the new bridge should be future proofed to allow for increased capacity, and comment that a second bridge would allow services to continue when one bridge requires maintenance.

5.4.4. Comments on Option 2

Support

There is support for Option 2 from several respondents who say that it will cost less to implement, and that it will have lower costs going forward as it would require less maintenance than Option 1.

Many respondents support Option 2 due to the potential to modernise and future proof the bridges, which they feel would provide a long-term solution that will last longer and require less maintenance. A few respondents suggest that the bridges be made wider to support electrification.

Some respondents support Option 2, they comment that it would be the most sensible option, it would be easier and more efficient to implement, and it would provide new modern bridges.

A small number of respondents support Option 2 on the basis that it would be less disruptive for train services during construction, and to nearby buildings and residents. A few respondents comment that this option will prevent the need for future maintenance and that it can be carried out while other improvements are made to the line.

A few respondents express support for Option 2 as all upgrades to the infrastructure could be made at once, it would involve the easiest construction, and that it would be easy to put new bridges in place if there is a blockade.

Some respondents support Option 2 because they see it as having a smaller impact on the surrounding land and environment. A small number of respondents comment that building wider bridges could use less land. A few respondents also suggest reusing the old bridges and keeping the EWR line close to the existing line.

There is support for Option 2 from some respondents who say that this option has the potential to be more visually appealing. A few respondents suggest implementing a more compact design, and a small number of respondents comment that one new bridge would have a stronger visual appeal than two bridges.

Concern

A few respondents raise concerns about the potential disruption caused by Option 2.

Suggestions

A few respondents suggest a second platform could be reinstated at Fenny Stratford station, high- and low-level platforms similar to Bletchley, and that passenger access could be provided at both ends of Fenny Stratford station. A few respondents suggest that redundant bridges be made into pedestrian and cycle paths, and that safety is consideration.

A few respondents suggest closing the bridges for a weekend while works are carried out. A few respondents suggest building a new bridge and demolishing the old bridge before building a new bridge in its place.

5.5. Other comments related to Section B

Support

Many respondents support the potential addition of a second track, both at Fenny Stratford and across the wider railway, and several respondents support more general line improvements.

Concern

Many respondents express opposition to the Marston Vale Line upgrade, objecting to the options put forward as the proposed line runs through local villages. Many respondents question the need for such upgrades in a post-

pandemic world.

Many respondents express concern over the potential negative impacts on local communities, including noise pollution from increased train services, community severance, and road closures during the upgrades. Several of these respondents voice particular concern over the potential negative impact to Woburn Sands, Aspley Guise, Lidlington, and Bow Brickhill. Many respondents have concerns about the negative impact on local towns and suggest consulting local communities and stakeholders in the development of future plans. Some respondents suggest rerouting roads and rail lines so that they do not go through towns.

Many respondents also voice concern over potential negative environmental impacts of the Marston Vale Line upgrade. In particular, these respondents emphasise the potential impact on the local countryside, community greenspaces, and wildlife habitats, including protected bird species and ancient trees.

Regarding project cost, some respondents express concern over whether sufficient cost-benefit analyses have been conducted.

Suggestions

Many respondents request more detail, in particular on current rail use and footfall, traffic modelling, and environmental impact surveys.

Several respondents suggest alternative routes, specifying fast links to Oxford and Cambridge, and a line that runs through Bletchley to Milton Keynes. Several other respondents suggest improving access to local towns along the Bletchley-Bedford line, including to Stewartby, Calvert, Winslow, Newton Longville, Wixams, Kempston, and Aylesbury.

A small number of respondents favour the promotion of active travel to railway stations, including through the provision of cycle routes and improved pedestrian safety. A similar number of respondents suggest keeping the existing rail lines, rather than building new ones.

6. Section C: Bedford

Question 33 asked respondents for their views on the most important considerations when developing proposals for the Bedford area.

Specifically, respondents were asked what EWR Co needs to consider regarding:

- Changes to Bedford St Johns station and the surrounding area;
- Changes to Bedford station and the surrounding area; and
- The emerging preferred option for the area to the north of Bromham Road Bridge (North Bedford).

Question 33 received 2,016 responses which are summarised below with other comments made in relation to questions 34 to 37.

The table below shows the number of responses to each of the open and closed questions in this section.

Question	Number of responses
Question 33: What do you think is important to consider when developing our proposals for the Bedford area?	2,016
Question 34: Please rank your preference for the proposed options for Bedford St Johns station.	684 respondents express a preference for at least one alignment options
Question 35: Please tell us why you have ranked the proposed Bedford St Johns options above and provide any other comments.	1,281
Question 36: What do you think is important to consider when developing our emerging preferred option for Bedford station?	1,730
Question 37: What do you think is important to consider when developing our emerging preferred option for the area north of Bromham Road bridge (North Bedford)?	1,564

Table 13: Number of respondents directly answering each question

6.1. Comments on Bedford St Johns station

EWR Co suggests the railway at Bedford St Johns would be unable to accommodate the proposed EWR train services at present.

It expects to change the route alignment of the railway in this area, so there is less of a curve, allowing trains to travel at a minimum of 30mph to achieve faster overall journeys along the route alignment. This means moving the

existing location of Bedford St Johns station.

EWR Co has considered several potential solutions for the location of Bedford St Johns station and realigning the railway in this area, and is consulting on two options:

- Option 1: A new station to the west of its existing location, using the existing railway bridge across the River Great Ouse; and
- Option 2: A new station to the south of its existing location and building a new railway bridge across the River Great Ouse.

Question 34 asked respondents to rank the proposed options on a scale from 1 to 2 where 1 indicates the most preferred and 2 indicates the least preferred option. Question 35 asked respondents to explain their rankings as well as any additional comments about Bedford St Johns station.

6.1.1. Responses to the ranking options question

To analyse the response data, scores were allocated to the different ranks to provide an average score for the two options, as outlined in the introduction and methodology section ('Responses to closed questions').

Overall, 684 respondents express a preference on at least one option. Since not all respondents ranked each concept, the total number of respondents selecting each rank is not necessarily equal to the number of responses to this question.

Table 14 below shows the average ranking score ascribed to each option. On this basis, Option 2 was the most popular overall with the lowest average score.

Option	Average ranking score
Option 2: A brand new station to the south of its existing location and building a new railway bridge across the River Great Ouse	1.44
Option 1: A brand new station to the west of its existing location, using the existing railway bridge across the River Great Ouse	1.49

Table 14: Respondents' average ranking of Options

Figure 9 below shows a breakdown of how respondents ranked the two options. The first part of each bar on the left-hand side represents the number of people that ranked that concept as first preference, across to the right-hand side.

Option 2, a new station to the south of its existing location, was marginally the most popular option, receiving 50 more first preferences than Option 1.

Option 1, a new station to the west of its existing location was almost an equal split amongst respondents who expressed a preference on this option, with 51% ranking as their first preference, and 49% selecting it as a second preference.

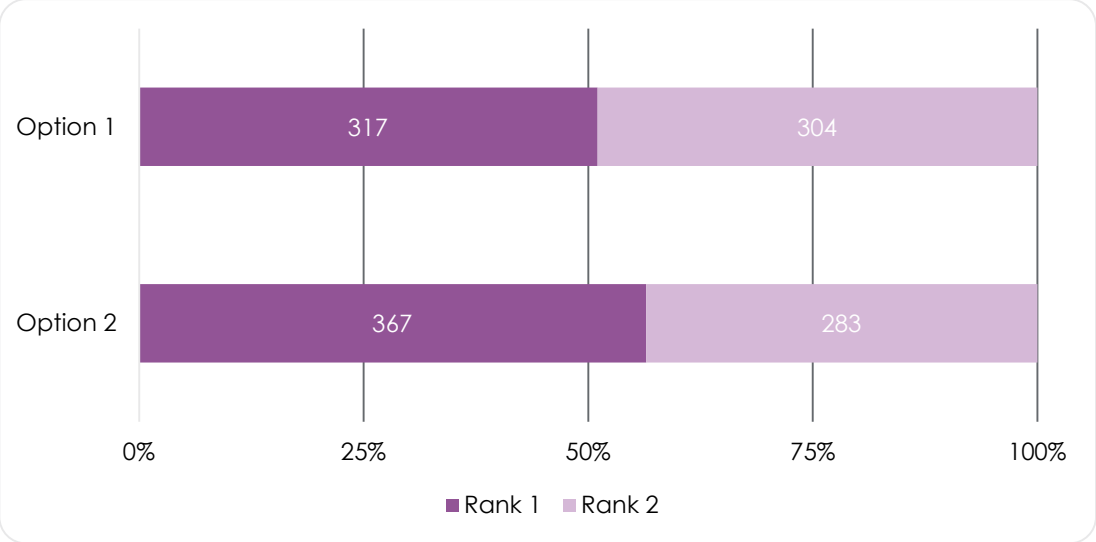

Figure 9: Breakdown of how respondents ranked Options

6.1.2. Comments on Option 1

Support

Respondents provide a range of reasons for their support of the Option 1. The new stations proposed close proximity to the nearby hospital is cited as a key reason for many respondents' support of Option 1, with a few respondents also observing that this option would potentially be especially convenient to hospital users who cannot walk very far.

Access

Many respondents remark that Option 1 is well connected to the surrounding residential area, local schools, and nearby Borough Hall. Similarly, a small number of respondents observe Option 1 to be well connected to the south side of the town centre and nearby shopping. Several respondents also express support for this option due its proximity to transport connections nearby, such as the local bus service and easy access to taxis. A small number of respondents support Option 1 as it would be near green space such as the river embankment and local parks and gardens.

Cost

A small number of respondents favour Option 1 due to it potentially being lower in cost than Option 2; a few respondents suggest that these potential savings could be used to electrify the railway and minimise freight.

Construction

A few respondents preferred Option 1 because it could be aligned with existing bridges, potentially minimising the length and cost of construction. Likewise, a few respondents observe that Option 1 meets the 40mph speed requirement for this stretch of track, claiming that the higher-speed Option 2 is not necessary.

Environment

A few respondents believe Option 1 would possibly be a less detrimental to the environment, with one respondent claiming that fewer people would be affected by noise and air pollution as Option 1 avoids residential areas to a greater extent than Option 2.

Location

A small number of respondents express general support for locating Bedford St Johns station to the west of Bedford, many of whom specifically express agreement with the reasoning cited in the Consultation Document. Other reasons for general support of Option 1, cited by small numbers of respondents, include more space for possible development and regeneration in the area, and potentially relieving traffic and congestion from the area surrounding Bedford Midland station.

Property and housing

Several respondents favour Option 1 due to its potential to reduce disruption and the demolition of local housing. A few respondents cited a preference to demolish parts of the hospital car park, wasteland, and brownfield rather than residential areas. Moreover, a small number of respondents support Option 1 due to its location near a large residential area, suggesting that the station should be built to the west to meet higher customer demand and housing growth in the area.

Concern

Many respondents state their concerns about the proposals. A few respondents express concern over the increased cost that could be incurred by relocating Bedford St Johns station to the west of Bedford. Additionally, a few respondents claim that the west of Bedford is more developed than the south, potentially making Option 1 more expensive.

Respondents also raise concerns in relation to the potential impact on roads. A few respondents remark that the roads in the local area are already congested, and Option 1 could potentially make this problem worse.

Likewise, several respondents state their concern about the possible negative impact Option 1 would have on car parking availability at the nearby hospital, which some respondents state is already limited. In addition, a small number of respondents express concern about how Option 1 would potentially increase congestion in the area surrounding the hospital, as well as possibly limiting access to the hospital.

A few respondents' believe that the area does not need a new station or does not need a new station so close to Bedford station.

Suggestions

Some respondents include suggestions for the proposals in their responses. For example, a few respondents suggest that the possible benefit of Option

1's close proximity to the local hospital and schools should be given greater promotion. Some respondents suggest the Option 1 proposal should include additional car parking for both the hospital and the new station. A multi-storey car park is suggested by a small number of respondents.

In addition, a few respondents suggest that the new Bedford St Johns station should be built on the site of the old warehouses to minimise impact on existing housing.

6.1.3. Comment on Option 2

Support

Serving population catchments

Many respondents support Option 2 on the basis that the south of Bedford is more populous than the west, with some respondents emphasising the importance of Option 2 serving a different catchment area to Bedford station. Some respondents feel that locating the station closer to a residential area could make it more accessible for local people. Another benefit mentioned by a small number of respondents was Option 2's easy access to the hospital.

Opportunities for development

A small number of respondents favoured Option 2 as it potentially has more space for the development of the EWR line. A few respondents suggested that the land in this area is flatter and so may be better suited to development than Option 1. Additionally, one respondent favoured this option due to the potential to build a new bridge over the River Great Ouse during the construction period.

Environment

The potential to minimise environmental impact is supported by some respondents. A small number of respondents felt that Option 2 would potentially lead to less impact on the countryside, and a few respondents commented that this option could possibly also minimise fuel consumption and air pollution. Moreover, a few respondents applaud this option for being the most sensible, practical, and based on common sense. Several other respondents feel a rail line in the south of Bedford would potentially be faster, flatter, more direct, and more cost-effective.

Journey time

Some respondents support Option 2's potential to minimise journey time. These respondents state that the flatter and shorter route of Option 2, as well as the faster approach and departure speed would potentially result in shorter journey times. A few respondents also propose this option would potentially support a higher speed track.

Local community

Several respondents favour Option 2 due to its potentially lower impact on the local community, suggesting construction will be less invasive if the route is built to the south. A small number of respondents remark that Option 2 will serve a large community that is currently not served by Bedford station. Additionally, some respondents state that the centre of Bedford currently has issues with traffic congestion and locating Bedford St Johns to the south will relieve pressure from the roads in the city centre.

Concern

Access

Some respondents feel that Option 2 is not well-connected and could potentially be hard to access for many passengers. A few respondents comment that this option is too far from Bedford town centre and not easily accessible from the nearby main road. Additionally, the cost of Option 2 is a concern for a few respondents, who believe it will be potentially more expensive due to it being faster and more complex than Option 1.

Construction

A small number of respondents comment on the potential for disruption during construction for Option 2. One respondent believes this option will be more invasive, and a few respondents remark specifically on the possible disruption to roads and railways. The potential disruption caused by construction of a new bridge over the river is also raised by a few respondents who want to preserve the visual and leisure aspects of the river. Criticism of the proposal to construct a bridge over the river is voiced by some respondents. A few respondents believed this proposal is too expensive or not an efficient use of money.

Local impacts

A small number of respondents express concern over the possible insufficient car parking space in the south of Bedford, and that the road infrastructure is inadequate to support that Option 2 would potentially lead to heavy congestion on the surrounding roads. In addition, a few respondents express concern about diesel trains potentially increasing air pollution in the area. Several respondents raise concern about the impact of Option 2 on local residents, as the station would be in close proximity to large areas of housing. The possible negative impact of noise, air, and light pollution on residents is also highlighted by a few respondents. Further, concern is also expressed by a few respondents about the possibility of a new station attracting litter and vermin to the area.

A few respondents mention that local housing backs onto the proposed station location in Option 2, and express concern that this area is too residential for a new station. Likewise, a small number of respondents oppose this option due to its close proximity to people's homes.

Suggestions

A few respondents suggest making ease of access to the station a key priority during construction. Some respondents suggest moving the station to an alternative location, with a small number saying it should be relocated to the south of Bedford and, more specifically, a few respondents propose Wixams, to the south of Bedford, commenting that it is a safe area that is easily accessible by public transport, bike, and foot. A few other respondents suggest locating the station in other areas surrounding Bedford including Elstow and Kempston Hardwick. They highlight that the proposed Winslow station was moved to accommodate housing, which could be a consideration for the new station.

In addition, some respondents remarked that Bedford station and Bedford St Johns station are presently too close together, suggesting that the new station should be relocated further away from Bedford station.

6.1.4. Other comments related to Bedford St Johns Station

Support

Many respondents support the proposals as they feel Bedford St Johns is in need of development and is currently underused. Also, some respondents express support for the proposals but state they have no real preference between the two options.

Concern

Many respondents oppose both options. Several respondents feel that the current station should be left as it is, and several other respondents do not believe either option to be suitable or viable locations.

Access

Several respondents express concern over how the relocation of Bedford St Johns station would potentially affect pedestrian access to the hospital. In addition, a few respondents feel the new station should be easily accessible from Bedford station. Furthermore, a few respondents comment that residents in Bedfordshire villages are poorly served by public transport and therefore could find it difficult to access the new station if situated in the town centre.

Existing station

Concerns regarding the existing Bedford St Johns station are raised by several respondents. Most prominently, some respondents state that car parking is poor, and the area around existing station is heavily congested. A small number of respondents feel the existing station is under-used, and a few other respondents state that it is not accessible for people with disabilities. A small number of other respondents criticise the area surrounding the existing station, describing it as unsafe, unclean and in need of development. In addition, a small number of respondents comment on

the potential for the rebuilding of Bedford St Johns station to be very expensive and a possible waste of money.

Construction

Many respondents feel that disruption from construction of the new station will be significant. Several respondents comment that both options will potentially cause disruption in the centre of Bedford specifically, which could increase congestion and pollution in an already busy area. Many respondents are concerned about the impact of construction on roads, potentially resulting in heavy traffic and long road closures. Furthermore, a few respondents feel that rebuilding Bedford St Johns will potentially increase air pollution in Bedford through construction, diesel trains and increased traffic congestion.

Local community

Several respondents state their concern over the potential disruptive impact of construction on local communities. A few respondents also voice concern over potential air and noise pollution as well as visual impact of the new station and from trains arriving and departing the station. They feel this could affecting the mental and physical health and wellbeing of residents. A few respondents also ask that the EWR line is kept away from existing lines.

Wildlife

A small number of respondents comment on the possible impact on local wildlife and habitats. Additionally, a few respondents express concern over the carbon impact of not building the line "straight and level". One respondent stated that Bedford is already visually built-up, and the construction of a new station would potentially make this worse. Some respondents express concern over the potential noisy freight trains running through residential areas and Bedford centre.

Property

Several respondents raise concern over the possibility of housing being demolished during the construction of the new station, and several other respondents state that their houses may decrease in value if the EWR line is built nearby. Several respondents believe that these proposals could lead to increased traffic and congestion on local roads and a small number of respondents suggest that roadworks during construction would potentially cause disruption and inconvenience for road users.

Location

Some respondents express concern over the potential location of Bedford St Johns station, stating it should not be too close to the main Bedford station. A few respondents also suggest that the new station should be located nearer to shopping and amenities.

Need

Many respondents question the need to rebuild or relocate Bedford St Johns station, with some other respondents commenting that there is no need to have a new station in such close proximity to Bedford station. A small number of respondents question whether there is sufficient passenger numbers or local demand to retain Bedford St Johns station.

Suggestions

Accessibility

One respondent specifically expresses the need for step-free access to the new station from both Ampthill Road and Kempston Road. A small number of respondents ask that improved accessibility to the station for elderly people and people with disabilities be a main priority.

Alternative routes and station locations

Many respondents suggest an alternative route, with the most common suggestion being a route to the south of Bedford, towards Wixams, which would potentially be flatter and less expensive. A few respondents suggest relocating the EWR line onto the former Midland Railway Hitchin alignment at Bedford St. Johns. Likewise, many respondents suggest an alternative location for Bedford St Johns station. A few respondents suggest the station should be moved east, south of Rope Walk. Some respondents feel the station should be moved to the south of Bedford near Wixams, and some other respondents suggest a parkway station at Kempston Hardwick. A few respondents suggest that the station would be better located near the retail park. A small number of respondents ask that the station be moved back to its previous location prior to 1964.

Cycle and car parking

A small number of respondents state the need for suitable cycle parking and storage facilities at the new station. Several respondents request additional car parking facilities at the new station, and a few respondents suggest that additional car parking at the nearby hospital should also be included in the proposals.

Need for the station and opportunities for regeneration

Many respondents consider that Bedford St Johns station is redundant, serving no purpose and therefore should not be kept at all. Some respondents believe these proposals could provide an opportunity to improve the area surrounding the station. One respondent suggests there is scope to regenerate the whole area south of the river as part of these proposals. A few others believe the area currently occupied by Bedford St Johns station could be used for social housing. Similarly, a few respondents state that the whole St Johns area needs modernisation.

Retaining current location

Many respondents feel that the station should be maintained in its current location and that moving the station is unnecessary and a poor use of money with no real advantages. Indeed, many respondents ask for further information about the role of Bedford St Johns station in these proposals.

Sidings

A small number of respondents suggest that the adjacent Thameslink sidings should not be used. A few other respondents state that new sidings are not needed on Bedford carriage, with one respondent suggesting that existing sidings at Cricklewood could be used. A few respondents state the importance of eco-friendly design and suggest that recyclable features of the current station such as the tiles and ironwork could be retained and used in the design of the new station.

Traffic and access

Finally, a small number of respondents feel that those driving to and from Bedford St Johns may add to congestion in the area. As such a few respondents suggest cycling should be encouraged. A few respondents also suggest that a drop off/pick up area should be included to ease any potential traffic surrounding the station. One respondent suggests Bedford St Johns could be used as a shuttle route into the town centre. Some respondents suggest a station built to the south could allow the use of the existing Varsity Line in the area.

6.2. Comments on Bedford Station

Question 36 asked respondents what they think is important for EWR Co to consider when developing the emerging preferred option for Bedford station.

Question 36 received 1,730 responses which are summarised below.

Support

Some respondents are happy with the existing location of Bedford station and feel that it simply needs an upgrade or refurbishment in its current location. A few respondents comment that it is important to retain the station's location in the town centre to facilitate interchange and for local public transport links. One respondent argues that Bedford station ought to become a key source of interchange.

Many respondents express general support for the proposals without giving further clarification. Many state that the station and the centre of Bedford need redeveloping and regeneration. Additionally, a small number of respondents state that the current Bedford station is not meeting the rail needs of residents and therefore they support any upgrades or expansion proposed. A small number of other respondents feel the station is not aesthetically pleasing and support the proposal for a new, modern station.

Some respondents feel these proposals would benefit the local area and people, potentially acting as a catalyst for further regeneration of the local area. A few respondents support the investment in long-term sustainable transport, as well as the potential for better connectivity within Bedfordshire.

Concern

Location

A considerable number of respondents raise concerns about the current location of Bedford station. Several respondents comment that the station is located in a busy and congested area of Bedford. A small number of respondents feel Bedford station is overcrowded, especially at peak hours, and a small number of other respondents feel the station is too small. In addition, a few respondents comment that Bedford station is not well connected to the town centre and local transport links. Many respondents state the roads surrounding Bedford station often experience heavy traffic. A few respondents express concern over the lack of seating or waiting area in the current station and a few respondents feel there is insufficient car parking at the current station.

Access

Some respondents voice concern that the favoured route is not well connected to local public transport, with one respondent commenting that local bus connections in Greyfriars are over a 10-minute walk away. A small number of respondents also state that many rail users will have to drive into the town centre to access the station, which could potentially prove difficult due to traffic and congestion.

Cost and funding

A small number of respondents feel Bedford Borough Council should not be funding the new station, and instead it should be funded in its entirety by EWR Co. A small number of other respondents believe that the proposals could undermine opportunities for economic development in Bedford, and a few respondents believe Bedford would not benefit economically from this new station due to poor road links. Many respondents feel the project is too expensive, and costs will ultimately be higher than predicted; some respondents feel it would be significantly cheaper to build the new station in a less central location. A few respondents call for a reassessment of the economic benefits of the proposals and an independent inquiry into the funding of these proposals.

Lack of space

Some respondents feel that, due to recent developments in local housing, Bedford does not have the space for a large station. Likewise, a few respondents feel the road and housing layout in Bedford would not allow for redevelopment of the station.

Local area and community

Many respondents raise concern over the potential for increased air pollution from freight trains using this route. Likewise, many respondents believe these proposals will lead to increased congestion and traffic near the station, which will also contribute to air pollution and worsen air quality in the area.

A few respondents express concern over the potential for the Alexander Sports Centre and field to be lost. Many respondents feel changes to air quality, noise pollution and housing demolition will negatively impact the local community.

Additionally, many respondents express concern over the potential for disruption to the town and community, especially to residents and commuters, during the construction of the new station and EWR line.

Impacts on train services

A few respondents suggest that, as a result of the proposed Bedford station the train service would become too busy to make use of the links to London; a few other respondents also suggest that the proposals would disrupt London connections and commuters. In addition, a few other respondents suggest that these proposals could impact the Midland Main Line and express concern over the impact of rail services sharing this line.

A small number of respondents suggest that these proposals will potentially cause disruption to existing rail services, especially London commuter trains. One respondent expresses concern over the proposed closure of the 12 car Jowett Sidings, possibly resulting in a reduced Thameslink train service. A few other respondents feel that train services into Bedford station should still run during the construction period.

Environment

Many respondents voice their concern about the impact of these proposals on the environment – in particular, many comment that these proposals could have a detrimental impact on nearby wildlife habitats. Likewise, a few respondents express concern over the potential damage to the surrounding countryside, including the visual impact on the landscape and difficulty in accessing any rural areas where the tracks are laid.

Noise

Many respondents are concerned about the noise potentially emitted by freight on this route, particularly if it is built through residential areas.

Property

Many respondents voice their concern about the possibility that houses may be demolished as part of the construction process – particularly in the Poets area of Bedford and Ashburn Road. A few other respondents express concern about the possibility of compulsory purchase, which could force people to move against their wishes.

Roads and footpaths

A substantial number of respondents voice their concerns about the impact these proposals may have on roads and paths, many with particular concerns about the potential for additional traffic and congestion. A few other respondents suggest parking may become increasingly difficult. Many respondents feel that the disruption caused by the construction period and the line itself may damage the local community.

Construction

A few respondents voice concern about the impact of construction on wildlife habitats. A few other respondents fear that construction will lead to increased traffic and in turn, more air pollution. Several respondents feel the option that has the least potential for environmental damage should be chosen.

Additionally, several respondents are concerned about the potential for construction to impact the landscape or spoil the countryside. A few respondents feel that the construction of viaducts and tunnelling will potentially destroy the rural countryside.

A few respondents urge that potential noise and vibration during the construction period should be minimised for the benefit of residents close to the construction site. Also, a substantial number of respondents express significant concern about the potential need to demolish housing and residential areas. Likewise, many respondents feel that construction would lead to additional traffic and congestion. Several respondents state that closing Ford End Road bridge could also potentially lead to further disruption.

Need

Many respondents question the need for any redevelopment of Bedford station. Some respondents ask where the demand for a larger station is coming from. A small number of respondents state that they feel Bedford station is not equipped to handle freight trains.

Lastly, many respondents reject the idea of building a new or a larger station in Bedford, deeming it unnecessary, a poor use of money, or disproportionate to demand. Many other respondents support a new station to be built out of town to minimise congestion and disturbance. A small number of respondents also voice opposition to the proposal to build additional tracks.

Suggestions

Accessibility

Several respondents suggest that step-free access to the station and the addition of wide lifts within the station would improve access for people with disabilities.

Alternative routes

A substantial number of respondents suggest an alternative route, with many respondents suggesting a route that enters and leaves Bedford from the south, as they believe it is potentially shorter, flatter, and straighter, therefore reducing carbon emissions. Many other respondents suggest that the route should avoid the town centre. One respondent suggests a northern route travelling directly to Cambourne, possibly using open farmland. Also, many respondents request a station out of town to prevent possible congestion and disturbance in Bedford town centre. Many other respondents suggest locating the station to the south of Bedford, such as a parkway station.

Alternative station location

Many respondents request that a station alternatively be located in Tempsford; a small number of respondents feel this would allow for improved access to the station. Alternatively, a considerable number of respondents request that a station be located in Wixams. Several respondents feel an out-of-town station would reduce problems with traffic and congestion.

Parking

A considerable number of respondents request that the new station has sufficient parking to meet current and potential future demand.

Minimise disruption

Some respondents suggest that, during the construction period, steps should be taken to minimise disruption to existing rail users.

Prioritise existing users

A few respondents believe that the station should be built in an area close to existing passengers and passenger convenience should be prioritised.

Design and facilities

Many respondents state that an attractive design for the station is highly important, with some respondents suggesting the new station should have a modern design. Some respondents suggest the design should be sustainable/eco-friendly, and a small number of respondents would like the station to be multi-storey. A few respondents do not want the land to be wasted with excessive or "extravagant" use of space.

A few respondents suggest that electric vehicle charging points should be available at the new station. In addition, many respondents request a variety of facilities to be included in the proposals. Several respondents suggest there should be more, cleaner toilets, including toilets on each platform. In addition, some respondents would like more and larger lifts in the station, and some other respondents ask for more seating and waiting areas. A small number of respondents feel cafes and convenience stores within the space would greatly enhance the new station.

Many respondents suggest that the station and platform size and layout

should be designed to accommodate a larger capacity of commuters and trains in the future.

Easy connection between different platforms and lines within the station is important to many respondents. A few respondents suggest that platform 1a should be repurposed for use by Thameslink services and many other respondents state the need for Bedford station to have a fast line southbound platform. A small number of respondents believe the station should be redeveloped to improve circulation and accessibility.

Opportunities for improvements

Some respondents suggest this could present an opportunity to develop more housing in the local area. In addition, a few respondents also suggest upgrading local roads and bridges – the Ford End Road bridge most notably. Many respondents suggest the area immediately surrounding the station needs regeneration. A small number of respondents suggest merging these proposals with the plans for development of the Bedford/Milton Keynes hospital. Some respondents state more facilities should be built surrounding the station, such as retail outlets or pubs and restaurants. A small number of respondents believe that plans for the redevelopment of Bedford station should be integrated with council plans to redevelop the surrounding area.

Access

In order to improve pedestrian safety, a few respondents suggest the Bedford station approach should be redesigned to limit vehicle access. Another respondent suggested banning smoking and begging outside the station to make passengers feel safer. A few respondents feel the current station is located in an unsafe area with a high crime rate and therefore suggest the new station should be built somewhere safer. Some respondents remark that the pedestrian bridge is often heavily crowded and unsafe.

Additionally, many respondents state that maintaining easy access to Bedford station during the construction period must be a priority, as well as general access to the new station when it is completed. Some other respondents suggest that improved access for surrounding villages in the form of transport links or building an out-of-town station is also crucial. Some respondents state that the station approach should be pedestrianised as it is currently dominated by cars and cyclists making access more difficult for pedestrians. Some other respondents call for easier access to the town centre from the station.

A few respondents feel zebra crossings on the roads surrounding the station would benefit those who travel to the station on foot. A small number of respondents suggest a park and ride into the town centre, and some respondents suggest a bus interchange nearby and good bus links to the station.

Integration with wider development

A small number of respondents suggest that plans for the redevelopment of Bedford station should be integrated with council plans to redevelop the surrounding area. With regards to funding, one respondent commented that the redevelopment should be funded by a third-party, unattached to the project.

6.3. Comments on the track near Bromham Road

Question 37 asked respondents what they think is important for EWR Co to consider when developing the emerging preferred option for the area north of Bromham Road bridge (North Bedford).

Question 37 received 1,564 responses which are summarised below.

Support

Several respondents supported the 6-track line near Bromham Road. A small number of respondents highlighted the need to plan for future capacity.

Concern

Local community

Many respondents are concerned about the potential effect of this proposal on the general wellbeing of local residents, as well as residents of the surrounding villages. They believe their area could become less desirable to possible future residents. These respondents are also particularly concerned about possible disruption to local residents caused by construction of the proposed route.

Many respondents are concerned about the potential need to demolish houses for the route, particularly in the Poets area of Bedford. Several respondents are also concerned about the potential loss of amenities, such as the GP surgery near Milton Road, local sports grounds, and the Polish Community Centre near Spenser Road. Similarly, several respondents comment that both the demolition of properties and the construction of new rail lines could have a negative impact on community cohesion.

Bridge closure during construction

Many respondents express concern about the closure of Bromham Bridge during construction, which was recently reopened following refurbishment.

Need

Many respondents also question the need for additional tracks in the area and mention the disruption that could be caused by expanding the line to six tracks.

Construction

Furthermore, many respondents are concerned about the undulating terrain in the area, which they claim could provide difficulties during construction

and extend journey times.

Existing rail services

Several respondents also mention the strain on the existing rail services that could be caused by additional trains from the EWR line.

Cost

Many respondents mention the cost of the project in general, as they consider the rebuilding of Bromham Road bridge offers poor value for money.

Environment

Many respondents are concerned about the potential impact of this proposal on the environment. In particular, several respondents are concerned about its possible impact on green spaces around Bedford. A few respondents claim that there have been insufficient environmental impact assessments for the city of Bedford.

Many express concerns for the surrounding countryside. Several respondents voice particular concern about the potential effect of the proposed viaduct. Several others remark that the proposed route could have a negative visual impact on Carriage Drive in Clapham Green.

Noise and air pollution

Many respondents are also concerned about the noise which may be generated by the line. These respondents feel that the construction of the EWR line, as well as running freight at night through Bedford, would be particularly noisy. A small number of respondents comment that this would be compounded by proposed tree removal, as well as a potential increase in traffic from construction.

Similarly, many respondents are generally concerned about air pollution, particularly caused by freight trains, with several stating that air quality in the area is already below acceptable levels. Several respondents mention the potential effects of dust from demolition and construction on air quality and the health of local residents. A few also express concerns about the environmental impact of a viaduct on the River Great Ouse valley. A small number also emphasise the impact of increased air pollution on local schools.

Roads and footpaths

Many respondents voice their concerns about roads and paths, particularly about the potential impact on existing congestion in the area. Several respondents are also concerned about the impact of the EWR line travelling across public footpaths and how this could impact their wellbeing. Several respondents mention the potential disruption to local roads from construction traffic. A few are particularly concerned about the impact on Bromham Bridge, which they claim risks becoming a choke point.

Suggestions

Many respondents suggested alternative routes and designs for this section of the proposal. These include:

- Going to the south of Bedford, rather than the north, where there is flatter terrain;
- Taking the route even further north to avoid Clapham Green;
- Bypassing Bedford itself to avoid going through the town centre; and
- Utilising tunnels instead of viaducts to mitigate impacts.

6.4. Other comments related to Section C

Support

Many respondents express support for aspects of the proposals. Points of support from respondents include the decision to take the EWR line through Bedford town, the potential economic benefits for Bedford and the possibility of local development, the choice of Route E, and the potential improvements to connectivity resulting from the project.

Concern

Many respondents express opposition to the route running through Bedford and the area to the north of Bedford. These respondents oppose Route E, some strongly. Many respondents say that the proposed route would be destructive, damaging, or bad for Bedford. Many respondents argue that since the approach to Cambridge is being reconsidered, the northern approach to Bedford should also be reconsidered. Several respondents state that the northern route is unpopular with Bedford residents.

Many respondents express opposition to the proposals in general terms. Several respondents argue that the proposals are unjustified. A similar number say that there should not be a new rail line in Bedford.

Property

Many respondents express concern about the potential negative impact on properties. The majority of these respondents are concerned about the potential compulsory purchase and demolition of residential properties. Possible reductions in property value resulting from construction of the railway and potential difficulty in selling property in the future are also concerns for several respondents. A small number of respondents also raise concerns about the potential reduction in size of residential gardens. A few respondents discuss the potential reduction in affordable housing in Bedford if some residential properties are demolished. A similar number express concern that the proposals may reduce the land available for the development of housing in the future.

Environment

The potential environmental impacts of the proposals, particularly on the local countryside, are also a concern for many respondents. Many respondents mention carbon emissions and several express concern about the loss of local trees and woodland. The environmental impact of emissions from diesel trains is also an issue for some respondents. Many respondents raise concerns about the potential negative impact on wildlife, including on local habitats, biodiversity, and ecosystems. A few respondents reference the potential threat to wildlife corridors and to particular types of animals such as red kites, pheasants, and deer.

Local community

A considerable number of respondents express concern in general terms about the potential negative impacts of the proposals on communities, residents, livelihoods, or quality of life. Several respondents mention the potential negative impacts on local people, both in the town centre and in villages such as Clapham, Wilden and Ravensden. These potential impacts include adverse effects on mental health for local people, loss of jobs, changes to the character of local areas, loss of homes, loss of villages, loss of sleep and the safety of children from Scott Primary School, given the school's proximity to the Hawk Drive construction entry point.

Roads and footpaths

The potential negative effects of the proposals on roads, bridges and paths in the Bedford area are a concern for a considerable number of respondents. Potential increases in traffic congestion in Bedford, both during construction and once construction is completed, are highlighted by many respondents, and some respondents are concerned about the effects of congestion on station access. Congestion in the town is already considered by many respondents to be a problem. Some respondents voice concern about potential disruption from the demolition and rebuilding of bridges in Bedford. The potential disruption to public footpaths from construction is also highlighted by a few respondents, while a similar number outline the importance of good pedestrian access to stations in Bedford during and after construction. A small number of respondents would like improvements to roads and paths for non-motorised vehicles as part of the proposals.

Cost, economic benefit and need

A considerable number of respondents express concern about the cost of the proposals or the potential economic benefits for Bedford. For many respondents there is concern that the proposed route is expensive. A similar number of respondents raise concerns about the costs of the engineering involved in taking the railway north of Bedford, mentioning the hilly terrain in this area and the need to construct a viaduct over the River Great Ouse. Many respondents also question the size of the economic benefits for Bedford that would result from the EWR line or have concerns that the costs

outweigh the benefits. Some respondents believe that the economic benefits have been overstated, and a similar number of respondents are sceptical that tourists and businesses will be drawn to Bedford rather than Oxford and Cambridge. A few respondents suggest that changes to patterns of work resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic may reduce the potential benefits of the railway.

Visual impact

The potential negative visual impacts and potential effects on the landscape are a concern for a considerable number of respondents, particularly on scenic local countryside and green space. Some respondents have concerns about the potential negative visual impact of the proposed viaduct over River Great Ouse and Paula Radcliffe Way. A small number of respondents are concerned about views of the railway line near residential areas and a few respondents suggest measures to reduce any potential negative visual impact, such as the construction of a brick wall beside the railway line. Some respondents express particular concern about the potential loss of local walking routes.

Noise and vibration

Noise levels and vibration in the Bedford area are a concern for many respondents, with a small number of respondents highlighting the possibility of noise disturbance from construction works. Many respondents are particularly concerned about the potential impact of noise pollution from passing trains on residents' quality of life, and raise concerns about freight trains passing through Bedford. Some respondents believe that trains through the town may be very frequent and will case a disturbance. Additionally, a small number of respondents are concerned about the possibility of freight trains travelling through Bedford at night.

Air quality

Air pollution and air quality are a concern for many respondents. Some respondents highlight the potential negative impact of construction work on air quality in Bedford. Many respondents are particularly concerned about the potential impact of freight trains travelling through the town on Bedford's level of air pollution and related effects on health and well-being. Several respondents specifically mention diesel engines and their potential negative effects on air quality. In relation to these concerns, some respondents mention that Bedford's air quality is already poor.

Disruption from construction

Many respondents state their concern in general terms that construction would be disruptive for the Bedford area, while many others request that disruption be kept to a minimum where possible.

Car Parking

Some respondents raise concerns about the level of current car parking provision in Bedford, and some others stress the need to provide enough car parking for Bedford stations when construction is complete.

Journey time

Journey time is a concern to some respondents who suggest taking the route north of Bedford, along Route E, would result in longer journey times than taking an alternative route to Cambridge.

Existing services and infrastructure

A small number of respondents highlight the potential impact on current rail use or existing rail infrastructure. These concerns include how the construction works and the new EWR line will interact with existing service provision, the potential impact on commutes, and the potential disruption to stations in Bedford may discourage rail users.

Suggestions

Alternative route

Many respondents suggest that an alternative route would be preferable to the one proposed. Most of these respondents would prefer a route to the south of Bedford, an option which many respondents describe as flatter, shorter, cheaper, and more environmentally friendly than a northern route. Many respondents believe that a southern route would help EWR Co achieve its zero carbon ambitions for the project. An in-out system, whereby trains enter and leave Bedford from the south, is an option that many respondents suggest. The A421 transport corridor is recommended by many respondents as suitable for a southern route, and a similar number suggest that route B would be preferable to Route E. An alternative route, which would allow freight to bypass the town, is an important consideration for many respondents.

Further information

Many respondents request more detail on the proposals, including on project costs, potential environmental impact of the proposals, the number of trains that will pass through Bedford per day, the operating hours of freight trains, how long it would take to rebuild Bedford station and other issues.

Other suggestions

Several respondents suggest that existing infrastructure should be used as part of the proposals. Some respondents recommend using old track to the south of Bedford, with a small number specifically recommending use of Varsity Line track. Several also suggest in general terms that the route should be aligned with existing transport corridors where possible.

Some respondents make suggestions about compensation. These respondents generally recommend that those who will lose property under

the proposals or who will see the value of their property decrease are appropriately compensated. A few respondents suggest widening the scope of the current scheme to include a larger number of residents.

Some respondents make suggestions about future capacity. This includes ensuring there is space for future increases in rail traffic, while a few respondents suggest that capacity requirements may be reduced in light of the Covid-19 pandemic.

7. Approach to Cambridge and Section D: Clapham Green to the Eversdens

In 2019 EWR Co consulted on various route options between Bedford and Cambridge. In January 2020, following consideration of responses to this consultation, further design development and environmental assessment, EWR Co selected route option E as their preferred route option. This defined the area within which the actual railway line would be located.

Route E followed a route from Bedford Midland, travelling south of St Neots / into the Tempsford area, through Cambourne and taking a southern approach into Cambridge.

Following this announcement of the preferred route option, EWR Co identified and assessed potential route alignment options, as well as considering possible station locations on each of these route alignments, which would facilitate a southern approach to Cambridge.

As part of this consultation respondents were asked to comment on the approach to Cambridge, as well as on the 5 route alignment options that EWR Co proposed.

The table below shows the number of responses to each of the open and closed questions in this section.

Question	Number of responses
Question 1: Please share your view on the approach to Cambridge	5,645
Question 38: Please rank your preference for the proposed Clapham Green to The Eversdens alignment options.	2,906 respondents express a preference for at least one alignment options
Question 39: Please tell us why you have ranked the proposed alignment options above and provide any other comments.	4,096

Table 15: Number of respondents directly answering each question

7.1. The approach to Cambridge

Question 1 asked respondents to share their views on the proposed approach to Cambridge and to comment on EWR Co's assessment that approaching from the south is the better option in light of the challenges of a northern approach even with a Cambourne North station.

This question received 5,645 responses, which are summarised below.

7.1.1. Comments on the northern alignment

Support

Many respondents express support for a northern approach to Cambridge in general terms without providing further information.

A large number of respondents express general support for this route, with some stating that this route is merely preferable to the southern alignment, the vast majority of these respondents claim that this is the only acceptable route into Cambridge. A substantial number of respondents also feel that the northern approach has not been given due consideration. A small number of respondents express support for this route for linking well to their preferred route alignment for Section D, particularly alignment 1.

Serving new developments

A large number of respondents support a northern approach to Cambridge as it would be able to serve new housing developments. A substantial number of these respondents mention the new town of Northstowe, a potentially very large development, which would be well served with rail options should this line approach Cambridge from the north. A substantial number specifically cite the many new houses in the area, estimated to number at least 10,000 after construction of the railway is completed, as a particular reason for their support. Further developments cited by respondents include those at Oakington and Waterbeach. Many respondents also claim that the Science Park in the north of Cambridge, a major employment site, is currently underserved by transport links, and would strongly benefit from increased services at Cambridge North station. Generally, respondents claim that the focus of future development in and around Cambridge will be to the north of the city, and not to the south, making a northern approach more suitable and in need of rail connections.

Environmental impact and carbon

A substantial number of respondents argue that a northern route alignment would have less environmental impact. Some of these respondents refer to views expressed by the Campaign to Protect Rural England, the Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire Wildlife Trust, the Woodland Trust, and Natural England.

Meanwhile, a substantial number of respondents similarly believe that a northern route alignment would have less visual impact on the landscape. They argue that it would pass through less rural countryside and would not require the same elevation as the southern approach. They also say that is would follow existing travel corridors and would therefore have relatively little impact.

Many respondents argue that a northern route alignment would minimise any impact on wildlife and habitats. In particular, they argue that it would avoid designated sites such as Eversden and Wimpole Woods, where some

users say that Barbastelle bats are known to roost. Many respondents refer to the Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, and Northamptonshire Wildlife Trust's preference for a northern alignment.

Some respondents feel that a northern route alignment would have a positive impact on carbon emissions, including emissions from construction when compared to the southern alignment.

Freight

A considerable number of respondents voice support for a northern alignment due to its positive impact on freight transportation. These respondents believe that this proposal would allow freight trains to bypass residential areas. Most of these respondents specifically express the importance of rerouting freight out of Cambridge.

Several respondents believe that a northern alignment could improve nationwide freight links. According to some of these respondents, the route could potentially facilitate improved freight routes towards Felixstowe and the Haven ports.

A small number of other respondents express support for the following freight-related reasons:

- Freight could travel faster via the northern alignment than the southern alignment;
- The route could remove HGV traffic from roads in Cambridge; and
- Dual track would not be required for freight if there is a northern alignment.

Engineering and construction

Many people believe that EWR Co has the capacity to overcome the engineering complexities of a northern alignment. Most of these respondents suggest that a northern route would be no less challenging than a southern one, hence their support for the northern alignment.

Several other respondents claim that the proposed 'four tracking' of the northern alignment on the approach to Cambridge is not necessary. As such, these respondents feel that a northern route could still be viable.

According to some respondents, the construction complexities created by floodplains could be overcome. A similar number of other respondents claim that a northern alignment would be feasible if trenches and tunnels are incorporated rather than embankments. A 'Dutch' model of construction is suggested by a small number of these respondents without further clarification.

Some respondents voice specific reasons as to why a northern route could be viable. These views include:

- Suggestions that previous rounds of consultation exaggerated the complexities of a northern alignment;
- Support for northern alignment proposals created by CamBed RailRoad (CBRR) and Cambridge Approaches;
- Respondents feel that trains reversing out of Cambridge would not have a significant impact in terms of delays; and
- A few other respondents suggest that a northern alignment could be feasible if modern construction techniques such as trench technology is used.

Local communities

A considerable number of respondents express support for the northern alignment because they believe it could have less of an impact on local communities than a southern alignment. Many of these respondents specifically claim that seven times more residents would be negatively impacted by a southern route than by its northern counterpart. A similar number of respondents suggest that the settlements in the path of the southern alignment such as of Toft, Harston, and Haslingfield would benefit from a northern alignment.

Many respondents feel that a northern alignment could be more beneficial for local people. These respondents express the following points of support:

- A larger population could be serviced by the northern route;
- More communities would possibly experience economic growth;
- New settlements such as Northstowe and Cambourne would benefit; and
- A northern alignment would complement existing travel corridors such as the A428 and A14.

Many other respondents voice their support for the potentially reduced disruption involved with a northern route. Most of these respondents stress that the impact of the route on community wellbeing could be significantly smaller than that of a southern alignment.

Some respondents state that a northern alignment would be the least impactful option for the local community. A few other respondents specifically claim that this alignment would possibly generate lower levels of noise and air pollution.

A small number of respondents support a northern alignment because they believe it would require the demolition of fewer residential properties than a southern alignment.

A small number of other respondents also express the view that a northern alignment would prevent the potential destruction of ancient monuments and heritage sites.

Connectivity

Many respondents express support for a northern alignment as it could provide improved connections to science parks in Cambridge. According to a similar number of respondents, the route could result in better travel connections for northern communities such as Northstowe, Waterbeach, Cambourne, Oakington and St. Neots. Some other respondents believe that this alignment could service a broader customer base. These respondents claim that the population in the north is already large and would grow further due to the development of new settlements.

Many respondents comment that a northern route would provide better connectivity for local businesses and employment hubs. Several other respondents specifically state that Cambridge Business Centre could potentially benefit from the connectivity improvements a northern alignment would bring.

Many other respondents suggest that a northern alignment would improve connectivity, however these respondents express this in general terms. Several other respondents believe that the route would provide increased connective flexibility. These respondents express the following:

- The route could allow easier access to the guided busway;
- Interchanges at Cambridge station may be streamlined;
- Access to London stations could be made more direct; and
- The alignment could possibly allow more routes to be added to timetables.

Local and national economy

Without giving specific reasons, many respondents express support for a northern alignment due to the potential economic benefits it could create. A similar number of other respondents voice the following points about possible economic benefits:

- A northern alignment may provide better access to employment hubs, such as the science park, therefore increasing employment in the area;
- Local businesses, such as the tech industry, could benefit from the alignment; and
- Northern communities could receive an economic boost due to increased rail use.

Use of existing transport corridors

Many respondents express support for a northern alignment because the use of existing transport corridors would be the least impactful option. Most of these respondents believe that routing track alongside existing roads would have a reduced impact on the environment, natural landscape, and local communities.

Many other respondents voice support for following existing transport corridors in general terms. According to some other respondents, a northern

alignment would complement existing travel options such as the A14, A428 and the guided busway.

Some respondents claim that construction of the line could be easier if it runs parallel to existing travel corridors. A few of these respondents suggest that the land around existing infrastructure benefits from flatter topography.

A small number of respondents suggest that following existing transport corridors would mitigate the impact of noise pollution on the local population.

Increased capacity and other transport modes

Some respondents express support in general terms, without giving further explanation, that a northern alignment would create more capacity and attract more rail users. A similar number specifically suggest that the northern alignment could alleviate pressure on the guided busway in north Cambridge which is at full capacity.

A small number of respondents feel that Cambridge North station has greater potential to cope with increased capacity than stations on the southern approach. These respondents believe that a northern alignment should be introduced to fill this capacity.

Several respondents suggest that a northern alignment could reduce congestion on roads in and around Cambridge. More specifically, some respondents state that the alignment could ease traffic pressures on the A14 and A428.

Other comments

Several respondents suggest that the northern route would be flatter, facilitating a faster transit through Cambridge. A few respondents claim that a northern alignment would provide better accessibility for offenders released from Milton prison. A similar number of other respondents feel that a northern route could be the quickest alignment to construct.

Concern

Many respondents express general opposition to the northern route.

Some oppose running a train through their local village (Oakington, Bourn, Dry Drayton, Knapwell, Milton, Landbeach, Clapham, Ravensden, and Renhold are all specifically identified).

A few respondents agree with EWR Co's reasoning for preferring the southern route and a few others believe the northern route option should have never been included in the consultation.

Complexity and land use

Many respondents express concern that the northern approach would pose more challenges, both in construction and maintenance, than the southern approach. Several other respondents voice concern that a northern approach would impact upon developments on the A14 such as at

Waterbeach, specifically that any approach from the north would require the complex construction of a bridge over the road, or the closure of the eight-lane carriageway.

The possible difficulty of constructing a railway line over the floodplains north of Cambridge is a concern raised by some respondents. A few of these respondents feel that any developments would exacerbate current drainage issues in the area. Similarly, some other respondents express concern that a complex and lengthy viaduct would have to be built over the floodplains.

A small number of respondents voice their concern over issues relating to land use. Specifically:

- The route would conflict with existing housing developments in Cambridge;
- Topography to the north of Cambridge could be more complex to construct;
- A northern alignment would put pressure on agricultural and recreational land; and
- Future infrastructure plans would be jeopardised by a northern approach.

A few other respondents express concern that EWR Co has favoured a southern approach because the northern route would be too difficult to plan.

Cost

For many respondents, the higher cost of a northern approach is of paramount concern. A small number of other respondents explicitly express concern that the need to construct track on floodplains, and create viaducts, would incur high costs.

A few other respondents claim that the potential cost of working around existing infrastructure, such as the A14, would not justify a northern approach.

The added cost of compulsory purchases of land and the impact on property values that the northern approach could bring is a concern for a few respondents. A similar number of other respondents believe that a southern approach would be a significantly cheaper alternative.

Local communities

Several respondents express concern that a northern approach could cause disruption to local people. Specifically, these respondents claim that villages and towns on the proposed route would lose their character or possibly be lost altogether. A small number of these respondents stress their concern that villages such as Oakington could become merged with other urban areas. For a few other respondents, the possibility of villages north of Cambridge becoming part of an 'urban sprawl' is of concern.

Some other respondents voice concern that a northern approach would

cause division within communities due to potential disruption. In particular, a small number of these respondents state that Dry Drayton, Landbeach, Milton and Oakington could be at risk.

A small number of respondents are concerned about the possible impact of this route on local businesses. A few of these respondents explicitly state that businesses in Oakington could be at risk. A small number of other respondents feel that a northern route would have a detrimental, aesthetic impact upon homes and village landscapes.

Some respondents identify possible impacts on the local community as a result of the northern alignment. These respondents state that:

- The line would be too close to residential properties, or would cut through them;
- There is potential for a significant increase in noise pollution;
- Equestrian schools in Dry Drayton could see their land curtailed;
- The proposed Cambridge Country Park and Sports Lake could be cut off or aesthetically disadvantaged; and
- Use of a northern route could interfere with the reopening of the March to Wisbech line.

Greenspace and heritage sites

Several people voice their concern that a northern route could impact public greenspaces. These respondents claim that any loss to recreation grounds, walking routes and communal spaces would have a detrimental effect on local people. A small number of other respondents specifically identify Milton Country Park and Edwards Woodland in Dry Drayton as areas potentially impacted. A similar number of other respondents suggest that the mental health of the local community could be affected by the loss of any public greenspaces.

Some respondents raise concerns that a northern route could impact upon or run closer to heritage sites, specifically:

- Iron Age settlements along the proposed route;
- Leper Chapel;
- Grade II listed Childerley Hall; and
- Grade II listed Madingley Hall.

Environment

Several respondents express concern, in general terms, that the creation of a railway would cause damage to the natural environment north of Cambridge. A few other respondents raise specific concerns that biodiversity and natural habitats would be impacted by the construction of a railway.

A few people claim that the areas north of Cambridge have already seen their natural environment damaged by infrastructure development such as the A14. These respondents express concern that further construction could exacerbate existing issues.

A small number of respondents raise the following concerns:

- Noise pollution caused by rail operations;
- Possible damage to waterways;
- The potential loss of agricultural land; and
- The urbanisation of rural environments.

Flooding

Proposed plans to build on a floodplain is a concern for several respondents. These respondents express concern that the area north of Cambridge sits below the water table and has already experienced major flooding in previous years. A small number of these respondents state that any construction work could reduce the ability of the floodplains to cope with future heavy rainfall. Some other respondents feel that the use of embankments could cause increased flooding, suggesting that the earthworks required to create seven-metre high embankments would diminish the absorption qualities of the soil, potentially exacerbating flooding.

A few people cite concerns that flood defences may need to be created, resulting in higher costs and visual blight. A similar number of other respondents express concern that potentially higher rates of flooding could cause damage to local wildlife.

Wildlife

The possible impact on wildlife and habitats is of concern to many respondents. These respondents feel that a northern alignment would cause general disruption to local species and their habitats. A few of these respondents specifically state that Edwards Woodland in Dry Drayton could become cut off, resulting in a loss of natural habitat.

A small number of respondents feel that a railway could potentially cut off existing wildlife corridors and create a barrier between habitats. For a similar number of other respondents, the possible impact upon specific species is of concern. For example, these respondents claim that:

- Endangered species of birds would be at risk as the proposals conflict with existing RSPB conservation sites;
- Great Crested Newt populations could be endangered in Dry Drayton; and
- Native snake species could be driven out of the local area.

Visual impact

Several people express concern that the infrastructure needed for a northern alignment could cause visual blight. In particular, these respondents claim that the proposed embankments, viaducts and bridges could potentially be visually intrusive. A small number of these respondents voice their concern that the local topography would mean any raised structure would have a high visual impact.

Some other respondents comment on the potential for detrimental visual

impact on the rural landscapes and leisure pursuits. These respondents feel that recreational wooded areas and rural walks could be negatively affected by rail infrastructure. A few other respondents explicitly comment that views of Madingley Hall, St. Peter's Church, St. Paul's Church, as well as the respectful atmosphere of local cemeteries would be disrupted by a railway.

The possible visual impact on residential properties is raised by a small number of respondents. A few of these respondents also raise the concern that the traveller community at Fen Road in Chesterton could be adversely visually impacted by embankments.

Property and local character

Many people express concern that the construction of a northern alignment could lead to the demolition of residential properties. Several of these respondents specifically voice concern that a northern alignment would result in more demolition than the proposed southern alternative. A few other respondents believe that the density and age of housing north of Cambridge would increase the risk of structural damage created by vibration from trains travelling at high speeds.

A small number of respondents show concern that the rural and sparsely populated character of local villages would be lost if a railway is constructed. A few other respondents feel that property prices could be adversely impacted by a northern alignment.

A few respondents voice particular concern that a northern alignment would conflict with existing property development plans.

Noise

Some respondents raise concerns that noise from the railway would have a detrimental impact upon their domestic and community life. A few other respondents claim that the proposed elevated structures such as embankments and viaducts would amplify noise pollution across a wider area.

Roads and rights of way

Some respondents express concern that congestion on local roads would increase, both as a result of construction activities and once it has been completed by severing local village road routes. A small number of other respondents express additional concern that the current road infrastructure would be unable to cope with a significant increase in car use caused by road closures during construction and additional traffic heading to the station once the railway is operational.

Some respondents suggest that the northern alignment proposals could create disruption on existing footpaths and bridleways. A small number of these respondents believe that communities could be severed as a result of roads and other public rights of way being disrupted.

A small number of respondents express the following specific concerns:

- Higher levels of traffic could impact pedestrian safety;
- EWR Co proposals could conflict with other infrastructure projects such as the new Northstowe roads and proposed upgrades to the A10; and
- The proposals could result in the communities, such as Dry Drayton and Madingley, being surrounded by infrastructure works.

A small number of respondents mention that the areas north of Cambridge, particularly Dry Drayton, have already experienced years of disruption due to the development of the A14. A small number of other respondents voice concern that the construction process could cause general disruption for years, especially in areas such as Oakington and Dry Drayton.

A small number of respondents comment that there could be negative impacts in terms of traffic. These respondents express that:

- Congestion could increase around the A14;
- Heavy goods vehicles involved in the construction could block local roads; and
- Noise pollution would increase as a result of works traffic.

Some respondents voice their concern that air pollution could increase as a result of increased rail use. A small number of these respondents claim that the increase in commuter traffic could outweigh the benefit of rail use.

Lobbying influence

Some respondents are concerned that a northern alignment is only being reconsidered due to a number of groups lobbying against the southern approach. These respondents claim that well-funded groups such as Cambridge Approaches and CambBedRailRoad could have too much influence.

A small number of people claim that southern lobbying groups could be downplaying the benefits of a southern alignment for the sake of preserving the landscape in those area.

According to a small number of other respondents, there is concern that the views of residents on the northern alignment could be ignored because their opposition is not as vocal. More specifically, a few of these respondents voice concern that a northern alignment is being reconsidered due to influence of vocal opposition from those potentially affected by the southern alignment.

Journey times

Several respondents voice their concern that a northern alignment would result in longer journey times. A few of these respondents feel that there may be higher running costs due to these longer journeys.

Some other respondents believe that the need for trains to reverse out of Cambridge would add unnecessary complexities to the operation of a

northern route. A similar number of other respondents express their concern that reversing trains could significantly increase journey times. A few respondents feel that reversing trains could conflict with other rail traffic.

Need

Several respondents question the need for a northern alignment in principle. These respondents state that the area north of Cambridge is already adequately serviced by the guided busway. A similar number of other respondents believe that there is no need for a rail link because the A14 already provides suitable connectivity.

A small number of other respondents claim that a northern alignment would see limited use, especially due to commuting changes as a result of Covid-19.

Some other respondents feel that the route would bring no benefit to the villages that it passes through.

Access to stations

Some people comment that the plans for a northern alignment lack provision for accessible stations. Most of these respondents show concern that the proposed Northstowe station would be too far away from Northstowe for convenient access.

Other concerns

A small number of people express specific concerns about a northern alignment. These responses include:

- The potential impact of the route on cycle routes around Cambridge;
- Concerns about the transition from road freight to rail freight; and
- The need to change stations at Cambridge.

Suggestions

Alternative track design and construction

Many respondents suggest alternative track designs and construction. In particular, these respondents claim that, should the track utilise trenching technology along the lines of that used in the Netherlands, that the impacts of the northern approach would be considerably lower than that of the southern approach, and that EWR Co has failed to take this into account when designing the proposals. Several respondents also suggest that embankments are unnecessary in this area and contribute to the northern approach appearing to be more impactful on the surrounding areas than the southern approach.

Use of existing transport corridors

Many respondents also suggest ensuring that the route follows existing transport corridors in the north of Cambridge, particularly the A428, the A14 and the M11. These respondents claim that running the track along these roads would help to contain the impacts of the line itself, as well as its

construction.

Stations and connectivity

A small number suggest that there should be an additional station built at Waterbeach, to allow residents of the new development to commute into Cambridge by rail. A small number support creating additional bus links to new stations and a small number support building a Cambridge South station, regardless of route alignment, in order to serve the Biomedical Campus.

Some respondents suggest that EWR should incorporate the northern route proposed by CBBR which follows the A14/A428 travel corridor.

Some other respondents suggest the following measures for a northern alignment:

- New linking chords should be incorporated to connect economic hubs;
- The guided busway could be replaced with rail; and
- Corridor option C should be revisited by EWR planners.

According to some respondents, a direct connection to Cambridge North station should be provided. A small number of other respondents suggest the following:

- The relatively new Cambridge North station could be used more by rail traffic;
- If a station is constructed in Cambourne, then an approach into Cambridge North should be considered; and
- Any route proposed by EWR should enter Cambridge via this station.

Other suggestions

A few other respondents voice the following specific suggestions:

- In-cab signalling could be used to avoid the need for four tracks on the northern alignment;
- A metro service could be incorporated into plans; and
- The northern alignment could go over the M11 to shorten the route.

7.1.2. Comments on the southern alignment

Support

A substantial number of respondents express support in general terms for a southern alignment without providing further clarification.

Several respondents support a route that serves the planned Cambridge South Station. Some respondents mention that the station would support Cambridge Biomedical Campus and Addenbrooke's Hospital, and a few say that it could reduce car use.

Local impact

Many respondents say that a southern alignment would be preferable to a northern alignment because it would be disruptive to fewer people. A similar

number mention that it would require the loss of fewer properties. A few respondents mention that the southern route would bring employment opportunities for local people.

Connectivity

A considerable number of respondents express support for the potential improvements the southern alignment would bring to connectivity in the area. Many respondents believe that the southern alignment would be beneficial for access to Addenbrooke's Hospital and Cambridge Biomedical Campus, improving access for users and employees, facilitating connection between research communities in Oxford and Cambridge, and supporting the future development and success of the Biomedical Campus. Many respondents also mention that the southern alignment would be the more convenient option for future through-trains to Suffolk and Norfolk, removing the need for trains to reverse in Cambridge.

Cost and value for money

Many respondents express support for the southern alignment because it would be less costly or better value for money than the northern approach.

Engineering and construction

Some respondents express support for the southern alignment because they believe that engineering and construction of the railway will be less challenging than the northern route.

Local economy

Several respondents voice support for the potential benefits the southern approach could have for the local economy, including the potential generation of jobs, better connectivity for local businesses and support for development of the Cambridge Biomedical Campus. A few respondents argue that the potential economic benefits of the southern approach outweigh those of a northern approach.

Environment and landscape

Many respondents express support for the southern alignment because they believe that it would have fewer negative environmental impacts than a northern alignment. As well as respondents who discuss environmental impacts in general terms, a small number argue that the southern alignment will cause less disruption to wildlife and habitats. A few respondents support the southern approach because they believe it avoids crossing floodplains. A similar number of respondents argue that the southern alignment would lead to lower levels of pollution, with reasons including that the route is shorter than the northern approach or because it would take more cars off the road.

Several respondents support the southern alignment because they believe its potential impacts on the local landscape, countryside and views are less significant than those of a northern approach.

Use of existing infrastructure

Some respondents express support for the southern alignment because this would allow for the use of existing rail infrastructure to the south of Cambridge, which they believe could lead to reduced disruption and lower costs.

Length of route

Many respondents express a preference for the southern alignment because they believe that it offers a shorter and more direct route to Cambridge, with faster journey times than the northern alignment.

Traffic and car use

Some respondents express support for the southern alignment because they believe it would reduce car use in local areas or lead to reduced levels of traffic congestion. A few respondents believe that a southern option would cause less disruption to road-users in Cambridge than a northern one.

Concern

Many respondents express opposition in general terms to the proposals for a southern alignment. Many reject or disagree with the proposals and others say that they are wrong or mistaken without further clarification. Where respondents comment in more detail, we have included these below.

Engineering and construction

Many respondents express concern about the complexity of engineering and construction works involved in building the southern alignment. Several of these respondents raise concerns about the engineering challenges of the embankments and viaducts involved in the southern alignment proposals, and some mention that the terrain will make construction difficult.

Cost and value for money

Many respondents express concern that a southern alignment to Cambridge will be an expensive option, poor value for money or more expensive than the northern alignment. Several respondents mention specific features of the southern alignment which they view as potentially being particularly costly, including the construction of embankments and tunnels, the construction of Cambridge South station and the effect of the undulating terrain.

Many respondents believe that cost of the route or ease of construction should not be the determining factors in the route alignment decision. These respondents believe that EWR Co has put too much weight on costs of construction in its favourable assessment of the southern approach. Many suggest considering a broader range of factors when choosing the route alignment, including potential impacts on communities, potential carbon emission levels, and potential effects on the landscape and the environment.

Freight

A substantial number of respondents express concern about freight trains on the southern alignment. These respondents are concerned about the potential negative impact of freight trains on noise pollution and air quality in their area. Several respondents are particularly concerned about freight trains passing through the centre of Cambridge if the southern alignment is chosen and mention that the northern alignment would avoid this. A few respondents are concerned about the carbon emissions resulting from train use on the southern alignment, in particular diesel freight trains.

Air quality

A substantial number of respondents are concerned about the potential negative impacts of the use of the railway line on air quality in the area around the southern alignment and the resultant potential impacts on the environment, health, and quality of life. A considerable number of respondents specifically mention concerns about the impact of diesel trains and their effect on local air quality. The potential impact of air pollution on schools close to the route, such as Comberton Village College and Haslingfield Endowed Primary School are a concern for many respondents. Several respondents mention potential increases in levels of road traffic from the proposals and the resulting effects on air quality. A small number of respondents express concern specifically about air pollution caused by construction work.

Local communities

A large number of respondents voice concern about the potential impacts of the proposals for a southern alignment on residents and communities. As well as general comments about potential negative effects on quality of life for residents, specific impacts include:

- making travel to services such as GPs and schools in South Cambridgeshire villages more difficult;
- disruption to community buildings such as churches and schools; loss of sense of community;
- negative effects on residents' mental and physical health;
- potential danger posed by sections of railway track near schools and residential areas; potential danger involved in crossing railway tracks;
- unpleasant views;
- loss of sleep; and
- disruption from construction.

Environment

A large number of respondents express their concern about the potential negative environmental impacts of the proposals. Many respondents mention the effect on waterways, particularly on local chalk streams but also on rivers such as Bourn Brook. The potential loss of green space is mentioned by several respondents, as is the potential damage to countryside. Several

respondents are concerned about the loss of trees and plants. Many respondents argue that choosing a southern approach to Cambridge would be more environmentally damaging than a northern approach. Several respondents also mention concerns about carbon emissions or climate change without offering further information.

Many respondents are concerned about the potential damage to woodland which could result from the southern alignment, particularly to Hardwick Woods, which several respondents note is historic and which a few respondents note is a site of special scientific interest, as well as to other woods such as Papworth Wood, Wimpole Wood and Elsworth Wood.

Flooding

Many respondents are concerned about the potential contribution of the proposals to flooding in the area, with concerns that factors including the construction of track, the loss of flood meadows and fields, and the impacts of construction on waterways could all make flooding more likely. Several respondents note that risk of flooding is already a problem in their areas.

Historical sites

The potential negative impact of the proposals on sites of historical significance is a concern for many respondents. Many respondents are concerned about the potential damage caused by the proposals to Chapel Hill, which respondents refer to as a landmark, a site of historical and archaeological significance, a beauty spot, and an ancient pilgrimage route. Specific sites mentioned by respondents include Bourn Windmill, Landbeach, listed homes in Great Eversden, and numerous historic buildings such as Baggot Hall and All Saints Church in Haslingfield. A few respondents mention potential destruction of areas and settlements of archaeological importance.

Visual and landscape

A large number of respondents express concern about the potential negative visual or landscape impacts of the proposals. Potential damage to or 'carving up' of the local countryside is a concern for a substantial number of respondents. A similar number of respondents are concerned about embankments and elevated sections of the line, which many respondents argue would be intrusive and have a negative visual impact on the surrounding area. Many other respondents raise concerns about the potential visual impact of viaducts in the area. The green belt status of the land is also mentioned by many respondents. Some respondents comment on the potential negative, visual impact of the proposals on specific locations such as Trumpington Meadows or Chapel Hill.

Noise

A substantial number of respondents voice concern about potential increases in noise pollution resulting from the proposals for a southern alignment, and the way that this would impact quality of life in

neighbourhoods near the railway line. Some respondents raise concerns about noise from construction. As well as the general concerns of many respondents about noise and disturbance from the operation of the railway, many respondents specifically express concerns about disturbance during the night and the potential impacts on sleep quality. Many respondents also express concerns that the elevation of the track would lead to significant levels of noise pollution in the surrounding areas. The potential negative impacts of noise pollution on local schools and children's learning is also a concern for many respondents. Many respondents draw attention to the fact that their neighbourhoods are currently peaceful or tranquil and believe that the railway would alter this.

Property

Many respondents are concerned about potential reductions in property values or potential difficulty of future sales resulting from the proposals. The proximity of the rail line to homes is also a concern for many respondents, who link this to the noise and visual impacts described above. Demolition or compulsory purchase of properties is also a concern for some respondents. A small number of respondents claim that the southern route to Cambridge has more properties in proximity to it than the northern route. A few respondents specifically mention the potential negative impact on or loss of new housing developments such as one in Caldecote.

Roads and rights of way

A substantial number of respondents are concerned about the potential negative impacts of the proposals on roads and paths. A substantial number of respondents mention that the proposals could affect roads between villages in South Cambridgeshire, leading to longer journeys, reduced connectivity and inconvenience when accessing essential services such as schools and medical services, as well as potential increases in traffic congestion. Many other respondents are concerned about the potential loss of local footpaths, which are used both for getting around and for leisure. The potential effects on leisure activities such as walking, running, and cycling are a concern for many respondents. Several respondents mention that the loss of certain paths or roads could lead to increased car use and difficulty in making journeys for those without access to a car.

Wildlife

A large number of respondents express concern about the potential negative impacts of the southern alignment on wildlife and wildlife habitats. The potential disturbance and threat to various species, including owls, otters, badgers, voles, and hares and their habitats is a concern for many respondents. In particular, a considerable number of respondents mention the impact the proposals could have on local Barbastelle bats in Wimpole and Eversden woods. Many respondents voice their concern about the potential negative impacts on specific areas or sites such as Bourn Brook and Westfield Farm. Several respondents say that the proposals could destroy

wildlife corridors, and a few respondents believe that the proposals could cut animals off from water sources important for their survival.

Construction

The potential impacts of construction work on traffic, such as increasing traffic in certain neighbourhoods or increasing congestion on main roads, is a concern for some respondents.

A small number of respondents express concern that construction involved in the southern alignment will cause a significant amount of carbon emissions.

Agriculture and farmland

A considerable number of respondents express concern about the impact of the southern alignment on agriculture. Many respondents are concerned about potential loss of farmland or that the railway would cut through farmland. Several other respondents argue that the proposals would harm the productivity of the farmland that remains, for instance by making it more difficult to farm and some are concerned about the impact this would have on agricultural livelihoods. A small number of respondents mention the importance of UK food production for reasons such as sustainability or the cost of imports, and for this reason are concerned about loss of farmland.

Amenity and recreation

Many respondents are concerned about the potential negative impact of the southern alignment on amenity and recreation. Specific impacts include disruption to cycling routes, loss of footpaths, the loss of a local golf course, the loss of areas of open countryside, and loss of and reduced access to village amenities.

Rail congestion

Many respondents believe that the existing southern train line into Cambridge is already congested and that more trains should not be added to this line. Several respondents say that this could cause disruption or delays for trains leaving or arriving at Cambridge station. A few respondents say that using this line would be hazardous.

Community severance

A considerable number of respondents are concerned that villages in South Cambridgeshire will be cut off from one another by the line if a southern alignment is chosen. These respondents are concerned about the loss of walking routes between villages, longer and less convenient journeys by car, and barriers being created between communities. Many respondents raise concerns about the potential negative impacts of the proposals on access to local services such as schools, GP surgeries, shops and post offices and sports facilities. Some respondents express particular concern about access for those unable to drive. A similar number of respondents are concerned about the potential effects that the southern alignment would have on relationships between villages and their residents. Several respondents

express concern regarding the lack of detail about which routes between villages could be lost.

Length of route

Many respondents are concerned that the southern alignment to Cambridge is a longer and less direct route than the northern alignment and that this would mean that the route is more costly and slower.

Local benefits

A large number of respondents are concerned that the southern alignment proposals offer no benefits for those who would be living nearest to the line, despite potentially imposing many impacts. Many of these respondents mention that there would be no transport benefit to residents living south of Cambridge because of the lack of a station between Cambourne and Cambridge.

Other concerns

Other concerns which respondents express include:

- That the southern alignment is preferred in order to increase profits;
- That the southern alignment is bad for EWR Co's image;
- That the project should be coordinating with other developments in South Cambridgeshire such as the Foxton Hub;
- That the proposals may negatively affect Mullard Radio Astronomy Observatory; and
- That the proposals would lead to the construction of housing developments in South Cambridgeshire.

Suggestions

Alternative routes

Many respondents suggest using an alternative route to the proposed southern alignment. Suggestions are as follows:

- Some respondents suggest adopting the northern alignment;
- A few respondents suggest adopting route corridor option A or B;
- Some respondents suggest adopting route corridor option C or D;
- Many respondents suggest alternative southern alignments which go north or south of certain villages; and
- Some respondents suggest utilising existing travel corridors.

Station locations

Several respondents suggest alternative station locations. A majority of these respondents suggest having a station between Cambridge South and Cambourne, for instance in Harston. Other suggestions include a new station in Cambourne and a new station in Milton.

Cycling and walking

Some respondents make suggestions about cycling and walking, including the provision of railway crossings or tunnels for pedestrians and cyclists to ensure connectivity, replacement of any paths or bridleways lost with crossings, and the construction of a cycle way along the railway.

Extensions to the line

A few respondents suggest that the southern alignment should be extended including to the north of Cambridge and towards Haverhill in Suffolk.

Mitigation

Many respondents suggest that there should be mitigation for potential negative impacts of the proposals. Several respondents make specific suggestions, including placing trees by the railway line, limiting the line's hours of operation, and building crossings. Some respondents criticise EWR Co for a lack of specific mitigation proposals, such as prevention of disruption for local people, reduction of environmental impact or protection of plants and wildlife.

Track design and construction

Many respondents make suggestions about track design. Many suggest that the track should go through tunnels in certain areas, such as near residential areas and in the Chapel Hill area in order to reduce noise and air pollution. A similar number of respondents suggest the use of trench technology for similar reasons, with prevention of flooding an additional concern; often these respondents mention that trenching is used successfully in the Netherlands. Several respondents suggest keeping the railway at ground level, rather than building an elevated section.

Hours of operation

Several respondents suggest limiting the railway's hours of operation so that trains do not run during the night.

7.2. Section D: Route Alignments

Following the announcement of the preferred route option in January 2020, EWR Co identified and assessed potential route alignment options, as well as considering possible station locations on each of these route alignments.

As part of this consultation respondents were asked to comment on five route alignment options that EWR Co proposed:

- Alignment 1: St Neots South Option A station and a Cambourne North station;
- Alignment 2: St Neots South Option A station and a Cambourne South station;
- Alignment 6: St Neots South Option B station and a Cambourne South station;
- Alignment 8: Tempsford Option B station and a Cambourne South

station; and
- Alignment 9: Tempsford Option A station and a Cambourne North station.

7.2.1. Responses to the ranking options question

Question 38 asked respondents to rank the proposed route alignment options on a scale from 1 to 5 where 1 indicates their most preferred alignment option and 5 indicates their least preferred alignment option. Question 39 then asked respondents to explain why they had ranked the alignment options in that way and to provide any other comments they may have about the route alignment options.

To analyse the responses to question 38, scores were allocated to the different ranks to provide an average score as outlined in the introduction and methodology section ('Responses to closed questions').

Overall, 2,906 respondents expressed a preference for at least one alignment. Not all respondents ranked each alignment, so the total number of respondents selecting each rank is not necessarily equal to the number of responses to this question.

Table 16 below shows the average ranking score ascribed to each alignment. On this basis Alignment 1 was the most popular overall with the lowest average score.

Alignment	Average ranking score
Alignment 1: St Neots South Option A station and a Cambourne North station	2.11
Alignment 2: St Neots South Option A station and a Cambourne South station	2.56
Alignment 6: St Neots South Option B station and a Cambourne South station	2.84
Alignment 8: Tempsford Option B station and a Cambourne South station	3.36
Alignment 9: Tempsford Option A station and a Cambourne North station	3.48

Table 16: Respondents' average ranking of Alignments

Figure 10 below shows a breakdown of how respondents ranked each of the five route alignment options. The first part of each bar on the left-hand side represents the number of people that ranked that route alignment option as first preference, followed by second preference and so forth, across to the right-hand side.

Alignment 1 received the most first preferences being favoured by more than half of all respondents to this question. However, it also had the lowest number of second and third preferences.

Alignments 2 and 6 both received a substantial number of third preferences

so had a high average ranking in spite of being selected as a first preference by the lowest and second lowest number of respondents respectively.

Alignment 9 received the largest number of fifth preferences and was the least popular alignment overall, however it also received the second lowest number of second, third and fourth preferences, suggesting respondents may have polarised views.

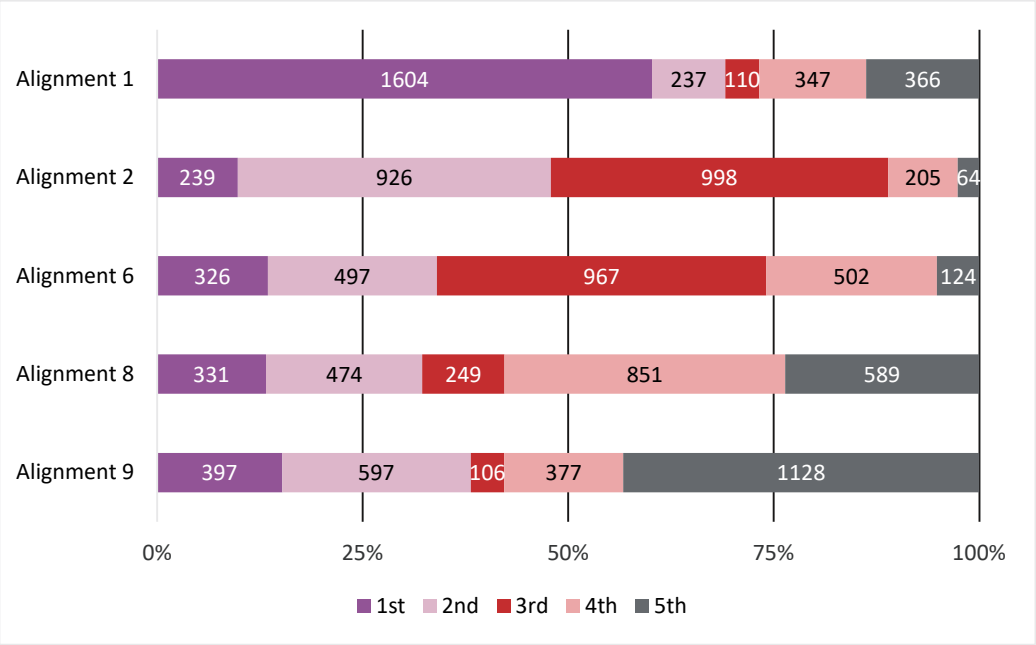

Figure 10: Breakdown of how respondents ranked Alignments

7.2.2. Comments on route alignment options

Question 39 received 4,096 responses, which are summarised below. Comments are organised by the various alignment options.

7.2.3. Comments on alignment 1

Support

A substantial number of respondents express general support for this alignment, with some suggesting that while they have concerns about all options, this route would be best.

Environment and wildlife

A considerable number of respondents state that this route alignment option would have the least negative impact on the local environment.

Several respondents state that a factor in their support for this route alignment option is that it passes further from woodlands. Several others say the same with regard to wildlife habitats and reserves in the area. The locations specifically mentioned include Bourn Brook, Cambourne Nature Reserve, Woodlands Park, and the Little Early Grove.

Some respondents claim that this route alignment option would cause fewer carbon emissions. Some respondents also claim that this route would cause

less flooding than other alignments, by avoiding the Great Ouse flood plain. A small number of respondents express support for the alignment 1 as they claim that it would cause less air pollution than other options.

Route and station locations

A large number of respondents support this alignment for its destination points at St Neots South station, Cambourne North station and the potential to facilitate a northern approach to Cambridge. A substantial number of these respondents express particular support for a station at Cambourne North, while a small number would support either station option at Cambourne.

The majority of the respondents who comment on this question prefer the Cambourne North option to Cambourne South, for its ease of access from the A428, the suitability of land to the north of Cambourne, which respondents state they would prefer to be developed than the south of Cambourne. Similarly, a further considerable number of these respondents base their support for this alignment on the fact that it has the potential to enable a northern approach into Cambridge.

A considerable number of other respondents support a station at St Neots South. Many of these respondents claim that St Neots is a growing community and would be well served by the additional links from another station. Many respondents remark that a new station at St Neots could be simpler to connect to a Cambourne North station than one at Tempsford, as St Neots South and Cambourne North are the two 'northerly' station options, and so the line would go 'north-to-north'. Several respondents state that the existing station is poorly placed in the town and does not adequately meet the demands of the area. Several others claim that there is more need for a new station in St Neots than there is in Tempsford.

Local community

A large number of respondents express support for this alignment as they consider it to have less impact on properties and communities in the area. Many respondents state that this alignment would avoid a substantial number of listed and historic properties, as well as properties in general, meaning that the physical impact on homes due to construction and operation would be lower. A small number of respondents express support for this route alignment option due to the lower number of properties that would be demolished. Many of these respondents also remark that keeping the line away from homes could reduce the negative impact of this alignment on property values.

A substantial number of respondents state that this route would have the least negative impact on local communities. Most of these respondents remark that this alignment would provide infrastructure to more already built-up settlements in the area, such as Cambourne and St Neots, while avoiding the less populous and more rural settlements such as Renhold and

Tempsford. These respondents state that this would be more fitting with the character of the area and would better align with the lifestyle choices of local residents, while providing infrastructure closer to more people.

Several respondents also claim that alignment 1 has the opportunity to increase connectivity and community cohesion in the area, allowing St Neots and Cambourne to act as local hubs for their surrounding smaller villages, which could in turn lead to better transport options for all in the region. A small number of respondents also express support for the alignment as it avoids dividing villages, particularly Bourn and Brickhill.

Housing and business development

A considerable number of respondents express support for this alignment due to its positive impact on new housing and business development in the area. In particular, these respondents remark that the route alignment could serve the new and forthcoming housing developments at Bourn Airfield and Cambourne, as well as St Neots and any potential future growth in Bedford, while also serving potential business development.

Roads

A substantial number of respondents support this alignment on the basis that it would have less negative impact on local roads compared to the other options. Many respondents specifically remark that this route alignment option could relieve traffic and congestion in the area by providing alternative transport options for those who would otherwise drive. These respondents cite the roads leading from Cambourne and St Neots as being particularly congested and would therefore benefit from being relieved by increased train travel.

Furthermore, many respondents claim that alignment 1 would cut off or otherwise disrupt fewer high-volume roads, and fewer roads in general, than other route alignment options, which would positively impact both traffic and ease of use for local residents. Some residents remark that aligning with the existing transport corridors of the A1, the A421 and the A428 would reduce the general disruption which could arise from constructing the track.

Landscape and visual impacts

A considerable number of respondents claim, with specific reference to Cambourne Country Park, Renhold and Ravensden, that this route alignment option would have fewer negative visual impacts than other route alignment options. Many respondents also feel that this alignment would have less impact on the surrounding countryside, as the route would be further from recreational footpaths that they use regularly.

Cost and construction

Many respondents express support for alignment 1 on the basis of a lower cost compared to other route alignments, which they suggest is due to fewer sections of the route needing to be raised onto viaducts or embankments.

Several respondents also remark that this could reduce construction time, as well as journey times on the line.

Noise

Several respondents claim this alignment would generate less noticeable noise than other alignments, as a result of being further from residential areas and using cuttings.

Concern

Construction

Respondents have a variety of concerns about the complex nature of construction, ranging from the challenges of construction, both in time and complexity, to the overall length of the railway. Respondents note that the length and complexity of the routing of alignment 1, which will need to route through several rural villages, would cause disruption.

Some respondents mention the effects of construction on access to farms and existing infrastructure, such as roads and stations, as well as concerns about the challenges of installing the required infrastructure such as tunnels and crossings whilst maintaining this access.

Several respondents are concerned about construction vehicles and potential damage to shallow depth drainage and critical local infrastructure. In particular, the potential severing of irrigation mains is a concern for farmers who state that – as well as the line cutting across farmland, making land uneconomical to farm – any severing of irrigation mains would result in crops failing.

Several respondents are concerned about the excavation requirements of this alignment, remarking on safety issues with filling borrow pits and the stability of the ground.

Design

Viaducts and high embankments are a concern for several respondents, who remark that noise and light pollution would be increased by having these structures on an already high point of land. These respondents also question the need for these structures on this this alignment. Some respondents mention the potential challenges and increased pollution caused by heavy freight trains needing to go up hills and suggest flatter areas in other route alignment options would address this.

Cost and economy

Many respondents are concerned about the cost and feasibility of the intersection with the A428, either by tunnel or road bridge, remarking that it would make the alignment prohibitively expensive. These respondents are also concerned about the mitigation, compensation, and liability costs of cutting through farms, individual homes, and development land. Some of these respondents believe that if alignment 1 is selected, it is likely to result in

a substantial and currently unacknowledged compensation liability, citing the compensation costs to developers, homeowners, and businesses.

Several other respondents are concerned about the overall cost of this alignment being high, especially during a time of economic difficulty, citing the longer route and more complex construction such as the tunnelling, bridges, and mitigation required to navigate existing infrastructure. In particular, respondents mention the difficulties of traversing the M11.

Effects on future and planned development is a concern for some respondents who believe that alignment 1 would significantly impact planned locations, such as Bourn Airfield and Wintringham, and result in high compensation costs. A few other respondents question if this alignment option is dependent on new development north of the A428, which is outside of the current local plan.

Some respondents mention the cost of moving other infrastructure, such as pipelines, that would be associated with alignment 1. A few other respondents refer to the maintenance costs that would be needed to keep viaducts and other large infrastructure clean and free from graffiti.

A few respondents are of the opinion that a station at North Cambourne will serve fewer commuters and so is less economical.

First/last mile

Many respondents express concern about the accessibility of stations along alignment 1. The proposed location of Cambourne North station is a concern for many respondents, who note that the A428 will separate the community from the station and make access more difficult for people travelling by foot and bicycle. The same respondents also remark that the proposed station is too far away from most residents of Cambourne and that this would result in increased motorised vehicle traffic.

A few respondents also comment that the St Neots South Option A station is too far away from the centre of St Neots and question how this station would be connected to the town by public transport and cycle routes.

Air pollution

Many respondents voice concern about the potential negative impact of increased air pollution, in particular around the use of diesel trains and the proximity of the alignment to houses and schools. Many respondents also express concern about the adverse effects of pollution on their physical and mental health.

Some respondents comment on visual and noise pollution from trains on embankments and viaducts. A few respondents comment that locating a station at Cambourne North, further away from residents of Cambourne, would encourage more people to drive to the station and cause additional pollution. A few other respondents also feel that this alignment would increase pollution in an already heavily polluted transport corridor, due to

the existing A428.

Amenity and recreation

Access to amenities and recreational facilities, such as outdoor shops, pubs, restaurants, and sports facilities is a concern for many respondents. These respondents also note that there is currently no information about how public rights of way affected by the proposals will be kept open. Some respondents comment on particular local amenities that could be impacted if alignment 1 is selected. These include:

- Listed buildings and historic houses such as those at Graze Hill Lane;
- Restaurants and pubs across the alignment;
- Woodland and walking routes along the alignment;
- Community allotments near the Bourn Airfield development; and
- Access between towns and villages along the alignment, particularly without any level crossings proposed.

Local community

A substantial number of respondents express concern about how alignment 1 could impact communities and local people.

A few respondents express concern that the rural character of the area would be changed by embankments.

Some respondents express concern about the proximity to villages and houses as well as the line cutting off access to services, in particular the villages of Wilden, Highfields Caldecote, Comberton and Toft. They comment that communities will be required to cross the railway line to access the local GP surgery, dentist, sports facilities, butchers, public house, and the library. A few respondents express concern that school-age children do not have access to a bus service to the local primary and secondary schools in Comberton, and they will have to cross the railway line in order to reach the schools.

Many respondents voice concern that the train line and corresponding development will lead to a loss of identity in smaller villages and towns, due to further development potentially spurred by EWR. Respondents mention access to countryside, noise and air pollution, outdoor exercise, and the tranquillity of small villages. These respondents are concerned about impacts on mental and physical wellbeing for local people.

There are several concerns relating to the use of 10-15 metre-high viaducts and how these could visually impact and physically cut off some entrances to villages such as Highfields Caldecote. A few respondents also express concern about vandalism and anti-social behaviour as well as fears around potential safety issues that viaducts may bring to the area, such as the additional danger from the height of the track in the case of a derailed train, and how this will affect the community.

Some respondents comment on the impact of a Cambourne North station

on local communities, stating that this will cut the community of Cambourne off from a number of critical services in the neighbouring village of Comberton.

Many respondents comment on the perceived unequal level of impact compared to the benefit of alignment 1 for small villages, stating that the alignment would have little or no transport benefit to small rural communities whilst impacting the physical environment in the form of pollution and visual disruption from embankments and viaducts. These same respondents question the local need and use of the alignment. Respondents mention that the line would be too close to or divide the following communities:

- Barrington;
- Chawston;
- Colmworth;
- Colesdon;
- Elsworth;
- Eltisley;
- the Eversdens;
- Hardwick;
- Harlton;
- Harston;
- Haslingfield;
- Knapwell;
- North Caldecote;
- Renhold;
- Ravensden;
- Toseland;
- Wilden;
- Wintringham; and
- Wyboston.

The same respondents also comment on potential mental and physical health impacts to local people, mentioning the impacts on tranquil village life and the visual disturbance of large structures. Several of these respondents suggest the alignment should be moved further away from villages to reduce the impact on local communities. Some respondents echo this view, requesting that the alignment should be moved further away from small villages and into the surrounding open farmland, so that noise and pollution will be minimised for local people.

A small number of respondents remark on the potential negative impacts to local businesses. These include access routes to farms, potential critical infrastructure networks such as irrigation, and effects on local businesses due to reduced accessibility.

Several respondents are concerned about the impact on the new development at Bourn Airfield. They feel the viaduct, and the start of the embankments, are proposed to be on land identified for high density

housing, as well as on recreation facilities for the community. These respondents feel that the visual impact on, and the severance of the entrance to, this new community would be unacceptable.

Landscape and visual impacts

A substantial number of respondents express concern about the visual impact of alignment 1 on the area. These respondents state that the rural nature of the area makes it unsuitable for large infrastructure. Most of these respondents also cite the specific impact of viaducts and embankments as cause for their concern, as these raised structures would sit higher up in the landscape and would compound the visual disturbance. Some respondents also state that constructing the line would add significant visual disturbance, due to the sight of earthworks and construction vehicles.

Impact on property and property value

A substantial number of respondents express concern about the potential impact of alignment 1 on homes and property values in the area. Most of these respondents claim this route alignment option will travel too close to homes generally, and particularly to the town of Cambourne and the new housing developments at Bourn. Many respondents voice concern over loss of houses along the route, stating that they oppose any demolition of properties.

Several respondents remark that this area contains a relatively high volume of historic and listed buildings, which they claim could be negatively impacted by proximity to the rail line. Several other respondents remark that this alignment could negatively impact the value of their property.

Environment and wildlife

A considerable number of respondents express general concern about the potential negative impact of alignment 1 on the environment. The primary causes of concern for these respondents include this alignment travelling through agricultural land, and increased carbon emissions from both construction vehicles and the trains themselves. Many respondents voice concern that this alignment could damage woodland along the route, particularly at Clapham, Ravensden and Highfields Caldecote.

A considerable number of respondents express concern about the potential negative impact of this route on wildlife in the area. These respondents mention that this route could affect priority habitats, such as protected biodiversity areas under Bedfordshire County Council's biodiversity plan. These respondents claim that the line could disrupt wildlife habitats along the route, as well as important travel and foraging corridors. Specific areas include Knapwell, Highfields Caldecote and Clapham. Several respondents also claim that alignment 1 would be more damaging in this regard than other alignments. They also feel that the proposals have failed to take this into account.

Several respondents claim that this alignment could increase flooding in the

area as embankments and cuttings could restrict and disrupt drainage in an area which is already relatively prone to flooding.

Roads, footpaths, and national infrastructure

A considerable number of respondents mention that this alignment could have a negative impact on roads and paths near the route. Many respondents state that St Neots and Cambourne in particular are already congested, and that the additional strain on the roads from construction traffic as well as vehicles accessing the rail line would add to this. Furthermore, many respondents express concern that disruption from construction, as well as the placement of stations at St Neots and Cambourne, could cause road blockages and turn villages along the route into 'rat runs' (the use of residential or smaller roads instead of a main road or route) of speeding cars looking for shortcuts. Several respondents also express concern that the route could disrupt public rights of way in the area, including public footpaths and bridleways, by physically blocking them.

Many respondents express concern that the construction of this route could disrupt the gas pipelines at Chequers Hill and Colesden, due to the cuttings that would be required in this area. These respondents claim that moving these pipelines would be impractical and could cause disruption to the gas network.

Noise and vibration

A considerable number of respondents voice concern that this alignment would contribute unacceptable levels of noise and vibration to the area. Most of these respondents claim that the prevailing wind and hills, combined with the embankments and viaducts, would amplify the noise caused by trains passing along the route. Several respondents are specifically concerned about the potential health effects of the noise from the route, as they believe the noise from trains could disrupt sleep for local residents, particularly if the trains run at night. A small number mention that construction of embankments could be particularly noisy as well.

Need and journey time

Many respondents state that there may not be a need for this stretch of line. These respondents cite the new and planned bus links between Cambourne and Cambridge, as well as the existing station in St Neots, as evidence that these towns do not need additional stations. Furthermore, some respondents question whether a considerable number of local people would actually use the line rather than driving, particularly given the perceived additional length and journey time of this route. Several respondents also feel there would be no local benefit to residents along alignment 1, especially given the considerable perceived downsides.

Some respondents claim that the Covid-19 pandemic has changed general demand for rail travel, thus also casting doubt among these respondents on the need for alignment 1.

Station locations

A considerable number of respondents express concern about the location of the stations along alignment 1. Many respondents state that there should not be a station at Cambourne North, which they feel could contribute to growing urbanisation in Cambourne, expanding the town north towards Knapwell and possibly cutting off or enveloping this village. Furthermore, many respondents state that it is convoluted to travel so far north (or even to Cambourne at all) if EWR Co is intending to have a southern approach into Cambridge. Several respondents oppose any station in Cambourne, as they oppose the southern approach altogether.

Several respondents express concern about a new station at St Neots for similar reasons. Some are concerned about growing urbanisation in St Neots affecting surrounding villages, which could be accelerated by a new station. Furthermore, a small number of respondents would prefer a station at Tempsford, which is further south and does not already have a station.

Suggestions

A considerable number of respondents offer suggestions for this alignment. These include:

- Coordinating construction of the alignment with the planned A428 upgrade, to reduce length and level of disruption;
- That new stations are served by buses, possibly with dedicated shuttle routes;
- Making the stations at St Neots and Cambourne accessible for residents by walking and cycling;
- Providing ample parking and cycle storage at the stations;
- Placing the track in a tunnel instead of cuttings and embankments, to further reduce noise impacts of the line; and
- Moving the track further north and west, to avoid Highfields Caldecote, Wilden and Bourn Airfield, as well as the Great Wood and the water tower at Sunderland Hill.

7.2.4. Comments on alignment 2

Support

Many respondents expressed support in general terms for route alignment 2.

Local community

A substantial number of respondents express support for this route alignment option on the basis that it would have fewer negative impacts on local communities and properties than other alignment options. Key areas identified by many respondents include Bourn Airfield and Highfields Caldecote.

Housing development

Many respondents support alignment 2 as they do not feel it would affect delivery of the new housing development at Bourn Airfield. Many respondents express support for the connectivity between St Neots and Cambridge. Several of these respondents remark that St Neots, being a growing community, is underserved by existing transport links. A considerable number also comment that this alignment would have less negative visual impact than other route alignment options, primarily because it would not require viaducts.

Station locations

A considerable number of respondents support alignment 2 because of the proposed stations. In particular, these respondents support the construction of Cambourne South station and the fact that it would serve the southern approach into Cambridge to provide a "south-to-south" line. Similarly, many respondents support a new station at St Neots South to serve the growing community of St Neots.

Environment and wildlife

Many respondents believe this alignment 2 would be the best of the route alignment options for the local environment but provide no further explanation. A small number of these respondents raise specific areas of environmental concern which this alignment would avoid, such as the Great Ouse flood plain.

Several respondents identify mitigation measures, such as running through cuttings rather than viaducts, as conducive to lower negative environmental impact. Many other respondents state that these cuttings would also reduce the noise impact of the alignment. These respondents claim that this alignment is shorter than others and hence more direct, which would similarly reduce the noise impact overall.

A few respondents also comment that this alignment would avoid damage to woodlands at the Little and Great Early Groves, as well as Highfield Wood. Many respondents also state that this alignment would have fewer negative impacts on priority habitats in the area in comparison to the other proposed alignments. A small number also comment that this alignment would have a less detrimental effect on air quality in the area, due again to the use of cuttings.

Roads and footpaths

Many respondents feel that this alignment would have a positive effect on roads and paths across the route. In particular, these respondents remark that a station at St Neots, with quicker access to Cambridge, would ease road traffic congestion around St Neots. A small number also remark that this alignment would avoid the line having to cross the A428, which would prevent further congestion on that road. Many respondents also remark that following existing transport routes, in this case the A428, would generally

make the alignment less noticeable and contain its impacts to an area already utilised by transport. A small number suggest that this alignment would have less impact on the A1 and the A1198.

Journey times

Many respondents specifically identify the directness of the alignment as having a positive impact on journey times. Many others suggest that this directness also makes the route cheaper and faster to build.

Concern

Many respondents express general opposition to this route alignment option, with several opposed to most or all of the shortlisted route alignment options.

Landscape and visual impacts

A substantial number of respondents express concern about the potential negative visual impact of this alignment, particularly the visual impact of cuttings on the hills in the area. Many of these respondents specifically state that the rural nature of the area makes it unsuitable for such a project.

Local community

A considerable number of respondents express concern over the potential negative impact of alignment 2 on their local communities. Key areas of concern include Colesden and Wilden. Several respondents are concerned about demolition of houses in their communities. Several others are concerned that the route would contribute to the growth of places like Cambourne, which could then grow to subsume other villages along the route. These respondents fear that this would change the small, rural character of the local areas.

Several respondents also voice concern about the impact of this line on recreational amenities, such as Cambourne Country Park nature reserve, Ravensden Grange, Bourn Hall, Bourn Windmill and Bourn Golf Club. These respondents are concerned that noise and visual impact from the line would negatively impact on their enjoyment of these locations.

Environment and wildlife

A considerable number of respondents express concerns about the potential negative impact of alignment 2 on the environment. Many of these respondents express specific concern for the wellbeing of wildlife in the area and mention the habitats at Bourn Brook, Cambourne Reserve, and the Conservation Areas along the route. A small number mention specific species such as the Barbastelle bat and great crested newt.

Several respondents also raise concerns about potential negative environmental and visual impacts from earthworks required for the railway cuttings in this alignment. Some respondents remark upon the potential negative impact of this line on woodlands along the route, particularly ancient woodlands, should trees need to be felled. A few express concern

that the cuttings may be prone to, or create, flooding in the area. Several also comment on the potential for negative impacts on air quality from the use of diesel trains.

Roads, footpaths, and national infrastructure

A considerable number of respondents express concern about the potential negative impact of alignment 2 on roads and paths in the area. Several of these respondents state that this alignment could conflict with the planned upgrade to the A428, preventing required upgrades to the capacity of the road. A small number describe the effect on these roads as creating a "rat run" of speeding cars cutting through villages looking for shortcuts. A few others mention that roads around Cambourne could be particularly affected, such as the School Lane exit and the A1198.

Several respondents also express concern about the possible negative impact of this route alignment option on general connectivity in the area, as well as access to recreational paths.

Many respondents mention that this route could impact usage of the gas pipelines at Chequers Hill, Wilden and Colesden.

Station locations

Many respondents express concern about the potential stations at Cambourne South and St Neots South. Those who express concern regarding Cambourne South largely mention the southern approach into Cambridge as a key factor, as well as the encroachment of the station on villages near Cambourne, such as Caxton. Several respondents state that the station at St Neots South would have a negative impact on the roads surrounding St Neots, which they say are already congested and would become more so as people drive to the station. Several respondents express concern about the necessity for St Neots South station, as the town already has a station.

Noise

Many respondents express concern that this alignment would increase noise in the area. Several of these respondents specifically identify noise associated with trains passing by their villages, while a small number mention the noise from construction of the line as likely to be particularly disruptive.

Journey times and route complexity

Some respondents claim that the length of alignment 2 would increase journey times. Several respondents voice concern that the longer length, as well as the potential challenge in dealing with the gas pipelines in the area, could make the project overly expensive.

Some respondents express concern about the complexity of parts of the project, particularly St Neots South station and the viaduct over the River Great Ouse.

Suggestions

Many respondents make suggestions for this route alignment option. These include:

- Coordinating the construction with the planned A428 upgrade;
- Making St Neots South into a transport hub, with bus and cycle links to the surrounding villages;
- Running alongside the East Coast Main Line after the two lines cross, in order to minimise the general impacts of the line, such as noise and visual impacts; and
- Restricting vehicle access into St Neots South via roads other than the A1198, to prevent drivers using the station from travelling through smaller village roads.

7.2.5. Comments on alignment 6

Support

Many respondents expressed support in general terms for route alignment 6.

Station locations

A considerable number of respondents support alignment 6 because of the stations that would be built to service St Neots and Cambourne South, as well as the ease of connecting to the southern approach into Cambridge. These respondents comment that the more direct "south-to-south route" would be faster, simpler to build and less disruptive to existing roads, while making use of existing transport corridors. A considerable number of respondents also claim that this route would generate less traffic on the local road network, and that its directness would make the alignment more cost-effective, as less track would need to be built.

Roads and footpaths

Many respondents also express support for alignment 6 on the basis of potential positive impacts on roads and paths in the area. They suggest that improved rail connectivity for St Neots would have a positive impact on congested roads in that area. Several respondents also comment that this route alignment option would not cross the A428, meaning that these roads would not face additional strain, and so are supportive of this alignment.

Environment and wildlife

A considerable number of respondents also support alignment 6 as they believe it will have less general impact on the local environment because of the more direct route. Many of these respondents express support for the alignment as fewer viaducts and embankments would be needed, which would reduce the environmental impact of the route. These respondents also claim this would lessen the visual, air quality and noise impacts of the proposed train service. A few also comment on the "brownfield sites" which

could be developed along this alignment.

Several respondents express support on conservation grounds, claiming that a shorter route would be better as it would have less impact on wildlife habitats and woodlands in the area. Several respondents similarly remark that this alignment would cross less floodplain than other route alignment options.

Impact on property and property value

Many respondents express support for this alignment as they feel it would have lower impact on homes along the route. Many of these respondents comment that alignment 6 would not have the negative impact on the construction of the new housing development at Bourn Airfield that alignment 1 and alignment 9 could have.

Many others support this route alignment option as it would service the growing community of St Neots. Several respondents also express support for this alignment as it would require demolition of fewer properties along the route than others, particularly alignments 1 and 9. Similarly, several respondents suggest that this alignment will affect the rural communities in North Bedfordshire less as it would pass further from them.

Concern

Many respondents oppose this route alignment option generally, with several opposed to all of the routes, and several others opposed to any route that comes near this area.

Visual impact

A considerable number of respondents express concern about potential negative visual impact from this alignment on the surrounding countryside. Many respondents claim that the proposed viaducts for this alignment could have a particularly negative visual impact, as they would be tall and thus visible in the surrounding landscape and that the cuttings would also be visually detrimental. Several also express concern about the negative visual impact of earthworks during construction. A small number also noted the negative impact that floodlights used during construction could have on light pollution in the area.

Local community

A considerable number of respondents express concern over negative impacts of alignment 6 on the rural nature of the villages. These respondents also remark on the impact of this proposal on agriculture in the area, which they claim would be disrupted by construction and the line passing through fields. A few respondents identify specific locations, including Wilden and Bourn, the latter of which many remark will lose its playground.

Noise and vibration

Many respondents voice concern about the potential for increased levels of noise from this alignment. In particular, several respondents remark that the raised elements of the track would further exacerbate noise from the trains, as would the use of diesel trains. A small number of respondents also claim the noise and vibration from both construction and operation would be felt more in their rural area as a result of the currently low levels of existing noise and vibration.

Roads, footpaths, and national infrastructure

A considerable number of respondents believe that the proposed alignment would have a negative impact on traffic in the area. Specific roads which respondents identify include the A1 and the A428 and particularly where they meet at St Neots. Several respondents claim that roads around St Neots are already congested, and that increased traffic brought about by construction, as well as the proposed station at St Neots South, could exacerbate this.

Several respondents also claim that the route would divide paths used by recreational walkers to access heritage sites.

Many respondents express concern about the impact of the proposed alignment on the gas pipelines at Chequers Hill, Colesden & Chawston.

Impact on property and property value

Many respondents are concerned about the negative impact of this alignment on homes along the route. Some express concern that this alignment would decrease the desirability of their area for potential future residents. Others are concerned that the rail line would encourage further development in their villages.

Environment and wildlife

A considerable number of respondents express concern about impact on the local environment resulting from this alignment. Several respondents raise concerns about the wellbeing of the wildlife in the area, while several others are concerned about the potential felling of woodland. Some also raise specific concerns about the negative impact of the earthworks required on the local environment and a few raise concerns about the potential negative impact to the area's biodiversity, already affected by the loss of certain habitats.

Cost and need

Several respondents raise concerns that this section of the project is too costly, and that the rail demands of the area do not justify this expense. These respondents claim that the cost of the project will be compounded by its difficult construction, caused by the terrain along alignment 6. These respondents also express concern over the location of Cambourne South station, stating that there is not sufficient need for this station and citing

concerns regarding the southern approach to Cambridge.

Suggestions

Several respondents provide suggestions for this alignment. These include:

- Building a cycle path to service St Neots South station;
- Bolstering local bus services; and
- Using tunnels instead of viaducts.

7.2.6. Comments on alignment 8

Support

Many respondents express support for alignment 8 in general terms without providing further clarification.

Environment and wildlife

A considerable number of respondents express support for alignment 8 as they feel it has a lower negative impact on the local environment. Several state that as this route mostly runs through a cutting, rather than on a viaduct, this would lessen its environmental impacts, as it would have less visual impact on the surrounding areas. Some respondents feel that alignment 8 uses cuttings rather than viaducts and as such would more effectively mitigate against any air quality impacts and be less carbon intensive to construct. Several respondents also state that the alignment's more direct route would mitigate its environmental impacts, as the track would affect a smaller area. Many respondents state that this option would have the least impact on wildlife and biodiversity, as the alignment travels through fewer priority habitats than other options, including at Toft and the Great Ouse flood plain.

Landscape and visual impacts

A considerable number of respondents express support for alignment 8 due to lower visual impact on the surrounding landscape. In particular, many of these respondents mention that both the shorter length and shallower depth of the cuttings used would make this route more visually acceptable than other routes. Several also state the reduced need for raised elements like viaducts and embankments would also contribute to lower visual impact. Respondents specifically mention avoiding village centres in Renhold, Wilden, Clapham and Brickhill as being positive for these communities.

Local community

A substantial number of respondents support alignment 8 due to its perceived lower impact on homes and communities along the route. Several note that this route alignment option would not affect delivery of the new housing development at Bourn Airfield. Many respondents support the new station at Tempsford, both to serve the community there but also to avoid the need for a station at St Neots South, which several say is unnecessary

and would add to existing congestion in St Neots.

Many support this route alignment option because it would require the demolition of fewer homes than other proposals. Several respondents also cite lower negative impact on the rural nature of this area, including the villages of Wyboston, Chawston, Colesdon and Wilden, as a key factor in their support.

Station locations and approach into Cambridge

Many respondents support alignment 8 for the new station at Cambourne South and subsequent southern approach into Cambridge. Several support the "south-to-south" approach for its directness, which they say should mitigate some of the impacts of the line. Some also state the placement of the station in relation to Cambourne as similarly key to this, as this placement allows users from Cambourne to access the station without crossing a major road. Many respondents generally support the choice of stations on this alignment.

Several respondents support this alignment as it follows existing transport corridors, in particular the A421, as well as not restricting future development on the A428.

Cost

Several respondents support this alignment because they state it will cost less to build.

Direct route

These respondents suggest that by being direct, this alignment would be cheaper, make construction quicker and journey times faster. Many respondents feel this alignment will create less noise for the surrounding area.

Many respondents support this alignment as it would not require deep cuttings near critical gas pipelines at Chequers Hill and Colesden.

Concern

A considerable number of respondents are opposed to this route alignment option completely, with most of them expressing opposition to both alignment 8 and alignment 9.

Environment and wildlife

A substantial number of respondents express concern about potential negative impacts from this alignment on the surrounding environment, particularly Bourn Brook Valley and other conservation areas. Several respondents state that this route would cause flooding in the area, as the alignment travels over the River Great Ouse flood plain. Many voice concern about the effect on woodlands along the alignment, including the Great and Little Early Groves, Weavely Woods, and Sand Woods.

A substantial number of respondents express concern about the negative impact on wildlife, particularly woodland mammals and birds. Areas of

concern include Bourn Brook reserve and Green Sands Ridge. Most of these respondents state that this route has the potential to damage these wildlife habitats. Furthermore, these respondents state that this route could lead to the fragmentation of the hunting grounds and other travel corridors that wildlife rely on. Several respondents also state that the loss of wildlife would have a negative impact on their experience in using this area for recreational walking.

Local community

A substantial number of respondents express concern about potential impacts on their local communities, particularly the villages of Renhold, Abbotsley and Ravensden. These respondents highlight the rural nature of these villages as a key factor for their concern, stating that this route alignment option would add to growing urbanisation in the area.

Several claim that this route would add barriers between interconnected villages, while passing through others, which would have a negative impact on community cohesion. Several respondents raise general concerns about potential impacts on the quality of life of local residents, stating that some may be distressed by their closer proximity to large transport links. Several others state that there would be no local benefit for those affected by the route.

Impact on property and property value

A considerable number of respondents voice concern over the impact alignment 8 would have on properties in the area. Several state that this route alignment would cause vibration that could result in structural damage to historic buildings.

Several respondents express concern about the demolition of homes, with some stating that any demolition is unacceptable. Several respondents also raise concern that the alignment could have a detrimental effect on their house prices. Some mention that the alignment would be in close proximity to new housing developments, which could make the area less attractive to new residents.

Noise

A substantial number of respondents express concern about the impact of alignment 8 on noise in the area. These respondents state that the rural nature of this area means that people move there to avoid noise, and this would be impacted by the presence of a railway. Furthermore, these respondents state that many residents are not used to the presence of rail noise so will be more acutely impacted by these proposals.

Similarly, several respondents voice concern about the additional noise that would be caused by construction of the line, as well as that of the trains themselves. Several respondents mention that both construction and rail noise at night is a particular concern. Several other respondents remark that diesel and freight trains would be particularly noisy. A small number claim

that the noise from rail line would cause them physical harm, due to potential sleep deprivation from trains running at night.

Landscape and visual impacts

A substantial number of respondents express concern about the potential visual impact of this route alignment option. These respondents feel that alignment 8 would obstruct views across the surrounding countryside, and that measures such as cuttings would be inadequate to mitigate this. Furthermore, several respondents highlight the raised elements, such as viaducts and embankments, as being particularly visually obtrusive. Some respondents also state that lighting during construction, as well as lighting for the tracks during operation, would contribute to light pollution in the area.

Route

A considerable number of respondents express concern about alignment 8 due to its end points at Tempsford station and Cambourne South station, as well as the subsequent southern approach into Cambridge. Several respondents claim that the Cambourne South station would be more disruptive to the people in Cambourne, taking up open spaces to the south of the town and disrupting roads. Many express concern over the station at Tempsford South, stating that the village is too small to warrant its own station and that one at St Neots would be more useful. Some respondents also claim the local terrain would have the added effect of increasing rail journey times, as trains would need to slow down round bends and up inclines.

Air quality

Many respondents express concern that this alignment would have a negative impact on air quality along the route. Most of these respondents cite diesel fumes from trains as a key factor in this, with a small number mentioning increased car fumes from traffic caused by diverted vehicles and additional motorists accessing stations. These respondents do not believe that the mitigation measures would have a significant impact on this issue.

Roads and footpaths

A substantial number of respondents voice concern that alignment 8 would negatively impact roads and paths in the area, as well as their access to amenity and recreation. Many respondents remark that construction of this route alignment option would cause disruption to roads in an area that is already congested, with additional traffic on the road due to construction traffic adding to bottlenecks from St Neots and Cambourne. Moreover, several state that these roads, particularly those around Renhold, are unsuitable for larger vehicles. Many respondents express concern about the loss of historic public rights of way, particularly recreational footpaths, which could be severed by the line.

Access to amenities

A considerable number of respondents express concern about access to amenities in the area. Several remark that this route might make it harder for children to get to school. Some others state that recreational areas, such as Bourn Golf Club, as well as historic landmarks in the area could be lost or made less pleasant to visit due to the line. Several respondents also comment that countryside activities, such as horse-riding and walking, may also become less enjoyable by their proximity to the line.

Complexity of construction

Many respondents express concern over the complexity of constructing this alignment. Some respondents claim that the complexity of viaducts into Tempsford would add to the construction time, with a few remarking that the extra time would drive up carbon emissions from construction. A small number state that the geology of the area, with its undulating terrain and bedrock, adds to the difficulty of construction. A few respondents also express concern over negative impacts on Sandy station, which they state is an important station for the area.

Cost

A considerable number of respondents express concern about value for money for alignment 8, stating that it is too expensive, unnecessary, or both. Many claim that the technical challenges of this route would make it unreasonably costly. These technical challenges include building cuttings and viaducts, as well as the alignment's length and the terrain it traverses. Respondents say that Tempsford is too small to warrant a station, and that too few of the local residents regularly utilise rail services for this route to be of use.

Suggestions

Several respondents offer suggestions for this route alignment. These include:

- Preventing access through Cambourne to travel to the station by using signposts at the entrances to the village as well as automatic number plate recognition;
- Constructing cycle and walking routes to Tempsford station, and arranging for bus connections to serve surrounding villages; and
- Taking the entire alignment further away from local villages.

7.2.7. Comments on alignment 9

Support

Many respondents express general support for alignment 9, with a large proportion stating that this option would be better than the other route alignment options, even if it would not be their first choice normally.

Route and station locations

A substantial number of respondents express support for this alignment because of its proposed stations and terminals. A substantial number of these respondents express particular support for a Cambourne North station and the potential for a subsequent northern approach into Cambridge. Several respondents claim that a station to the north of Cambourne would make better use of the flatter, less developed land in the area than the proposed Cambourne South station. Additionally, a considerable number of respondents support this route alignment option as they feel it is more suited to enable a northern approach into Cambridge.

Many respondents specifically express support for a new station at Tempsford. Several respondents state that they would use this station and they would find this more useful than one at St Neots. Several other respondents remark that St Neots already has a station, and that one at Tempsford would mean more people are served by a local station. A small number claim that a Tempsford station would be easier to access, considering existing congestion at St Neots.

Environment and wildlife

A considerable number of respondents feel that alignment 9 has the least negative impact on the environment and biodiversity in comparison with the other route alignment options. Many respondents state that this alignment would directly affect the fewest parts of the Bedfordshire Biodiversity Network and so would be best for biodiversity in the area. Many other respondents remark that this route alignment option has fewer and shorter cuttings than other route alignment options, which they suggest would also help to reduce the environmental impact of the project.

Several respondents also state that constructing alignment 9 would generate fewer carbon emissions than other route alignment options, as it requires fewer cuttings and earthworks. A small number of respondents remark that this alignment 9 would cut across fewer flood plains than other routes, and so would have less effect on flooding in the area. Several respondents also state that they would support this route because it avoids wildlife reserves at Bourn Brook, Cambourne, Wimpole and Eversden.

Use of existing transport corridors

A substantial number of respondents state that the use of transport corridors, such as the A428 and A421, are key factors in their support for this alignment. Most of these respondents claim that this would reduce the impacts of the line, containing air pollution and noise to a smaller area. Several respondents also claim that following this corridor would allow for greater connectivity and ease of access to the line for local residents.

Roads and national infrastructure

Many respondents state that alignment 9 would have a positive impact on traffic in the area, while avoiding some of the negative impacts on roads and paths that other route alignment options may have. Several respondents claim that utilising the transport corridors would prevent traffic for the line being routed through villages, such as Bourn and Caxton, which should mitigate traffic from both construction and once the line is operating. These respondents remark that the more rural roads of the area are ill-suited to handle more traffic and therefore support this route alignment option as it would use A-roads to access stations on the line. A small number of respondents remark that additional options for rail travel will reduce pressure on roads generally. A few respondents also remark that a station at Tempsford would not hinder further development of the A428.

Many respondents express support for this route alignment option as it avoids alterations to the gas pipelines at Chequers Hill and Colesden.

Local community

A substantial number of respondents state that alignment 9 would have fewer negative impacts on homes and communities in the area. A considerable number of respondents remark that this route alignment option would require the least number of properties to be demolished. Several respondents also state that this alignment avoids listed buildings and scheduled monuments.

A considerable number of respondents claim that this alignment would have fewer negative impacts on local communities, in particular Caxton, Bourn, Hardwick, Colesden, Wilden and Comberton. Respondents state that the rural nature of these communities make them unsuitable for larger infrastructure projects so the distance of this route alignment option away from them would be positive. Many respondents also note that locating the line near Tempsford and Cambourne would be suitable, as those settlements are larger and are currently underserved by existing infrastructure.

Housing development

A considerable number of respondents state that this alignment would be useful for new housing developments in the area. In particular, respondents remark that this new route, along with its new stations, could serve current, planned and potential housing developments in Cambourne, Bourn Airfield and Tempsford.

Landscape and visual impacts

A considerable number of respondents claim that out of all the route alignment options, alignment 9 would have the least negative visual impact on the surrounding landscape and countryside. Most of these respondents claim that the shorter length and number of required cuttings for this alignment would reduce its visual impacts more than other route alignment options, as would its lower number of raised elements.

Several respondents also claim that alignment 9 avoids village centres along

the route, reducing the perceived visual impact due to being further away from where people live. A small number of respondents also remark that this alignment would avoid specific beauty spots, such as Bourn Valley, which would also reduce the potential visual impact.

Cost and journey time

Several respondents express support for alignment 9 as they feel this would be cheaper than other route alignment options. Some respondents remark that this alignment would be particularly short and direct, meaning rail journey times could be shorter than on other alignments. They also feel this will make it cheaper to build.

Concern

A substantial number of respondents are entirely opposed to this route alignment option. Many of these respondents oppose any route alignment option which would travel near the village of Renhold, and many are opposed to all of the route alignment options. Many other respondents oppose any route which requires a Cambourne North station, such as alignment 1 and alignment 9, as they are opposed to the northern approach into Cambridge and feel these alignments are more suited to a northern approach.

Environment and wildlife

Many respondents express concern about the potential negative impact of alignment 9 on the local environment. They are particularly concerned about woodlands and other habitats along the route, including woodlands at the Great and Little Early Groves, Hardwick Wood, Bourn Brook, and other ancient woodland at Caldecote, Toft, Clapham and Renhold. These respondents claim that the line would mean losing some trees and that the division of woodlands would be damaging to the sensitive ecosystems of these areas, leading to further effects.

A substantial number express specific concern about wildlife in the area. Many respondents remark that alignment 9 would impact habitats for various birds and mammals, including deer, badgers, rabbits, hares, and owls. Furthermore, several respondents remark that the noise from the line could scare or disturb the wildlife and livestock along the route.

Flooding

Many respondents express concerns about the potential impact on flooding in the area. These respondents state that the line crossing floodplains at the Great Ouse could cause the line itself to be flooded and result in more flooding generally.

Local community

A large number of respondents express concern about the potential impact of this route alignment option on local people and communities near the route. In particular, they state that the route would have a negative impact

on the rural 'feel' of their communities. Several respondents also state that there would be no local benefit to their communities from the route alignment. Many respondents remark that this route would have a direct impact on quality of life for local people, including their mental health. These respondents remark that they had moved to the area in order to avoid urbanisation so are concerned by the possibility of the presence of large infrastructure. Specific villages mentioned by respondents as potentially being affected include Great Barford, Knapwell, Roxton and particularly Renhold.

Impact on property and property value

A substantial number of respondents express concern about properties along alignment 9. Many mention that houses in the area tend to be older, with many using wattle and daub construction so may be more impacted by land shifting from construction and rail use, as well as by vibrations from the trains themselves. Many others express concern about the potential demolition of houses to construct the route. These respondents believe demolition is unnecessary and should be minimised wherever possible. Several respondents express concern that this route alignment option would affect the delivery of new housing developments. Furthermore, several respondents voice concerns that alignment 9 could contribute to growing urbanisation, potentially causing their villages to be subsumed into larger developments. Many respondents remark that the construction of this route, and subsequent effects on the surrounding area, would negatively affect the values of their properties.

Landscape and visual impacts

A substantial number of respondents express concern over potential negative impacts of this route alignment option on the local landscape. Most of these respondents claim that the landscape near the route is untouched and that large infrastructure would have an unacceptable visual impact, given the area's natural beauty. A considerable number of these respondents voice concern about the height of embankments and viaducts which could be used for this route, which they feel would be particularly unsuitable for this rural area. A small number of respondents remark that floodlights from construction, as well as lighting for the track itself, would impede the naturally dark skies of the region.

Roads and footpaths

A substantial number of respondents express concern about the potential negative impact of this route alignment option on roads and paths.

Many mention specific roads, including the A1, the A421 and the A428. A considerable number claim that construction traffic and those travelling to access the line, would increase traffic on these roads. These respondents also claim that the roads around alignment 9 are unfit to handle additional traffic, as they are narrow and winding countryside roads.

Many respondents voice their concern over accessibility of footpaths and bridleways around the route, and remark that this alignment has the potential to sever the surrounding recreational walking, cycling and horse-riding routes in the surrounding villages, and that the presence of trains would lessen their enjoyment of these paths.

Access to amenities

A considerable number of respondents remark that this route alignment option could restrict their access to important amenities. In particular, several respondents state that alignment 9 could make it more difficult for schoolchildren, such as those attending Comberton Village College and Renhold VC Primary School, to access their schools.

Some respondents also claim that the line could prevent local residents from accessing Roxton, Brickhill and Ravensden Country Parks, as well as potentially damaging these amenities. Some respondents also claim that potential growth caused by the line could put additional strain on amenities such as GP surgeries and shops.

Noise and vibration

A substantial number of respondents express concern that this route alignment option would cause significant noise and vibration in the area. Many claim that this could be exacerbated by the raised sections of the track proposed for alignment 9, as the additional height would allow the sound to travel further and have a greater impact. Several respondents also claim that noise could have a negative impact on the learning of children in the local schools and could be both distracting and harmful to them.

Many express concerns over vibration from the rail lines, in particular, that these vibrations could structurally damage the traditionally built houses near the line.

Air quality

A considerable number of respondents express concern about potential negative impacts on air quality from the line. Of these respondents, a large proportion remark that diesel and freight trains would be particularly harmful, and several respondents specifically mentioned the effects of particulates from these trains, which they claim would be particularly harmful for children and asthmatic people in the area.

Several respondents express concern that the raised elements of track could compound the negative effect on air quality in the area caused by the line. A small number also mention dust from construction, particularly from earth works, which they claim could significantly reduce air quality in the area.

Cost,

A substantial number of respondents express concern about the value for money of alignment 9. Many feel that the route would be prohibitively complex to build, due to the undulating terrain. Several respondents also

claim that the terrain would increase the cost of the route, as well as the cost of travelling on the route, due to the additional journey times. Several respondents express concern that mitigation measures, such as building cuttings and tunnels, could increase the cost beyond acceptable levels, and others state that this construction should not be carried out during a time when the Government is already having to spend large amounts of money.

Need and local benefit

A small number of respondents are concerned that some of the maintenance costs associated with alignment 9, such as cleaning graffiti, could fall onto local councils, and so on local people. Many respondents also remark that the towns and villages around the route are too small to warrant additional rail services, and that the area is already well served by existing public transport, such as bus services. Furthermore, most of these respondents state that they would experience no local benefit from this line.

Route and station locations

A substantial number of respondents cite the stations at Tempsford and Cambourne, as well as the subsequent southern approach to Cambridge, as concerns. Many respondents oppose the southern approach to Cambridge and prefer a route alignment option for this section that enables a northern approach into Cambridge. Several respondents claim that Tempsford is too small to justify its own station, and that the growing town of St Neots would be better suited to a station.

Access and disruption

Many respondents express concern about potential disruption to roads and existing rail services from alignment 9. Many of them voice specific concern that constructing the line would disrupt access to other parts of their communities, particularly in the villages of Renhold and Bourn. Some respondents also mention the length of construction and uncertainty as to where it could take place as concerns. Some respondents remark that disruption from construction could prevent farmers in the area from accessing their fields. A small number of respondents also express concern about the potential loss of a train station at Sandy following the construction of Tempsford Station.

Suggestions

A substantial number of respondents offer suggestions for this route alignment option. These include:

- Running the line through a tunnel at Clapham;
- Building sufficient car and cycle parking at Tempsford Station;
- Moving the station further from Tempsford;
- Moving the alignment away from homes and villages in the area; and
- Coordinating with the development of the Caxton and Black Cat roundabouts, as well as the planned A428 upgrades.

7.3. Other comments related to Section D

Support

Many respondents express general support for Section D. Several of these respondents state that Bedford, and North Bedfordshire in particular, is underserved by transport links and has opportunities for economic growth in the future. Some respondents only express support for the more southern route alignments.

Concern

A large number of respondents express opposition to the proposed route alignments, or to Section D in general. Most of these respondents reject all options, but several reject all of the more southern route alignments out of Bedford, while several others reject all of the more northern route alignments.

Landscape and visual impacts

A substantial number of respondents express concern over potential negative visual impacts of this section. Most claim that the rural nature of North Bedfordshire makes this area unsuitable for large-scale infrastructure. These respondents claim that the undulating landscape and rural nature of the region mean that local residents would be more acutely aware of new construction more commonly found in less rural areas. A considerable number of respondents also state that any use of viaducts or embankments, regardless of length or location, would add an unacceptable level of visual impact. Several respondents state that the choice of route alignment is also irrelevant in this regard for the people of Clapham, who they remark would be affected regardless of which route the section takes. Some respondents raise concern about the potential additional light pollution.

Local community

A substantial number of respondents express concern about the potential negative impacts of Section D on local communities, specifically Brickhill, Wilden and Clapham, which would all be potentially affected regardless of the chosen route alignment. They claim that this section of the line would divide communities who rely on interconnectivity for access to amenities, and could contribute to growing urbanisation, which they believe would diminish their rural way of life. Furthermore, many respondents claim that this section would provide no benefit to the residents of the areas affected, largely as a result of the lack of proposed stations along the route. Several respondents also claim that this section would negatively impact on the mental health of local residents.

Impact on property and property value

A considerable number of respondents express concern about the impact of this section of the route on homes and property values. Many respondents express concern about the demolition of homes, most stating that any demolition of homes would be unacceptable. Many other respondents also

express concern that the value of their property would be negatively affected as a result of the line. Several respondents also remark that any route alignment chosen would travel relatively close to historic listed buildings and insufficient consideration has been given to the potential effect of this section on these specific properties. Similarly, several respondents believe that the proposals do not take into account planned development at Bourn Airfield.

Environment and wildlife

A considerable number of respondents express general concern about the environment along the route. In particular, many respondents express concern that this route will contribute carbon emissions at a time when society is trying to eliminate these. Respondents remark that these emissions would come both from construction and the trains themselves. Several respondents also suggest that dust and dirt from building earthworks would negatively impact the local environment. Several respondents remark that much of the area, particularly around the River Ouse and in Clapham, is prone to flooding, which could be made worse. Some respondents express concern that woodlands in North Bedfordshire, which contribute to both recreation and biodiversity, could face damage from the line.

A considerable number of respondents express concern that wildlife and habitats could be affected by this section. Many remark that biodiversity in the area is of particular importance to the local community, as well as to stakeholders like Bedfordshire County Council and that this section could harm efforts to bolster biodiversity. Particular flora and fauna mentioned by respondents include orchids, bats, newts and birds. Many respondents voice concern that this route could have a negative impact on air quality in the area, particularly that which could be caused by particulates from diesel trains. Several of these respondents claim that embankments in this section could compound this issue.

Noise

A considerable number of respondents voice concern that this section could contribute significantly to noise in the area. Many of these respondents state that North Bedfordshire has a low level of noise currently, and any additional noise from construction or trains, would be particularly noticeable. Many respondents also claim that the use of viaducts and embankments would compound noise impacts. Several respondents remark that they live in the area specifically for its tranquillity and that it is unfair that they could now experience noise that they were not expecting.

Cost

Many respondents express concern about the cost of this section. Of these respondents, many claim the expense of cuttings, viaducts, embankments, and earthworks would drive up the cost of the project. Many others remark that the perceived lower price tag of Route E concerns them, as a cheaper

line could represent low quality and poor value for money.

Many respondents also claim there is little-to-no need for this section. Several respondents cite the existing stations at St Neots, Sandy and Biggleswade as evidence that the area is already served by train lines. Furthermore, several respondents are sceptical that post-pandemic passenger levels will match the expected demand for this section. Some respondents also claim that there is a general lack of interest in travel into Bedford, further decreasing the section's necessity.

Several respondents express concern that the complexities of constructing this line, due to the undulating terrain and clay soil as well as the required cuttings and viaducts, would increase the cost and construction times.

Roads and footpaths

A considerable number of respondents express concern that the roads and paths in their area would be disrupted by this section of track.

Many of these respondents state that the roads in North Bedfordshire are small, winding and often poorly maintained country roads, making them unsuitable for increased traffic from both construction vehicles and those driving to access the line. Furthermore, many respondents claim this route would create additional traffic on already congested roads, particularly around St Neots and Cambourne.

Many respondents also mention that North Bedfordshire has a network of footpaths and bridleways, which they are concerned could become inaccessible or severed by the line.

Several respondents express concern that the line crossing roads would compound all these effects by further physically disrupting transport networks. Respondents expressed particular concern for Carriage Drive in Clapham, as well as the A428 and A421.

Utilities

A small number express concern for potential disruption to power and water supplies in the area.

Suggestions

A substantial number of respondents offer suggestions pertaining to Section D as a whole.

A considerable number of respondents make suggestions about stations on the route. These suggestions relate to station access, the locations of stations on the route, and alternative or additional stations, including:

- More stations generally on this section;
- Stations servicing Wixams, Haslingfield and Longstowe;
- More stations around the periphery of Bedford;
- Cambourne North would be the best option if there is to be a northern approach into Cambridge;

- Utilising the existing St Neots Station;
- Bypassing St Neots entirely and serve a different town like Tempsford;
- Building stations at both St Neots South and Tempsford; and
- Utilising Sandy station in conjunction with one or both of the proposed new stations.

A substantial number of respondents suggest alternative routes to those proposed. Many also suggest utilising and coordinating with existing infrastructure projects and interchanging with other train lines. These suggestions include:

- Routes A, B and C from the previous consultation in 2019;
- Route alignments from the previous consultation such as Alignment 5 and 7;
- Taking the whole route further south, and potentially linking the route to the London rail network;
- Going south from Bedford and following the A421;
- Utilising the older Varsity Line, Cambridge-Bedford, or Bourn-Kingston routes;
- Generally avoiding towns and villages along the route;
- Avoiding taking the line through Bedford;
- Interchanging with the East Coast Main Line at St Neots; and
- Generally utilising the most direct route wherever possible.

A considerable number suggest that EWR Co provides more detail on the proposals. Many respondents request more general justification for the given "emerging preferences". Other suggested detail includes:

- 'Actual use' case of the line, particularly taking into account post-pandemic travel patterns;
- Mitigation proposals for:
    - Noise;
    - Impact on rural roads from additional use;
    - Flooding;
    - Light pollution from construction and rail use; and
    - Disruption to power in the area from additional draw;
- Impact on housing proposals, particularly at Bourn and Cambourne;
- Details of local economic benefits for affected communities;
- Financial and cost-benefit analysis;
- Environmental impact studies;
- Tree planting, hedging, and landscaping proposals;
- The location of new sidings in the Cambridge/Cambourne area;
- More detailed maps of the proposals; and
- Details regarding public rights of way that would be affected.

Many respondents also offer suggestions for the design and construction of this section. These include:

- Utilising tunnels wherever possible;

- Using trenching technology instead of embankments and viaducts;
- Limiting the height of raised elements;
- Placing vehicle weight and height limits in affected villages to prevent through-traffic from construction;
- Aesthetic considerations, such as utilising Victorian-style bridges and viaducts, and using natural colours where possible;
- Crossing routes for cyclists, pedestrians, equestrians, and wildlife;
- Keeping the track above sea level;
- Noise and visual mitigation with embankments and trees around the track; and
- Only constructing the track during the daytime, and only on weekdays.

Finally, many respondents suggest that the process of designing the route in this area would be more successful if there were a more collaborative process between local residents and EWR Co.

8. Section E: Harlton to Hauxton

Question 40 asked respondents what they think EWR Co should consider when planning the route in the Harlton to Hauxton area.

In particular, feedback was invited on:

- Building a new railway junction which would join the new railway to the Shepreth Branch Royston existing railway; and
- The emerging preferred option to build a new junction which uses a bridge to connect the railways (a grade separated junction) and to extend the existing railway to connect to the new junction (using an offline construction).

Question 40 received 3,018 responses which are summarised below.

8.1. Comments on the new junction

Support

Improved infrastructure and design

Many respondents support the proposal to add a new junction and railway from Harlton to Hauxton. Some say they do not have a preference for either grade-separated (separate heights) or at-grade (same height level) crossing options and are generally supportive of both. A few remark that a new junction is a good solution and would help to minimise disruption to existing railway lines. A few say they support the proposal because improved infrastructure is needed in the UK.

Many respondents express specific support for the grade-separated option. Some say this will help to reduce disruption in the local area, and to existing services. A few remark that the grade-separated option provides more rail capacity and is a more future-proofed design.

However, many respondents also support keeping the track at-grade or at ground level as opposed to grade-separation and raised junctions. A few say this would help to reduce impacts on local residents.

Some respondents express support of using the online option. A few of these say that the online option, where the junction would follow existing infrastructure, would make use of the existing line and may be better for the environment as it would use less green belt land.

A small number of respondents express general support for building a junction that would join the new railway to the existing Shepreth Branch Royston railway.

Efficiency and journey times

Some respondents say they support any option that will provide an efficient train service and the fastest journey times. A few respondents suggest a fast link to Cambridge South, removing the need to go into central Cambridge.

Level crossings

A few respondents support the proposals for the level crossing at Station Road to be closed. A few also suggest replacing other local level crossings with bridges or tunnels.

Concern

Connectivity and accessibility

A substantial number of respondents voice concern about the possibility of community links being severed. Many respondents highlight the importance of villages such as Harston and Newton being connected, as they share important facilities such as a school, post office and GP surgery. Many of these respondents raise concerns that the junction would disrupt children's journeys to school by car, bus, or bike. Some of these are strongly opposed to children being required to use a potentially dark underpass to get to school. Some respondents remark that the proposal would impact the quality of life of local residents due to potential visual impacts, noise and air pollution caused by the new junction.

Health

Many respondents suggest that the height of the proposed embankment would have a detrimental impact on residents' mental health due to visual blight. Several express concern about impacts on the physical health of some residents, particularly with regard to vulnerable people; children; the elderly; and those with underlying health conditions such as asthma. A small number feel the line may increase the risk of accidents, during construction and operation.

Roads and public rights of way

Many respondents express concern about the potential impact to existing roads and paths in the area, such as Barrington Hill, and how this could impact local communities and potentially disconnect neighbouring villages.

Many respondents express concern that the proposal would have a negative impact on farmland, with several claiming that farms will be severed. Many also suggest that agricultural crossings should be implemented every 500m. A few respondents say that they would require constant access for farm machinery and request that this is not interrupted during construction.

A few respondents express concern that the existing road infrastructure doesn't have the capacity to support construction traffic, and that this would have an impact on residents gaining access to villages.

Many respondents express concern over increases in traffic on roads in the area caused by proposed road closures. Several mention the A10 in this regard. A few respondents mention that if Hauxton Road in Little Shelford and Newton Road in Harston are closed, there will only be one east-west road with access to the A10 between Addenbrooke's Road and London

Road, Harston, which would also increase traffic in the local area.

A few respondents express concern that carbon emissions would be increased by extended car journeys and added traffic as a result of these road closures. A few claim the potential disruption caused by the proposal would make their commute too difficult and they would have to work from home full time.

Some respondents express specific concerns regarding the closure of Station Road level crossing, as this currently provides direct access between Harston and Newton. A few say that the closure of the level crossing between Hauxton and the Shelfords would impact traffic using the A10 and Trumpington Road.

Access to amenities and recreation

Several respondents say that Chapel Hill is important for recreation, in particular walking and cycling, and have concerns that the new junction would impact this. A small number of respondents express concern about the Mullard Radio Astronomy Observatory and potential interference with the equipment, due to vibration and electromagnetic sensitivities of the work conducted there.

A few respondents remark that during construction, access to shared facilities would be lost and bus services would be impacted. For example, the churches of Harston, Hauxton and Newton operate together, sharing one vicar. These respondents express concern that the new junction could sever these neighbouring communities and cause a divide between the parishes.

Visual impact

A substantial number of respondents voice concern that the new junction would have a significant visual impact. The impact on Chapel Hill in particular is a concern for many respondents who regard it as a significant landmark. Many respondents are concerned about the proposed height of the embankment, with several saying the embankments would be visually intrusive.

Some respondents say the height of the new junction, plus the additional height of the trains, would cause a loss of skyline and horizon. A small number express concern about the visual impact of the construction process.

Environmental impact

A substantial number of respondents express concern that the proposed junction would cause environmental damage. Several comments suggest the proposed grade-separated junction would be harmful to the environment, claiming high embankments would increase the effects of noise and air pollution and visual impacts. They ask that any impact on the environment be minimised and that the green belt is respected.

A small number of respondents believe the use of diesel trains would

increase air pollution. A few respondents would like EWR Co to ensure that there is no damage to the rivers and chalk streams in the area. A few voice concern over potential impacts on water drainage and ask that there are measures to prevent flooding. A few respondents claim that the area around the Little Eversden was a military dump for WWI mustard gas and unexploded WW2 bombs which would need to be taken into consideration.

Many respondents express their concern about possible impacts to Wimpole's Special Area of Conservation and to the barbastelle bats. Several of these suggest the proposal could disrupt bat flight paths and put bats at risk; with a small number saying that bat bridges are ineffective. A few respondents express concern over the impact on wild orchids in the area, claiming it is a priority habitat that needs to be protected.

Construction methods

Many respondents say that consideration should be given to the methods of construction to minimise negative impacts to the area, for example using low CO_2 concrete or lime-based technology. A small number are concerned that the construction of the junction (in particular the elevated bank) could cause environmental damage, such as from dust from HGVs; with a few others referring to the possible impacts of mess and of earthmoving.

Noise and air pollution

A substantial number of respondents express concern that EWR would create noise, with many suggesting the height of the junction would increase the noise from trains passing through.

Freight is a concern for many, who claim that freight trains should not pass through residential areas due to noise.

Many respondents request that there be a guarantee on keeping noise levels lower than 45dBA or baseline levels, whichever is lower. Several feel that the noise from trains at night could affect local people and a few of those suggest mitigating this by implementing a night time curfew for trains. Some respondents think that surrounding villages would be faced with years of noise during the construction process.

A substantial number of respondents express concern about potential increases in air pollution. Many remark that the surrounding villages already experience air pollution from the A10. These respondents feel this proposal would add to pollution, mentioning in particular the use of diesel trains and embankments. Some respondents raise concerns about the proximity of the route to schools such as Haslingfield Primary School and Comberton Village College, and potential impacts on children's health and wellbeing from increased air pollution. A few mention they moved to the area to escape air pollution in cities, and as such are opposed to the railway.

Homes, property, and compensation

Many respondents voice concern that properties will be negatively impacted by the proposal, with several concerned their homes will reduce in value and/or that their ability to sell their homes in the future would be reduced due to proximity to the proposed junction.

Many respondents feel that the current compensation scheme is inadequate and should be adjusted to reflect the potential impacts of the railway. Some feel that the consultation downplays the number of homes which would be affected by the proposed junction, and that additional homeowners must be included in the scheme. A few say that they would not consider moving out of their current property if required by the proposal.

Access for cycling and walking

Some respondents express concern about disruption to the current cycle routes in the area; with a few suggesting that a bridge for cyclists and pedestrians would be less safe than the current level crossing. A few claim that any bridge that is cyclable would also be driveable by small cars, and measures should be taken to ensure that access is restricted for motor vehicles on the cycle bridge.

Local community

Many respondents state that the construction of the junction would cause disruption and inconvenience for local people in the area; with some saying this could potentially last for years, with impacts such as noise and possible road closures. A few respondents voice concern about disruption to major roads such as the A10 creating further inconvenience in the surrounding villages of Harston and Newton.

Rail infrastructure and stations

Several respondents remark that without an additional station in the area, there would not be any benefits to local people. A small number of respondents remark there is no need for the railway line to come through this area at all, even with the addition of a new station. A few say that the surrounding villages would be negatively impacted without any benefit to the community.

Several respondents are concerned about disruption to existing rail infrastructure and services. A small number say that it is a busy line, and the proposal would potentially add congestion and delays. A few remark that disruption to existing services, such as the Cambridge line, must be kept to a minimum during construction and operation, as this is a busy commuter line. A few also say that additional trains could place a burden on capacity between Hauxton and the Shepreth Branch junction, compromising future growth of freight and passenger trains on the Kings Cross or EWR routes.

Cost and value for money

Many respondents think that the proposed junction would be too expensive to build. Some attribute this to the cost of construction of the bridge and required embankments as part of the preferred, grade-separated option. A small number suggest that the proposal would be a poor use of public money.

Conversely, a small number of respondents express concern that the proposal is the cheapest option, and would therefore be low-quality, and that cost or ease should not be prioritised over the potential impact on the landscape or jobs.

Complexity and design

A substantial number of respondents strongly oppose the new junction; with many opposed to the railway passing through villages, whether grade-separated or at-grade. Some claim the proposed junction is too complicated, and a few of these suggest that due to the complicated construction, it would not sit well in the landscape and would therefore negatively impact views from surrounding villages.

Many respondents opposed to the grade-separated option specifically request that the railway not be elevated. A few respondents remark that the decision to use bridges seem inconsistent as the need for bridges is used as a reason to reject the northern approach.

Suggestions

Rail infrastructure and stations

Many respondents suggest a Kings Cross line station at Harston, with several saying this would help to reduce some of the impacts of the new junction.

Access for cycling and walking

Some respondents ask that routes for cyclists and pedestrians be maintained and possibly improved as part of the proposal. A few suggest cycle routes could be provided in the form of a bridge over the railway. A few others request bridges be implemented for pedestrians and cyclists, rather than tunnels. A few also suggest that a route for non-vehicular users along the railway would help to encourage low carbon travel.

Engineering design

A substantial number of respondents suggest the track should be trenched, and then tunnelled through Chapel Hill. A substantial number also request that the track be set low in the landscape to avoid high embankments.

Use of existing track

Some respondents suggest using existing track where possible, claiming that this would help to minimise disruption and the impact on the landscape. A few specifically suggest running the new junction and railway line through the old Varsity Line.

Future proofing and sympathetic construction

Some respondents request that any infrastructure that is built as part of the proposal be future proofed, and some say that it needs to be sympathetic to the landscape and consider local residents.

Alternative routes and locations

Many respondents put forward suggestions for alternative routes and locations for the proposed junction and railway, including:

- Following and going over the M11 – some suggest this would provide a shorter route;
- Moving the line further south – some propose that moving the line further south away from Harston would help reduce noise pollution, visual impact, and severance on the village;
- Moving the line further north – a few suggest taking a more northly approach near Comberton would reduce visual impact, noise, and severance on villages such as Harston and Harlton, while also reducing journey time; and
- Avoiding interference with the A10 - a few suggest joining the King's Cross line somewhere between Shepreth to Foxton station before the A10. A few suggest this will avoid potential traffic issues on the A10.

Integration with other transport infrastructure

Some respondents request that compatibility with a future A10 bypass be considered in the proposal, claiming that a bypass would benefit the local community. A few suggest EWR Co could provide funding for the bypass.

Public transport improvements

A few respondents say that public transport should be improved in the area to improve connectivity within communities, as well as access to the new train services.

Foxton level crossing

A small number of respondents request that the Foxton level crossing be closed, saying this would benefit the local communities. A few suggest the crossing could be replaced by a bridge to maintain access.

Noise mitigation

Several respondents propose that properties within 300m of the rail line should have noise mitigation installed for free to help reduce potential noise impacts. A small number of these respondents also suggest the hours of operation of the trains be limited to 7am to 9:30pm to minimise noise during the night.

Visual impact and wildlife

A few respondents request that EWR Co design the proposal to reduce potential visual impact as much as possible. A small number suggest building wildlife corridors such as tunnels and green bridges in order to protect local

wildlife from potential disruption.

Engagement

A small number of respondents request that EWR Co listens to public opinion of those who live in the surrounding villages. A few respondents also suggest open discussion with CambBedRailRoad and Cambridge Approaches as part of the consultation.

Further detail and information

A small number of respondents say that they do not understand the proposal due to some of the terminology used in the consultation, for example the meaning of offline and online construction. Some respondents asked specifically for more detail including:

- The total length and height of the embankments, viaducts, and bridges;
- Details as to the purpose, uses and benefits of the proposal;
- Environmental assessments and air quality surveys;
- The total cost of the proposal;
- Details of vibration effects on Mullard Radio Astronomy Observatory; and
- Details of all mitigation measures proposed.

9. Section F: The Shelfords to Cambridge station

Question 41 asked respondents what they think is important for EWR Co to consider when developing the proposals for the Shelfords and Cambridge area.

In particular, feedback was invited in relation to:

- The options for the Hauxton Road level crossing;
- The proposed modifications to the Shepreth Junction;
- The emerging preferred option to increase the existing railway line between Shepreth Junction and Addenbrooke's Road bridge from two tracks to four tracks;
- The emerging preferred option to increase the existing railway line between Long Road Sixth Form College and Cambridge station from two/three tracks to four tracks; and
- Anything they should consider at Cambridge station.

Question 41 received 2,986 responses which are summarised below.

9.1. Comments on Hauxton Road level crossing

Support

Several respondents, including Network Rail, support closing the level crossing in general terms, with a few of these saying that it is dangerous and little used. A small number express support for closing it only to cars, as they believe this would reduce traffic congestion in the area.

Concern

Local community

A large number of respondents express concern about the proposal, with the majority mentioning the potential impacts of closing the crossing on local roads and communities. Of these respondents, a considerable number state that closing the crossing would divide Little Shelford and harm the community.

Many suggest it would sever an important link between Hauxton and Little or Great Shelford, potentially cutting off access to shops, schools, recreational spaces, social activities, medical engagements, and the nearest train station (Great Shelford). Some state this would have a detrimental impact on local residents' health and well-being; with a few others concerned about a negative impact on the local economy.

A small number of respondents express concern that the proposal provides no benefit to the local community.

A few others say that the crossing is safe and there is no need to close it.

Impact of level crossing on road users

Many respondents are concerned that Hauxton Road is frequently used and so the proposal would significantly increase journey times for users; with several claiming there would be more traffic and congestion in the local area.

Some respondents are concerned about drivers having to use the A10 instead and that this would make road journeys longer and less viable for local residents.

Some are concerned that pedestrians and cyclists who regularly use the crossing may be unable to travel as normal without it.

Some express concern that buses would be unable to access either of the two Shelfords, restricting older residents' ability to leave the village, and making it more difficult for school buses. Similarly, a few are concerned that the emergency services would be unable to access the two Shelfords.

Roads

Many respondents are concerned that this proposal could increase traffic, congestion, and pollution locally, particularly on the A10, M11, Newton Road, Trumpington Road and Donkey Lane. A few mention the safety of pedestrians and drivers on alternative routes, which they believe are unsuitable for the potential increase in traffic. A few others express concern about access to local amenities including Addenbrooke's Hospital.

A few respondents state that building a new road or underpass at the Hauxton Road level crossing site would potentially impede the visibility of drivers when accessing the road, making it dangerous.

Disruption from construction

A small number of respondents express general concern about the potential impacts from construction on the area, with a few others concerned specifically about the disruption to residents from building a new bridge or underpass. A few express concern about the possible impacts construction would have on traffic in the area.

Environment

A small number of respondents share general concerns about the potential impact of the proposal on the environment.

A similar number say that it would lead to increased car use; with a few of expressing concern about higher levels of carbon emissions as a result.

Noise and vibration

Several respondents express concern about the potential impacts of noise or vibration; some respondents simply stating a general concern about noise without further clarification.

A small number are concerned about the potential impact of noise or

vibrations on the health of local people and the local setting.

A small number of respondents suggest there is already too much noise and vibration in the area caused by the motorway and the trains already using the crossing, and they feel the proposal would add to this.

A small number of residents comment on the potential noise impacts if diesel, freight, or overnight trains operate in the area.

Air pollution

Several respondents express concern that the proposal could increase air pollution; with a small number saying diesel trains would contribute to this.

A small number of respondents believe an increase in air pollution would have a negative impact on local residents and their health, including those who suffer from asthma; or children attending school in Harston.

Wildlife

Several respondents express concern about the potential impact of the proposal on local wildlife, with a few of these respondents commenting that wildlife is a valued local asset, and a few suggesting that rare species, including of bats, would be negatively affected. Additionally, a few respondents are concerned about the proximity to the Little Shelford Conservation Area.

Property and property values

Devaluation of property is a concern for some respondents, who think that loss of access routes, construction of significant new infrastructure, and the proximity of the proposal in general, would potentially reduce house prices in the local area.

Some express concern about potential demolition of local properties, with a few of these respondents saying this is particularly likely when it comes to building any new bridge or underpass.

Additionally, a few respondents believe the proposal is too close to existing homes, and a few others suggest the trains could possibly cause damage to homes.

Landscape and visual impacts

Several respondents are concerned that the proposal could have a negative impact on the local landscape. Of these, a small number believe that the rural heritage and countryside setting of Little Shelford is an unsuitable location for the proposal. Some other respondents remark that the proposal would be visually obtrusive, with most highlighting the building of a new bridge as a particular concern.

Current rail use and existing rail infrastructure

A few respondents suggest that new infrastructure built as part of the proposal could potentially affect current railway crossings and eventually

lead to the closing of Shelford station.

Feasibility

Some respondents feel that the site at Hauxton Road level crossing is inappropriate or unfeasible for building a new bridge or underpass, with a few citing a lack of space and a few others citing excessive cost.

A few respondents are concerned that building an underpass in the area could increase flood risk given it would be below surface water levels; with a few other respondents saying that it could be unsafe and under-used.

A small number of respondents express concern that a pedestrian road bridge would not be suitable for all users, such as cyclists; elderly residents; and users with young children.

Suggestions

Accessibility

Many respondents suggest maintaining access for motorists across the level crossing by building either a new bridge or underpass, with a few of these adding that any new bridge would have less impact on local residents if it is built away from homes and closer to the M11. Additionally, a few suggest lowering the rail line into cuttings in order to provide a bridge carrying traffic overhead.

Several respondents suggest maintaining access for pedestrians and cyclists across the level crossing by building either a new bridge or underpass, with a few commenting that it is important to allow residents to move safely between local villages and to encourage active travel. Some respondents further suggest that either a bridge or underpass should be convenient for a range of users, including those with physical impairments; on bikes; on mobility scooters; or with pushchairs.

A few think that metal bridges wouldn't be suitable, saying that they are unsightly and impractical.

Several respondents prefer retaining the road link but replacing the level crossing with a bridge or underpass, with a similar number saying that continued, convenient access to pedestrians and cyclists is important.

A few respondents believe there are better options for diverting traffic around the existing level crossing and that it would not be difficult to deliver these.

Alternative routes

A small number of respondents suggest establishing a new cycleway either across the site of the existing level crossing or alongside the proposed train route, with a few saying it should be connected it to the existing Addenbrooke's to Great Shepreth Cycleway.

A few respondents suggest creating a new footpath to run alongside the proposed train route, with a few others suggesting the path alongside the

A10 between Hauxton Road and London Road is widened to reduce disruption.

A few respondents suggest using existing railway infrastructure towards Cambridge to minimise disruption in the Shelford area. A few others suggest aligning the route more rigidly alongside the M11, and over or under the proposed new park and ride between Babraham and the Abingtons next to the A1307.

A few suggest providing a new diversionary road should the level crossing close, with a few others suggesting alterations to existing road arrangements which they believe would reduce traffic in the area. These suggestions include closing the A1301 to non-local traffic or re-routing the A10 beside the railway line between Foxton and London Road. Additionally, a few respondents suggest any plans to build a new highway in the area should be done in close consultation with local residents and parish councils.

Track design

A few respondents suggest tunnelling the train line under Hauxton Road. A few others say noise mitigation measures, such as noise barriers, should be introduced.

Modernise level crossing

Many respondents suggest maintaining and improving the existing level crossing. Several suggest improving the crossing's safety in general terms, while several others identify the potential safety benefits of increasing the number of barriers at the station to four. A few others suggest replacing the barrier system with a fully gated crossing mechanism, with a few saying that CCTV would improve both motorist and pedestrian safety.

Some respondents suggest upgrading and modernising the crossing in general terms, with a few other respondents making specific suggestions, such as using technology; reducing the sound of the barriers closing; or adapting the crossing to multi-modal or specific purpose trains.

Traffic control measures

A few respondents suggest local roads, such as Newton Road, would be able to cope with an increase in diverted traffic with new traffic control measures such as strong road layouts.

Additional station

A few respondents suggest building a new station at the site of the crossing, commenting that this would reduce the impacts of closing the crossing less on the local community, particularly if it reduced the need for travelling by car.

Engage with local people

A few respondents suggest paying particular attention to the concerns of local communities affected by the proposal, including those in Hauxton and

the two Shelfords.

Further information

Some respondents request more information regarding the proposal, with a few suggesting they require additional details, including the rationale for closing the crossing, and the specifications of any new bridges to be built. A few other respondents ask for more information about the potential impacts of the proposal in general on local roads and residents. A few suggest comparative information on similar proposals delivered elsewhere would be beneficial.

9.2. Comments on Shepreth Junction

A large number of respondents make comments on the proposal to modify the Shepreth Branch Junction.

Support

Many support the proposal to modify the junction, with some supporting in general terms, and a few specifying that it is necessary, would not be difficult to implement, and would have an insignificant impact on the local area. A few support the proposal because they believe it would increase capacity and reduce congestion along the route. A few other respondents support the proposal as they say it would allow trains to access more platforms at Cambridge station.

At-grade option

Many respondents are in favour of an at-grade option to modify the junction. Several of these express general support, with a few other respondents specifying that they think it would reduce the impact on local residents, cause less disruption to the local area, and help improve the flow of trains through Cambridge station.

Grade-separated option

Several respondents support a grade-separated option instead. Where preference is expressed beyond general terms, a small number claim that it would increase capacity for the long-term more than an at-grade option. A few other respondents remark on the advantages of this option such as relieving traffic on local roads; being more suitable for freight; and the construction could be undertaken in close alignment with that of Cambridge South station.

Concern

A substantial number of respondents oppose this proposal, with the majority against a grade-separate option. Of these, many express their opposition in general terms, however some often cite the elevated nature of the option as reason for their opposition. A few of these respondents state their opposition to the construction of viaducts. Many others think it would have a negative impact on local residents. Additionally, many say it would have a detrimental

impact on the environment, local villages, or the local area, including the green belt. A few others are concerned that it would potentially increase local traffic, for example if the A1301 bridge was closed. A few other respondents feel it is unnecessary, particularly if trains continuing beyond Cambridge station still need access to alternative routes.

In comparison, only a few respondents oppose an at-grade option, commenting in general terms that this option also has potential disadvantages.

Several respondents oppose the proposal in general. These respondents mention concerns such as that the area is too busy with traffic and that increased urbanisation would potentially make this worse; or that the proposed modifications are not necessary at this point in the route.

Local community

A considerable number of respondents express concern about the potential impact on the quality of life of residents, including their health and well-being; with several saying the proposal would affect the character and the quality of village life.

Several others think the proposal would detract from the enjoyment of the local area, including the green belt, local attractions, or the Addenbrooke's to Great Shelford Cycleway. A few respondents emphasise that this could be of greater detriment to elderly residents who may be unable to travel further afield.

Landscape and environment

A considerable number of respondents express concern that the proposal would damage the green belt between the south of Cambridge and the Shelford area, with several others saying that it could have a detrimental impact on local green spaces, including Hobson's Park, Hobson's Brooke, and Nine Wells Reserve. Possible impacts on habitat and wildlife is a concern for some of these respondents, with a few saying the proposal would disturb a rich variety of local animal and plant life. A few others think the line runs too close to a nearby chalk stream that is home to great crested newts.

Many respondents remark that the proposal would have a negative impact on views of the area. Most of these refer to any elevated section of a grade-separated option.

The general environmental impacts of the proposal are of concern to several respondents, with a few particularly concerned about the impact of a grade-separated option on the surrounding environment.

Many raise concerns about possible impacts of increased noise or vibrations in the area. Several have specific concerns about the potential for any elevated sections to increase noise travelling across the area, with a few citing the surrounding flat topography as potentially exacerbating this. Some others express concern that diesel or freight trains would create noise or

vibration.

Air pollution is also a concern for many respondents, with some referring particularly to the potential effect of running diesel or freight trains through the area, and a few expressing further concern that any elevated sections of rail would exacerbate this, or that local schoolchildren would suffer as a result.

Several respondents emphasise particular concern that running diesel or freight trains would be more detrimental if they run throughout the night.

Properties and property values

Many respondents express concern that the proposal is too close to existing homes, with several mentioning the potential impact any elevated sections would have on these, including those on either side of the A1301 bridge. A few other respondents raise housing needs in the area or that charitable housing provision and other locally significant buildings would face negative impacts from the proposal. A few others are concerned about a potential decrease in property values or the demolition of existing.

Roads and traffic

Many respondents express concern that the proposal would impact local roads and paths, with several mentioning that the closure or alteration of the A1301 bridge would potentially increase traffic and journey times throughout the area. Some believe that any elevated section of rail would make this more likely, with a small number of others stating that the A1301 road should not be closed.

A small number of respondents suggest the proposal could add congestion to already busy roads, creating traffic problems such as slowing traffic into Cambridge, or making travel between local villages difficult.

A few respondents believe that the proposal could make access to local footpaths and cycleways more difficult and say that all such access must be maintained. A few others suggest the proposal fails to properly account for proposed busway developments in the area, which they feel are detrimental in themselves to residents.

Some respondents are particularly concerned that any construction would result in increased traffic, with a few others expressing concerns that construction would last for years or would be very disruptive to residents.

Subsequent over-development

Some respondents think that the proposal has the potential to encourage subsequent over-development or loss of green belt in an area that is already overly urbanised. A few of these respondents suggest that the proposal would also facilitate an unwanted expansion of the Cambridge Biomedical Campus. However, a similar number of respondents express the opposing view in that they believe it would inhibit a welcome expansion of the Campus, as well as hinder further development on valuable land.

Cost and viability

Some respondents voice concern about the viability of the proposal, with a few expressing general concern about the cost, and a few specifying the potential costs of building or maintaining any viaducts. A few others believe the nearby roads and bridges are too close to the existing junction for the proposal to be implemented on the same site.

As well as viability concerns, a few directly question the need for the proposal. Alongside a few respondents mentioning general concerns that the proposal could be unsafe, a few emphasise a particular concern that the geography around the existing junction is not suitable for any increase in train speeds.

Current rail use and existing rail infrastructure

Some respondents express concern that the proposal has the potential to impact on current rail use and infrastructure, by cutting off key routes or increasing journey times or delays. A few also state that the existing junction is already very busy and any closure or reduction in capacity would have a disruptive impact on existing services. A few other respondents suggest the proposed line should not connect to the West Anglia Main Line along the proposed route from the junction, and a few other respondents, including Thameslink, remark that a grade-separated option would restrict platform access for existing train services into Cambridge station.

Request for more information

Some respondents say that more information is needed to choose between grade options. They request more design detail for the two options; a cost-benefit analysis of a grade-separated option; and detail of potential negative impacts; and are concerned about the location of the proposal if it is not at the site of the existing junction.

Suggestions

Track management and design

Some respondents suggest the design of the proposal should ensure there is no conflict between the multiple lines and routes they expect to use, either at the junction or to enter Cambridge station**.** Of these respondents, a small number suggest the design should eliminate any potential delays or interference caused by crossover between east to west and north to south train services. A small number offer more specific suggestions for achieving effective track management to accommodate multiple lines and routes, such as keeping the line to two tracks; operating two separate twin tracks to pair the route rather than the direction of train lines; improving signalling solutions; adjusting the route further east; rebuilding old lines; or running existing lines in parallel with proposed new lines into Cambridge.

A few other respondents suggest design features to mitigate potential impact of the line on the surrounding area, such as cuttings or an

embankment.

Tunnelling the route is suggested by some respondents, who often cite the potential benefits it could provide in removing existing level crossings, including at Granhams Road.

Platform use

A few respondents provide suggestions on whether the proposal should allow for the future development of proposed lines entering into either the east or west platform sections of Cambridge station. Of these suggestions, preference is mixed, with some respondents favouring proposed lines entering western platforms, believing this would better serves existing lines. A similar number of respondents suggest the proposed lines should enter eastern platforms so as not to preclude any potential further eastward expansion of the route.

Footpaths

A small number of respondents suggest that providing new or improving existing footpaths should be included in the proposal.

More detail requested

A few respondents suggest that any changes in the detail of the proposal should be made available for scrutiny, especially to local residents. Most requests for further information relate to the potential impact on properties, the local landscape, or nearby roads and bridges.

9.3. Comments on expanding tracks

Shepreth Junction to Addenbrooke's Road bridge

Many respondents comment on the proposal to expand the tracks between Shepreth Junction and Addenbrooke's Road bridge.

Support

Many respondents support the proposal, saying that increasing the existing railway line between Shepreth Junction and Addenbrookes bridge from two to four tracks is needed and would future proof the line.

Concern

A few respondents express general opposition to the proposal, with some of these respondents suggesting that support for other proposals further along the route, such as Cambridge South station, is contingent on there being no track expansion required at this point. A small number of respondents question the need for an expansion to four tracks.

Many respondents express concern about the potential impact of this proposal on the Nine Wells Reserve, Hobson's Park, and Hobson's Brook. They suggest that the proposal could affect natural spaces or features, including chalk streams, natural springs, flood meadows, habitats, and ponds. They also describe the amenity value of the green space and green belt land and

argue that these areas should not be impacted by the proposals.

Furthermore, many respondents raise concerns about the potential impact of this proposal on the Addenbrooke's to Great Shelford Cycleway. They argue that many pedestrians and cyclists use the path for both leisure and commuting into Cambridge and say that it should be retained. Some say the path is valuable as it supports sustainable transport, or that its removal would force some cyclists (including children) to use road routes which may be less safe; whilst others comment on its visual aspect and the artwork on the route.

Several respondents feel the proposals could negatively impact the green belt and argue that this should be protected, whilst a small number of respondents believe it would impact on the Iron Age Scheduled Monument to the west of the track.

A few respondents also raise concerns in relation to:

- The potential impact on local communities and residents in places such as Barrington;
- Noise pollution and increased vibration;
- Impact on properties and property values; and
- Increased local traffic, particularly during construction.

Several respondents also support the proposal to expand the existing railways from Shepreth Junction to Addenbrooke's Road bridge to four tracks. Some argue that this would be necessary to provide sufficient capacity and avoid the creation of bottlenecks.

Suggestions

Many respondents make suggestions in relation to the Addenbrooke's to Great Shelford Cycleway, which they feel could be affected by the proposals. Several argue that improvements could be made to the path by widening it; improving lighting and CCTV along the route; and incorporating permanent stripes into the design. Some say that the path should remain open during construction or that an alternative should be in place before any closure; whilst others ask that artwork along the route be preserved.

Some respondents make suggestions about the Nine Wells Reserve – a few say that environmental protections should be put in place; whilst others propose a pedestrian footpath under the track at Hobson's Conduit.

Long Road, Cambridge

Support

Several respondents express support for the proposals, suggesting that four tracks are necessary to provide sufficient future capacity.

Concern

Some express opposition to the proposals in general terms. A considerable number of respondents feel the closure of Long Road during construction

could cause disruption, as it is a busy road with students travelling to nearby education centres and people travelling into Cambridge. Some respondents say Long Road is part of the Cambridge Ring Road, and if this road were to be closed it would have a significant negative impact on road traffic. Several respondents also raise concerns about the guided busway and argue that this must not be affected.

Some respondents express concern about the impact these proposals could have on local residents, nearby education facilities, and Addenbrooke's Hospital.

A few respondents also raise concerns in relation to:

- The feasibility of the proposals given a lack of space around the existing track;
- A potential increase in air and noise pollution; and
- The possible impact on adjacent properties.

Track Expansion

Support

Many respondents support track expansion, often saying they see it as necessary to provide sufficient capacity for the network. Some think more capacity is needed now, whilst others feel there will be future growth in passenger numbers.

Concern

Many respondents oppose track expansion in general. They often challenge the need to have four tracks or say that current track provision is sufficient. A few of these respondents refer to a potential increase in trains entering Cambridge from the south from 467 to 600.

A considerable number of respondents express concern about the potential impact track expansion could have on the green belt and the character of the local landscape. Some of these emphasise the value of green spaces. Some also say the proposals could negatively impact the environment in general; local wildlife; and chalk streams or aquifers.

Some respondents raise concerns about the potential impacts of track expansion on local communities and residents, particularly in Great Shelford, whilst some specifically say that there would be disruption during the construction phase. Some also feel the proposals could impact on nearby housing and may affect property values in the area, with others saying it could lead to an increase in noise pollution.

A few respondents express concern about:

- The feasibility of track expansion given the space available;
- A possible increase in air pollution;
- The alignment and layout of the existing track design; and
- The cost of track expansion.

Suggestions

Some respondents make suggestions around the design of any expanded track, including the incorporation of bi-directional tracks. A few respondents suggest an underpass would enable the continued use of the road from Hauxton to the Shelfords. Meanwhile, some respondents suggest that the track expansion should be extended as far as the Shepreth Branch Junction.

A few respondents suggest that better signalling could reduce the need for increased network capacity, and a few say that the cycleway and busway, which may be affected by these proposals, should be replaced or improved.

A few respondents suggest more information should be provided on:

- The proposed new four-track layout from Shepreth Junction into Cambridge and any possible implications;
- How the proposed tracks would enter Cambridge Central station and whether there is suitable space available;
- What mitigation measures will be implemented to reduce impact on residents' wellbeing; and
- The benefits that an increase in the number of tracks is thought to bring.

9.4. Comments on Cambridge station

Support

Several respondents support the proposals or say there is a need for additional platforms.

Concern

Several respondents oppose the use of Cambridge station by EWR trains. They say that the station is already busy or that there is no need for trains to visit this station.

Many respondents also express concern that Cambridge station is difficult to reach by car, cycle, foot, and public transport, and is too far from the city centre.

Some respondents believe the station is poorly designed, saying the taxi rank and drop-off point outside the main entrance are difficult to navigate for pedestrians and cyclists; whilst others say that bus stops are too far from the station; and a few say the station can be difficult to access with bags or cycles. Some respondents also say theft from the cycle storage facilities is a concern.

Some respondents express concern about the potential impact of the proposals on traffic. Other concerns respondents raise include:

- A potential increase in air and noise pollution;
- Possible impacts for nearby properties or property values; and
- The cost of making changes.

Suggestions

Many respondents suggest improvements to transport to and from the station are needed. They often suggest an increase the number of buses stopping near the station and improvements to onward connections for those arriving at the station.

Several respondents say that car parking at the station is currently inadequate, whilst some say the same about cycle storage facilities. Some also say that access to the station for cyclists and pedestrians needs to be considered. A few say that improvements should be made to the taxi rank.

Several respondents say there should be a new eastern entrance to Cambridge station, whilst some say a new footbridge would be needed. Some also say that platforms should be more accessible or that there should be better management of passenger flows around the station.

A few respondents make other suggestions, which include:

- Improvements to lifts or introduction of escalators;
- Additional seating and display screens;
- Modernisation of the station appearance;
- More food and drink outlets within the station; and
- Better toilet facilities.

9.5. Other comments related to Section F

Cambridge South station

Many respondents to this section comment on Cambridge South station, these views are summarised below.

Support

Many respondents support the proposed location of Cambridge South station as it would benefit those needing to access Addenbrooke's Hospital.

Concern

A few respondents oppose the proposal for Cambridge South station. A small number of respondents question the need, arguing its location would only benefit those working at the Biomedical Centre and Addenbrooke's Hospital.

A small number of respondents express concern over potential negative impacts of the construction of Cambridge South station on the surrounding area and local amenities, including Addenbrooke's Hospital and Clay Farm housing developments. A few respondents remark that the construction would cause potential disruption and inconvenience to residents.

A few respondents voice concerns regarding the track capacity at Cambridge South station and argue that it needs to be increased in preparation for an expected increase in passenger numbers.

A few respondents raise points about Cambridge South station that are

outside the scope of this project. For instance, a few respondents remark that any interchange with the West Anglia Main Line should be at Cambridge station not Cambridge South. A few others believe that Cambridge South station will be built regardless of EWR Co's proposals, referring to the Biomedical campus and Royal Papworth Hospital.

Suggestions

A few respondents request a cycle lane for commuting to the station; that there is parking at the station; that there are two island platforms at the station; and that it is easy to access.

A small number of respondents suggest a bus line for commuters at the station; and an interconnection between Cambridge South station and Cambridge main station.

Other level crossings

Several respondents request that as part of the proposal, all level crossings in the surrounding areas be closed, for example the level crossing at Foxton. A small number remark about the safety of these level crossings.

A few respondents are in favour of closing level crossings in the area but only if access for cyclists and pedestrians is retained. A few suggest level crossings are out-dated and that there are too many in the area; and a few request that no additional level crossings be built and that EWR to use tunnels or bridges instead.

A few respondents request that the level crossing on Hampton Road be kept open due to concerns that its closure could increase carbon emissions because longer journeys would be made to access nearby facilities.

General comments

Support

Many respondents are in support of the proposed railway line from The Shelfords to Cambridge. A small number think that the proposal would benefit people in the local area, for example by improving access for young people in the southern villages of Cambridge who travel to central Cambridge for sixth form. A few respondents support the proposal because providing additional commuter rail capacity could help reduce further road building.

Concern

Many respondents oppose the proposed route from The Shelfords to Cambridge. Several oppose the route due to its southern approach to Cambridge, and some suggest the Shelford area is unsuitable for a new railway line and suggest an alternative approach is considered.

Need, benefit, and feasibility

Many respondents state the plans proposed in are unnecessary as the area already has enough stations and trains. Several respondents believe the proposed plans would not benefit local communities. Some respondents believe the proposal is not economically feasible.

Access for public transport

A few respondents are concerned that Cambridge South station would prevent accessibility to public transport links including bus services and coaches as these routes would be affected.

Disruption

Many respondents express concern that the construction of the proposed plans in would lead to significant disruption, including potential road and bridge closures; and possible increases in traffic, noise, and vibrations.

Local community

A considerable number of respondents believe the proposed plans would negatively impact the health of residents in local villages and many state the proposed plans could sever links between communities.

Local amenities

Several respondents state the proposed plans would have a potentially adverse impact on local amenities and recreation spaces including Nine Wells, Hobson's Park, hospitals, schools, and green belt land; and that this could negatively impact the health of local people, cyclists, and horse riders.

Environment

Many respondents voice concern that the proposed plans would have a detrimental impact on the surrounding environment, especially the Cambridge green belt.

A substantial number of respondents are concerned that the railway line would negatively impact the countryside and landscape and would create both noise and visual pollution. Many respondents worry the proposed railway line would also lead to more air pollution.

Several worry that natural habitats and local wildlife would be at risk as a result of the proposed railway line.

Noise

Many respondents are concerned that the railway would increase general noise levels in the local area. A similar number believe freight trains would increase noise levels, and several are concerned that this could have a negative impact on the health of local people.

Rail traffic

Several respondents voice concerns that there are already multiple railways in the south of Cambridge and that building a new railway line would lead to more traffic and disruption on the railways in this area.

Impacts on hospitals and emergency services

A small number of respondents comment that Section F would potentially have serious impacts on ambulance and patient access to local hospitals, including Addenbrooke's and Royal Papworth Hospitals. A few respondents voice concerns that the view of the railway line from hospitals would negatively impact patients' recovery, whether medically or mentally.

Homes and property

Several respondents worry that the proposed plans would lead to the demolition of properties, whilst some voice concerns that property prices would decrease.

Roads and connectivity

Many respondents express concern about road closures and the potential for communities to be cut off from each other. They also believe that this would lead to increased traffic in the local area and request that existing road links are maintained to minimise disruption to journeys.

Development

Several respondents are concerned that rail use would encourage additional development in the area in the future.

Journey time

A few respondents voice concern that the proposed route would increase their journey time.

Rail service and freight

Several respondents express concern that night services would have a potential negative impact on the local community and environment.

Many respondents object to allowing freight to pass through Cambridge to Cambridge station as they worry this would have a potential negative impact on the landscape. Several respondents voice concern over the possible on pollution and noise.

Suggestions

Stations

Several respondents suggest additional stations to serve local communities in the villages south of Cambridge be provided as part of the proposal. A few respondents suggest this would help reduce car use and therefore congestion in these areas. A few respondents ask that strong transport links are retained between Hauxton and Newton.

Access

Some respondents ask that existing cycleways and pedestrian access is maintained, as it is important to support active travel in the local areas. Some respondents suggest this could be implemented by adding bridges and underpasses for non-motorised access. A small number of respondents ask that improvements are made to existing routes as part of this proposal, such as the A1301 bridge.

A few respondents ask that access across the track is maintained for all users. A few suggest the addition of a bridge would help pedestrians cross the track safely and ask that people with disabilities be considered when designing crossings.

Design

Some respondents say the new railway line should be tunnelled or trenched into the landscape as opposed to above ground. A few of these think this would help minimise potential noise. A few others suggest including acoustic barriers to reduce noise further.

Alternative routes

Some respondents put forward alternative routes and suggestions for the Shelford to Cambridge section. A small number of respondents suggest the route should be directed through Addenbrooke's with EWR Co providing a station here as part of the proposal. Other suggestions put forward by a few respondents include:

- Moving the line so that it runs along the existing M11 corridor;
- Taking a route that integrates with existing infrastructure, making use of old railway alignments;
- Taking a more northerly approach to avoid southern villages such as Hauxton;
- Moving the line so that it runs along the existing A14 corridor; and
- Moving Scotsdale garden centre and to run the track through here instead to reduce the number of houses demolished.

Wider suggestions

Many respondents put forward ideas they feel should be considered as part of the broader project. A few respondents proposed the following:

- Investment in existing road infrastructure, improving road connectivity and reducing traffic;
- A light rail link to connect facilities such as Addenbrooke's Hospital and Cambridge Airport;
- Additional car parking in local areas;
- Full excavation of the Iron Age site (the scheduled monument behind Scotsdale garden centre); and
- Adjustments to the current train timetabling to accommodate new trains.

A few respondents are opposed to the Cambridge guided bus and suggest this route could be used to run the new railway line.

Some respondents request that the proposal provide sufficient capacity for the additional services that would be using the line. A few of these say there needs to be enough tracks to ensure trains are not being held up.

Engaging local communities

Several respondents ask that EWR Co listens to the views of the local communities regarding the proposed line from The Shelfords to Cambridge. A few respondents remark that the current proposal would impact residents of The Shelfords, and ask that sensitivity and empathy be given to the answers given by those affected.

Several respondents ask for further information to be provided. A few respondents specify they would like more information on:

- The potential impact on properties – a few ask if the proposal would require their house to be demolished;
- The potential impact on other transport – a few ask whether public transport would be adversely affected in the local area;
- The potential impact on Cambridge South station – a few ask whether the proposal would impact the train frequency or track layout at the new Cambridge South station;
- A cost-benefit analysis report to be provided; and
- Details on how traffic will be managed during the construction phase.

10. Comments about the consultation

14,082 respondents comment on the consultation process.

Support

Several respondents support the overall EWR consultation process.

Some respondents find the consultation summary very informative and helpful. A few respondents praise the consultation response form for recognising the importance of customer experience and railway operations.

A few respondents agree that staff conduct has been helpful and proactive throughout the consultation process.

Concern

Information and materials

Many respondents voice concern that the consultation summary document did not contain enough information, whilst some respondents claim they didn't receive it.

A substantial number of respondents believe that there is inaccurate information in the Consultation Document including: Appendix F; Section D; the data presented on a northern versus southern approach into Cambridge; and the names of some locations.

A very large number of respondents express their concern about the lack of specific information in relation to potential northern and/or southern approaches into Cambridge and Section D, including a lack of information regarding the potential impact of the railway line on communities, the environment, and amenities.

A very large number of respondents remark on the lack of route assessments for a northern approach into Cambridge and many question if Route E is the most appropriate route, and how they can assess this without the relevant assessments.

A substantial number of respondents remark on the general lack of information in the Consultation Document which they suggest means they have not been able to make well informed decisions. A considerable number of respondents believe that the maps are inadequate and vague, which makes them misleading. Many respondents criticise the general illustrations and diagrams in the Consultation Document.

Some state that the online interactive map was not accessible. A substantial number voice concern regarding the lack of information about the possibility of using the railway line for freight trains. A similar number find that the information in the Consultation Document is misleading and downplay the impacts on the local community and environment.

Many respondents comment that the information in the Consultation Document is too complex which makes it difficult to understand. A small

number comment that the Consultation Document was not translated into any other languages than English, and therefore it is not accessible to some residents who may be impacted by the proposals.

A considerable number of respondents suggest that some of the questions proposed in the response form are irrelevant, inappropriate, and premature as they do not focus on the proposed railway route. A similar number of respondents criticise the response form and online portal, with some stating they were unable to voice their opinions properly due to the format of the response form.

Engagement events

Many respondents comment on a lack of face-to-face engagement with the public whilst several respondents criticise the decision to run the consultation process during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Many respondents criticise the online consultation events, as they believe these events did not provide sufficient answers to their queries. Several respondents comment that people without internet access, especially elderly people, would have been unable to attend the events. A few remark on the inconvenient hours of these events.

Process

A large number of respondents criticise the consultation process in general, but do not provide further information.

A considerable number of respondents criticise the consultation process as they believe it has not been fair or transparent. Many feel that there has not been a fair consultation on potential routes for the proposed section of new railway between Bedford and Cambridge, specifically the northern approach into Cambridge.

A substantial number of respondents claim there has been a lack of opportunity to influence the development of the proposals throughout the process; and that the views and needs of local people and councils have not been considered.

A considerable number of respondents believe that EWR Co has predetermined the outcome of the consultation without regard to public feedback; and many believe that the southern approach into Cambridge has been decided on prior to the consultation process.

A very large number of respondents criticise the previous 2019 consultation as they believe it did not involve sufficient communication with stakeholders and residents; there was little publicity; and because information in the Consultation Document was lacking, inaccurate and misleading.

Several respondents feel that EWR Co staff behaved poorly throughout the consultation process and that they were not able to answer queries during the events to support the consultation.

A considerable number of respondents believe the consultation process was too short and request that it is extended.

Undue influence

A substantial number of respondents express concern about perceived political influence in the decision-making process. They believe there may have been undue influence from Bedford Borough Council and local elected officials.

Promotion

A substantial number of respondents state there was a lack of communication, and many residents did not know about the consultation as they were not properly informed by EWR Co or by Bedford Borough Council.

Many respondents suggest there was a lack of publicity and some state that using local newspapers is an inadequate approach.

Requests for more information

Several respondents request further information regarding compensation schemes for residents whose properties may be affected.

Many respondents request more general information concerning the proposed EWR line.

A considerable number of respondents seek clarification for more detailed queries.

Suggestions

A very large number of respondents request further consultation, especially on a potential northern or southern approach into Cambridge, and reconsideration of Route E.

A considerable number of respondents request further engagement with the public.

A few respondents request that EWR Co listens and acknowledges the views of the public.

Appendix A – The consultation response form

east west RAIL

East West Rail 2021 Public Consultation Feedback Form

Please use this form to share your views on our consultation on the East West Rail Project.

The feedback we receive during this consultation will be considered as we refine our proposals before seeking government approval for its construction.

For more details about the Project, please refer to our consultation document which can be found online at **www.eastwestrail.co.uk**.

You can also fill in this form:

- Online at **www.eastwestrail.co.uk/feedback**
- Return a paper copy to **Freepost EAST WEST RAIL**
- Scan electronic copy to **consultation@eastwestrail.co.uk**

For large print copies of this form or versions in alternative languages, please email **contact@eastwestrail.co.uk** or call **0330 1340067**.

Please submit your feedback by 9 June 2021 when this consultation will close.

You can fill out as many or as few questions as you would like. If you require more space, please attach any extra pages to this form.

The following questions are in the same order as they appear in the Consultation Document. The main headings show which section the questions relate to.

Introduction to the project so far

The approach to Cambridge

1. Please share your view on

Because EWR alignments closer to north Cambridge are now being considered, we have looked again at whether we were right to have favoured Route Option E and approaching Cambridge from the south as we confirmed after our last consultation. In particular, we have reviewed our previous assessment that concluded approaching from the south was the better option taking account of a Cambourne North Station outside of Route E to see if we would have made a different decision. We consider that the advantages of approaching Cambridge from the south continue to support this conclusion and that a number of challenges remain for a northern approach even with a Cambourne North station. **We'd welcome your comments on our assessment**.

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Customer experience and railway operations

The train service

2. Please share your views on:

- How you might use EWR services - for example for work, to visit friends and family, or to get to leisure destinations?
- Based on your experience of rail travel in the UK what do you think are the main areas that could be improved?
- If you don't currently travel by rail, what are the reasons for this? Is there anything that would persuade you to use rail services?
- Are there ways in which we could help improve your entire journey? For example:
  - How and where you research your trip
  - The actual rail journey itself
  - Getting from your home at the start of the journey, to the point that you reach your end destination
- How could we support our net zero carbon ambitions through the delivery of services to customers? For example, through the design of stations, the trains we operate or through forms of active travel, for example cycling or walking.

3 / 20

Station experience

3. Please share your views on:

- Thinking about your experience of stations, how would you like your rail journey to link with other parts of your journey? For example, arriving or leaving the station on foot, by bike, car, or bus.
- How can station forecourts and approaches be designed to offer the most convenient access for walking, cycling and bus services?
- What sort of facilities would you like to see at stations – both those that contribute to the overall journey experience, as well as those that might serve a wider community purpose?
- Are there any particularly good examples, either in the UK or abroad, of stations with good facilities or facilities for changing between different transport modes?
- Are there specific factors that you would like us to consider that may improve safety and security at stations?
- How can stations be better designed to manage customer flows around the station environment?
- How can customers be guided through the station experience (particularly during busy periods)?
- How should we ensure inclusivity, for example in terms of accessibility and the broader station experience?

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On-train experience

4. Please share your views on:

- How can we create an engaging environment that suits the unique needs of our customers, for example, working effectively, relaxing or being entertained?
- What types of things should we put in place to create a clean, safe and secure environment for you and your belongings on your train journey?
- What facilities and services would provide the optimal train experience for customers on the EWR route?
- What types of areas/spaces would you like to see on EWR trains beyond seating and standing space?
- What on-train experience(s) might encourage customers to switch to rail from other modes of transport?
- Are there any examples, either from the UK or from abroad, of good seating layouts or on-train facilities?
- How might we consider sustainability in the on-train environment?
- How can the on-train environment support customers' wellbeing throughout their journey?

5 / 20

Interaction with colleagues

5. Please share your views on:

- What types of attitudes and behaviours would you like to see our staff displaying to make your experience with EWR a positive one? This may relate to contact you have online, over the phone, at the station or on the train.
- How and where would you like to have access to staff members on your journey and why? Again, this may relate to virtual support or face to face contact.

Customer information

6. Please share your views on:

- What sort of information do you find most critical when you are making a train journey?
- What ways of communicating travel information do you think will be most effective as you arrive at the station or on the train?
- Are there other types of travel information, not directly relating to the train journey, that you think it would be valuable for EWR to provide before or during your journey?
- How could we provide better or different customer information, to help our customers be more relaxed and feel in control throughout their journey?

Infrastructure development

Section A: Oxford to Bicester

7. What do you think is important to consider when developing our proposals for the railway in the Oxford to Bicester area?

In particular, we would like to know about:

a. Anything we should consider in relation to our proposals for Oxford station
b. Your views on our proposals for Oxford Parkway and Bicester Village stations
c. Anything we should consider about the level crossing at London Road in Bicester and the options we are considering.

7 / 20

8. Please rank your preference for the proposed concepts for the level crossing at London Road in Bicester.

Please use a scale of 1 to 6 to indicate your preferences where 1 indicates your preferred option and 6 the option you favour least.

Concepts	**Concept 1:** accessible bridge for non-motorised users	**Concept 2:** road underpass at London Road (online)	**Concept 3:** road bridge at London Road (online)	**Concept 4:** road underpass alongside London Road (offline)	**Concept 5:** road bridge alongside London Road (offline)	**Concept 6:** alternative road crossing locations
Concept preference ranking						

9. Please tell us why you have ranked the proposed concepts above and provide any other comments.

Do you have any alternative suggestions?

8 / 20

Section B: Bletchley and the Marston Vale Line

10. What do you think is important to consider when developing our proposals for the Bletchley and the Marston Vale Line area?

In particular, what do we need to take account of:

a. In relation to the existing stations on the Marston Vale Line and whether they should be kept open or consolidated through closure and relocation
b. When we provide alternatives to existing level crossings
c. In delivering the improvements to the Marston Vale Line
d. In delivering works to Bletchley station
e. In relation to the impact of reinstating a second track between Bletchley and Fenny Stratford.

11. Please rank your preference for the proposed options for the existing stations on the Marston Vale Line.

Please use a scale of 1 to 2 to indicate your preferences where 1 indicates your preferred option and 2 the option you favour least.

Options	**Option 1:** retain existing service (in a modified form) and introduce limited-stop Oxford to Cambridge services alongside it, calling at Woburn Sands and Ridgmont	**Option 2:** provide a more frequent, faster service with some new and relocated stations and improved community access
Option preference ranking		

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12. Please tell us why you have ranked the proposed options for the existing stations above as you have and provide any other comments:

a. In relation to option 1, please provide any comments on the search area for the relocation of Ridgmont station and the new passing loops
b. In relation to option 2, please provide any comments on the search areas for the relocated stations:
   i. Woburn Sands (relocated)
   ii. Ridgmont (relocated)
   iii. Lidlington (relocated)
   iv. Stewartby (relocated).

Please provide us with your view on the options for the level crossings on the Marston Vale Line:

13. **Fenny Stratford**: vehicular traffic – three options	
14. **Fenny Stratford:** pedestrians and other non-vehicular road users – three options	
15. **Bow Brickhill** (V10 Brickhill Street) – four options	
16. **Browns Wood** – three options	
17. **Pony** – three options	
18. **Woburn Sands existing crossings** – two options	
19. **Aspley Guise and Husborne Crawley level crossings** – two options	
20. **Husborne Crawley Footpath No. 10 and Station Road in Ridgmont level crossings** – three options	

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21. Lidlington level crossings – two options	
22. Millbrook (Station Lane) – three options	
23. Green Lane – two options	
24. Wootton Broadmead (Broadmead Road) – two options	
25. Wootton Village – one option	
26. Kempston Hardwick – three options	
27. Woburn Road – two options	
28. Bedford Carriage Sidings – options to be developed at the next stage	

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29. Please rank your preference for the proposed options for the Marston Vale Line upgrade.

Please use a scale of 1 to 3 to indicate your preferences where 1 indicates your preferred option and 3 the option you favour least.

Options	**Option 1:** series of short blockades	**Option 2:** a prolonged blockade	**Option 3:** a mix of short and long blockades
Option preference ranking			

30. Please tell us why you have ranked the proposed Marston Vale Line upgrade options above as you have and provide any other comments.

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31. Please rank your preference for the proposed options for the Fenny Stratford additional track.

Please use a scale of 1 to 2 to indicate your preferences where 1 indicates your preferred option and 2 the option you favour least.

Options	**Option 1:** building new bridges next to the existing bridges to carry the new track	**Option 2:** replacing the existing bridges with wider bridges that would carry both tracks
Option preference ranking		

32. Please tell us why you have ranked the proposed Fenny Stratford additional track options above as you have and provide any other comments.

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Section C: Bedford

33. What do you think is important to consider when developing our proposals for the Bedford area?

In particular, what do we need to take account of:

a. Regarding changes to Bedford St Johns station and the area around it
b. Regarding changes to Bedford station and the area around it
c. Regarding our emerging preferred option for the area to the north of Bromham Road bridge (North Bedford).

34. Please rank your preference for the proposed options for Bedford St Johns station.

Please use a scale of 1 to 2 to indicate your preferences where 1 indicates your preferred option and 2 the option you favour least.

Options	**Option 1:** relocating Bedford St Johns station to the west	**Option 2:** relocating Bedford St Johns station to the south
Option preference ranking		

35. Please tell us why you have ranked the proposed Bedford St Johns options above and provide any other comments.

36. What do you think is important to consider when developing our emerging preferred option for Bedford station?

37. What do you think is important to consider when developing our emerging preferred option for the area north of Bromham Road bridge (North Bedford)?

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Section D: Clapham Green to The Eversdens

38. Please rank your preference for the proposed Clapham Green to The Eversdens alignment options.

Please use a scale of 1 to 5 to indicate your preferences where 1 indicates your preferred option and 5 the option you favour least.

Options	**Alignment 8 – yellow:** Tempsford Option B station to Cambourne South station	**Alignment 1 – dark blue:** St Neots South Option A station and a Cambourne North station	**Alignment 2 – red:** St Neots South Option A station and a Cambourne South station	**Alignment 6 – light blue:** St Neots South Option B station and a Cambridge South station	**Alignment 9 – purple:** Tempsford Option A station to Cambourne North station
Option preference ranking					

39. Please tell us why you have ranked the proposed alignment options above and provide any other comments.

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Section E: Harlton to Hauxton

40. What do you think is important to consider when developing our proposals for the Harlton to Hauxton area?

In particular, what do we need to take account of:

a. In relation to building a new railway junction which would join our new railway to the Shepreth Branch Royston existing railway
b. In relation to our emerging preferred option to build a new junction which uses a bridge to connect the railways (a grade separated junction) and to extend the existing railway to connect to the new junction (using an offline construction).

Section F: The Shelfords to Cambridge station

41. What do you think is important to consider when developing our proposals for the The Shelfords and Cambridge area?

In particular, what do we need to take account of:

a. In relation to our options for the Hauxton Road level crossing
b. In relation to our proposed modifications to the Shepreth Junction
c. In relation to our emerging preferred option to increase the existing railway line between Shepreth Junction and Addenbrooke's bridge from two tracks to four tracks
d. In relation to our emerging preferred option to increase the existing railway line between Long Road Sixth Form College and Cambridge station from two/three tracks to four tracks
e. Anything we should consider at Cambridge station.

We will collect and process the information you provide to us in order to record and analyse any feedback or questions you raise during the Consultation. If you give us personal information about other people you must first make sure that you have obtained all necessary permission from that person for you to pass this information on to us. We may need to share personal information with third parties which could include public bodies and third parties working with us on the Project. You have the right to object to the processing of your personal data in certain circumstances and you may ask us to delete your personal information if you believe that we do not have the right to hold it. For further information in relation to how we process personal data, please see our Personal Information Charter at www.eastwestrail.co.uk/personal-information-charter

And finally, please tell us a bit about yourself

Title:	**Full name:**
Address:	
Postcode:	
Telephone:	
Email:	
Organisation (if applicable):	

Please select the option that best represents the capacity in which you are responding to this consultation. I am a:

- ○ Local resident
- ○ Commuter to the area
- ○ Visitor to the area
- ○ Local business owner
- ○ Future resident
- ○ Elected representative
- ○ Local authority
- ○ Statutory body
- ○ Directly impacted land/property owner
- ○ Other (please specify):

Age range (choose one):

- ○ 18 and under
- ○ 19-34
- ○ 35-50
- ○ 51-65
- ○ Over 65

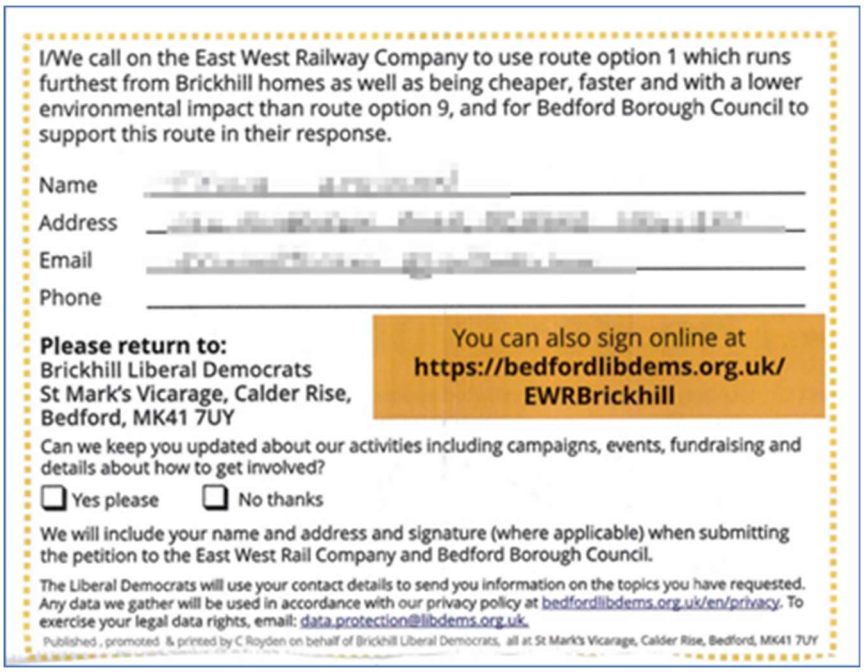
Would you like to receive further information from East West Rail as the proposals develop? By selecting 'yes' you consent to us contacting you with occasional information and updates about East West Rail.

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

Appendix B – Petition responses

Petition 1

The consultation received a petition response from Brickhill Liberal Democrats. This was sent to the consulataiton email inbox and included scans 82 scans of the petition below.



I/We call on the East West Railway Company to use route option 1 which runs furthest from Brickhill homes as well as being cheaper, faster and with a lower environmental impact than route option 9, and for Bedford Borough Council to support this route in their response.

Name

Address

Email

Phone

Please return to:
Brickhill Liberal Democrats
St Mark's Vicarage, Calder Rise,
Bedford, MK41 7UY

You can also sign online at
https://bedfordlibdems.org.uk/
EWRBrickhill

Can we keep you updated about our activities including campaigns, events, fundraising and details about how to get involved?

☐ Yes please ☐ No thanks

We will include your name and address and signature (where applicable) when submitting the petition to the East West Rail Company and Bedford Borough Council.

The Liberal Democrats will use your contact details to send you information on the topics you have requested. Any data we gather will be used in accordance with our privacy policy at bedfordlibdems.org.uk/en/privacy. To exercise your legal data rights, email: data.protection@libdems.org.uk.

Published , promoted & printed by C Royden on behalf of Brickhill Liberal Democrats, all at St Mark's Vicarage, Calder Rise, Bedford, MK41 7UY

Alongside this a file containing the names and personal details of a further 147 signatories was received.

Appendix C – List of participating organisations

Prospective Statutory Consultees

Ampthill Town Council
APTU - The Association of Public Transport Users
Aspley Guise Parish Council
Aspley Heath Parish Council
Bar Hill Parish Council
Barrington Parish Council
Barton Parish Council
Bedford & Kempston Constituency Labour Party
Bedford and Milton Keynes Waterway Trust
Bedford Borough Council
Bedford Borough Council - Clapham Ward
Bedfordshire & River Ivel IDB
Bedfordshire Local Nature Partnership
Berks, Bucks and Oxon Wildlife Trust
Bicester Town Council
Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Town Council
Borough of Bedford Local Access Forum
Bourn Parish Council
Bow Brickhill Parish Council
Brickhill Parish Council
Buckinghamshire Council
Caldecote Parish Council
Cambourne Parish Council
Cambourne Town Council
Cambridge City Council
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority
Cambridgeshire County Council
Carlton and Chellington Parish Council
Caxton Parish Council
Central Bedfordshire Council
Chartered Institute of Logistics & Transport, Rail Freight Forum
Cherwell District Council

Chiltern Railway Company Ltd
Clapham Parish Council
Colmworth Parish Council
Comberton Parish Council
Cranfield Parish Council
CrossCountry
Croxton Parish Council
DB Cargo (UK) Limited
Dry Drayton Parish Council
Elstow Parish Council
Elsworth Parish Council
Eltisley Parish Council
Environment Agency
Fen Drayton Parish Council
Forestry Commission
Foxton Parish Council Clerk
Freightliner Group Limited
Gamlingay Parish Council
GB Railfreight Limited
Girton Parish Council
Grantchester Parish Council
Great and Little Eversden Parish Council
Great Barford Parish Council
Great Gransden Parish Council
Great Shelford Parish Council
Great Western Railway
Great Western Railway
Harlton Parish Council
Harston Parish Council
Haslingfield Parish Council
Hatley Parish Council
Hauxton Parish Council
Hertfordshire County Council
Highways England
Hilton Parish Council
Historic England

Hulcote and Salford Parish Council
Huntingdonshire District Council
Inland Waterways Association-Milton Keynes Branch
JB Planning Associates on behalf of Wavendon Parish Council
Kingston Parish Council
Knapwell Parish Meeting
Landbeach Parish Council
Lidlington Parish Council
Little Shelford Parish Council
Luton Borough Council
Madingley Parish Council
Marston Moreteyne Parish Council
Marston Vale Community Rail Partnership
Meldreth, Shepreth and Foxton Community Rail Partnership
Millbrook Parish Meeting
Milton Keynes Borough Council
Natural England
Network Rail
Newton Parish Council
Norfolk County Council
Northstowe Town Council
Oakington & Westwick Parish Council
Oakley Parish Council
Oxford City Council
Oxfordshire County Council
Papworth Everard Parish Council
Parish Council of Waresley-cum-Tetworth
Pertenhall & Swineshead Parish Council
Putnoe Ward, Bedford Borough Council
Ravensden Parish Council
Renhold Parish Council
Ridgmont Parish Council
Roxton Parish Council
Sandy Town Council

Simpson & Ashland Parish Council
South Cambridgeshire District Council
St Neots Town Council
Staploe Parish Council
Steeple Morden Parish
Stevington Parish Council
Stewartby & Kempston Hardwick Parish Council
Swavesey Parish Council
Tempsford Parish Council
Teversham Parish Council
ThamesLink
The Canal and River Trust
Thurleigh Parish Council
Toft Parish Council
Toseland Parish Council
Walton Community Council
Waterbeach Parish Council
Waterways Management Company
West Suffolk Council
Whaddon Parish Council
Wilden Parish Council
Wilstead Parish Council
Winslow Town Council
Woburn Sands Town Council
Wyboston, Chawston and Colesden Parish Council
Yelling Parish Council

Other Consultees

2G3S1
All Saints Church, Little Shelford
Anglia Ruskin University
Anglian Water
Anne Archer Associates
Anthony Browne MP
AstraZeneca
Baby Sensory North Bucks
Baker Rose Consulting
Barton & District Bridleway Group
Bedford and Kempston Conservative Association
Bedford Borough Labour Councillors
Bedford Commuter's Association
Bedford Greenacre Independent School
Bedford to Bletchley Rail Users Association
Bedfordshire Climate Change Forum (BCCF)
Bedfordshire Garden Buildings
Bedfordshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
Beds & Herts Community Rail Partnership Steering Group
BFARe
Bicester Bike Users Group
Bicester Social Cycling
Billing Specialists Ltd / Geneva Technology Ltd
Birkbeck College
Bletchley Park Residents Association, representing COBRA (Consortium of Bletchley Residents Associations) on the Bletchley & Fenny Stratford Town Deal Board
Bletsoes on behalf of KB Tebbit
Bow Brickhill C of E (V.A) Primary School
Briar Security Systems Ltd
Brown & Co on behalf of F P Tinsley Estate
Brown & Co on behalf of Huntingdon Freemen's Trust
Brown & Co on behalf of property owners and DHT Limited
Busy Bees
C.H Plumbing Ltd
Caljan Ltd

Cam Academy Trust
CamBed RailRoad
Cambridge Approaches Ltd
Cambridge Assessment
Cambridge Biomedical Campus
Cambridge Consultants
Cambridge Development Forum
Cambridge Friends of the Earth
Cambridge Innovation Parks Limited,
Cambridge Local Access forum
Cambridge Nature Network
Cambridge Past, Present & Future
Cambridge Regional College
Cambridge Sport Lakes Trust
Cambridge University Hospital
Camcycle
Campaign for Family-Friendly Trains
Carbon Neutral Cambridge
Carter Jones on behalf of Axis Land Partnerships Ltd
Catesby Estates plc
Cathedral Independent
CEMEX
Chairman of Great Barford Twinning Partnership Association
Charlewood RTM Company Limited
Chiltern Line Association
Chivers Farms Ltd
Christy Plumbing & Heating Ltd
Church Commissioners for England
Clapham Park Management Committee Limited
Class Q Ltd
Clow
CODE Development Planners Ltd
Comberton Village College
Confederation of British Industry
Conservative Group at Bedford Borough Council

Consortium of Bletchley Residents Associations
Councillor Christine McHugh
Councillor David Sawyer and Cllr Henry Vann
Councillor Ian Kemp
Councillor John Baker
Councillor Nick Wright
Councillor Paul Davies,
Councillor Ricciardi Corner
Councillor RIchard West
Councillor Stephen Ferguson
Councillor Tim Caswell
Councillor Wendy Rider and Councillor Charles Royden
Councillors Hilde Hendrickx and Jake Sampson
Councillors Lucinda Wing, Dan Sames, Zoe McLernon and James Metcalf
Countryside Properties
Countryside Solutions acting for College Investments Ltd
CPRE
CPRE Oxfordshire
Cranfield University
Croxton Park Partnership
Cycling Campaign for North Bedfordshire
Cyclox
Dacorum Borough Council
Daily Grunch
David Lock Associates on behalf of O&H Strategic Land
Davison and Co (Barford) Ltd
Deloitte on behalf of Universities Superannuation Scheme Ltd
Dom Polski
Dragonmobility Ltd
Dry Drayton Estate Limited and Hallam Land Management Limited
Durham Coat Rail Users Group
E C Tutt & Sons
Eagle Analysis Limited
East Norfolk Transport Users Association

East West Rail Consortium
Endurance Estates
Environment Working Group
ERTA
ESTA
FCC Environment UK Ltd
Fen Line Users Association
Fisher German LLP
Forest of Marston Vale Trust
Fortitude Fitness Centre
Foxy Wings
Frank Locke and Sons
Freight 21
Friends of Edgewick Farm
Friends of Lidlington Station
Friends of Millbrook Station
Friends of Park Wood Nature Reserve
G Wisson & Son
Galliard Caldecotte Ltd
Gigtent
Gladman Developments
GN Hearing
Granta medical practice
Great Paxton District Councillor
Great Shelford Parochial Charities
Green Party Bedford
Groundbreaking Bletchley & Fenny
Grupo Senzala
Hare and Hounds (Harlton) Community Owned Pub Community Interest Company
Harston Lunch Club
Harvey Norman Architects
Haslingfield Endowed Primary School
Hayfield Consortium
Higgin on behalf of LandCo
Hobson's Conduct Trust

Howard Foundation Holdings Limited
Howard Pack Consulting Limited
Hub Rural Ltd
Hundred Houses Society
Huntingfield Estate Ltd
Huxley Bertram Engineering
i2i
Iain Stewart MP
Ian Critten Accountancy Ltd
Iceni Group Riding for the Disabled
Isambard Ltd
Jeff Helme Thatching Services Ltd
JLH Enterprises Ltd
Jonathan Djanogly MP
JSA Architects
JTAG Technologies
K5 Stakeholder; Sustrans Volunteer National Cycle Network Ranger;
Kilsby-Steele
Kingsbrook Liberal Democrat Bedford Borough Ward Councillors
L&Q Estates
Langford Village Community Association
Larchfield Nursery
Layla Moran MP
Lean Consulting Services
Lichfields
Lidlington Church LEP
Local cycling campaigns inc. A10 and CUK Cambridge
Longhurst Group
Love Woburn Sands Community Transport
Love's Farm Community Association
Lucy Frazer MP
LVA
M C B Settlement Trust
Mactaggart and Mickel Homes

Marcol Industrial Investments LLP and Bedfordia Developments Ltd
Mid Anglia Rail Passengers' Association
Milton Keynes Centre for Integrated Living
Milton Keynes Cycling Forum/Cycling UK
Milton Keynes Development Partnership
Milton Keynes Green Party
Milton Keynes Natural History Society
Milton Keynes: Bletchley & Fenny Stratford Town Deal Board
Mohammad Yasin MP
Morgan Pell Farms
Mulberry Homes
N&J Pearson
N.F.O
National Farmers' Union
National Trust
Natural Talents Cambridge Ltd
Neame Sutton on behalf of Bourn Quarter, Diageo Pension Trust Ltd
Newton Community Primary School
No Expressway Group Woburn Sands - now Protect Woburn Sands
NPC Eastern Region
Oakington and Westwick Transport Action Group (TAG)
Orchard Baptist Church
Organic Health
OX Garden Design
Oxford Civic Society
Oxford Green Belt Network
Oxford Health System Reform Group
Oxfordshire Cycling Network
Oxfordshire Strategic Transport Forum
Oxon and Bucks Rail Action Committee
Peterborough-Ely-Norwich Rail Users
Pightle Close Owners Association
Planning Prospects on behalf of Gladman/Fox and L&Q Estates

Plastometrex
PNPR
Portfolio NED
Prologis
Px farms ltd / dry Drayton estate ltd
Quainton Railway Society
R I Reynolds & Son
Rail Freight Group
Railfuture
Railfuture Ltd
Rapleys on behalf of Mactaggart and Mickel Homes Limited
Rapleys on behalf of Wrenbridge Land Ltd
Redrow Homes Limited
Renhold Neighbourhood Plan Working Group
Ridgmont Station Heritage Centre
Ringway Infrastructre
Roebuck Land & Planning
RSPB
S Stewart & Sons
S W Highland Ltd
Sandy Rail Users Group
Sarah Ashworth Garden Design
Sarah Bell Childminding
Scald End Farm
SG Trading
Smarter Cambridge Transport
South Sea Farm
Springhill Stables
St John's College
St Michael's Parochial Church Council
Steels Transport
Stop The Arc Group
Stop the Arc Group, Protect Woburn Sands
Strutt & Parker
Stuart Michael Associates Ltd on behalf of Arnold While Group

Sunrise Boarding Kennels
support4breastfeeding.co.uk
Sustrans
SW on behalf of Charles Wells Ltd
Swavesey & District Bridleways Association
T R Quenby Son
Talkdata Ltd
Tarmac Trading Ltd
Taylor Wimpey UK Limited
Tetworth Estate
Tetworth Farms LLP/Tetworth Hall Estate
The Bear Bedford
The British Horse Society
The Cam Academy Trust
The Cambridge Shutter Company Ltd
The Civic Society for Milton Keynes
The Greensand Trust
The Harpur Trust
The Manor Barn (wedding venue) AND Thomas Banks & Partners (farm)
The National Allotment Society
The Protect Poets Steering Group
The Roxton Village EWR Action Group
The Woburn Sands and District Allotment Society
Thriplow Farms Ltd
Townlands
Trainspotters Club
Trumpington Residents Association
University of Cambridge Estates Division
University of Oxford
Urban&Civic
Value Retail
Vectos on behalf of Redrow Homes
Victoria Prentis MP
Vistry Group

Voi Technology UK Ltd (micro mobility hire), Arc Central (independent O2C Arc strategy group)
W E Davenport & Son
Ward Howard Ltd
Wavendon Properties Limited
Whitby Wood
White & Company
Whitehouse
Wildlife Trust BCN
Wilsons of Cambridge
Wintringham Residents
Woburn Sands and District Allotment Society
Woodland Trust
Wooton Academy Trust
Worcester College
Www.thesecrettobeingslim.com


TRAVERSE