Appendix 18: Table 12.4 - Engagement since the close of the 2021 consultation – Local Representatives Groups (LRG) feedback

Matter Raised	EWR Co Response
All stations must be designed with accessibility in mind. People with disabilities must be able to access all platforms. Travel considerations must go beyond the platforms and extend to the trains which should have sufficient room for mobility scooters, wheelchairs and cycles. It was suggested that trains should have automatic ramps available to ensure step-free access. Concerns were expressed regarding access at Bedford Station and the issues people with disabilities currently face.	We're committed to delivering a railway that is inclusive, and we believe that stations must be designed to be accessible to a wide range of users, including disabled people, older people and people with children. We are carefully considering the needs of different users, including disabled people, people with visible or non-visible health conditions, pushchair users and older people, as we develop our proposals. Our dedicated Head of Inclusion ensures our inclusion strategy, 'East West Rail for All', is followed, and we set up an Accessibility Advisory Panel to find accessible solutions to our services and make inclusive decisions throughout the Project. Being able to access all areas of the station, as well as getting on and off trains easily, is paramount to all users, so all our new stations will be built to industry standards and guidance, including the Office for Rail Regulations' Accessible travel policy – Guidance for train and station operators (March 2021). Our stations will have step free access, providing ramps where required for access on and off trains, wide gates (where gatelines are installed), trained staff available for assistance and regularly maintained modern lifts. We'll provide more information on station design at the statutory consultation. The Office for Rail Regulations' Accessible travel policy – Guidance for train and station operators (March 2021) sets out how rail companies must help older and disabled customers. Currently, customers can pre-book assistance at stations ahead of their rail journey, however assistance can also be provided to people who have not booked in advance. We would have trained staff at all stations who can provide booked and unbooked assistance for customers, giving people a choice to pre-book or be spontaneous, ensuring that everyone can turn up and go. Further information about assistance booking app can be found at National Rail Enquiries - Passenger Assistance App. One of EWR Co's core priorities is to increase connectivity across the Oxford to Cambridge region, which includes consideration of local connectivity, bus services and customer experience

	while travelling to EWR stations within the station design work. Our proposals for Bedford St Johns and Bedford Midland stations will include consideration of the removal of barriers to step-free access such stairs and steps, design that is legible and considers the requirements of people with vision impairments and the provision of step-free access and lifts (including appropriate maintenance arrangements), where required and reasonably practicable. We will work with local stakeholders to develop an integrated planning approach, promoting and prioritising both active and sustainable transport modes, including the provision of secure cycle parking facilities and safe pedestrian and cycling routes. These proposals are likely to be provided in more detail in the next round of consultation.
There was some concern that closing smaller stations along the route would reduce opportunities for some residents to travel to the station on foot or by bicycle. In addition, it was felt that extended barrier downtime at level crossings and possible road closures could hinder active travel. People commented that consideration should be given to providing ample and secure bike storage on trains and at the train stations and that cycle hire facilities should be made available at stations. Current issues were reported such as poor crossing provisions from a cycle path down the northern side of the A413 to access Winslow train station. Also, concern was raised that the A428 Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet improvements scheme (National highways) may not be compliant with the cycle infrastructure design guidance - LTN 1/20. It was observed that there are few cycle routes to Bedford station and that this could be improved upon.	**Station Closures, Road Closures & Level Crossing Barriers** We consider that the best way to provide competitive journey times whilst also encouraging people to use our services without reliance on the private car is to provide a combination of centrally located stations with good access to other transport modes and connecting train services as well as implementing measures to integrate the new EWR stations into the wider local transport network, including footpaths and cycle paths. The preferred option for each station will be selected following a rigorous process using a range of assessment factors, which are outlined in Chapter 5 and Appendix C of the Non-Statutory Consultation Technical Report. This will include consideration of short distance connectivity and rail passenger connectivity as well as environmental impacts and opportunities. Further information will be presented at the statutory consultation. We have carried out further options analysis of the concepts and station proposals. Where analysis has identified further potential options including what services will be provided at which stations these are set out within the Economic and Technical Report. More information will be provided at the statutory consultation. We understand concerns around the local road network and congestion. Although highway improvements not directly related to the Project are outside of EWR's scope, we will continue to work with local highway authorities to understand any interdependencies and identify potential mitigations where required as a result of impacts caused by EWR. This includes undertaking traffic surveys and modelling of the area, where required, to support the decision making and help mitigate any impacts from the chosen option.

Concern was raised that the cycle path from Great Shelford is merely 2 metres wide and is also used by pedestrians and horse riders and that no considerations have been made regarding this. It was also felt that there is a lack of motorcycle considerations within the proposals. Further concerns were raised that no examples of active travel solutions have been shared yet within CS1.	There are several factors that influence barrier down times, including the protection and warning arrangements in place at the crossing. The configuration of the protection and warning arrangements are governed by legislation and industry standards. Each option will be subject to further design development and traffic modelling will be undertaken so that we have a clear understanding of level of use of the crossing, as well as how it affects the local road network. We will consider connectivity for all types of users, and a risk assessment of the level crossing will be prepared. The preferred option will be selected following a rigorous process using a range of assessment factors, which are outlined in Chapter 5 and Appendix C of the Non-Statutory Consultation Technical Report. We will present the preferred option at the statutory consultation. We are aware that road closures have the potential to impact traffic on the local road network. As part of the Environmental Statement that will accompany the DCO application, we will prepare a Transport Assessment to consider the impact on the strategic and local highway network, road safety and local sustainable modes of transport, including public transport. It will also set out the impact of construction on the road network, including changes to existing traffic patterns because of predicted construction traffic. This will include consideration of congestion, access (including access restrictions), parking, and any health and safety impacts. The Preliminary Environmental Information Report will include information regarding the baseline for transport, access and non-motorised users, together with a preliminary assessment of impacts and will be published at the statutory consultation. We are committed to encouraging active travel and we will focus on integrating this with existing and future regional and local plans and planning strategies. Options for active travel could include new and improved walking and cycling routes, to provide a door-to-door service between the station and a customer's origin or destination. More information will be shared at the statutory consultation. Our stations could serve as 'community travel hubs', integrating the railway with the wider transport network – including bus, taxis, walking, and cycling and emerging micro-mobility modes. We will make sure that public transport connectivity and the ability to use new and improved active travel modes as an alternative to personal vehicles are appropriately considered in the development of our station designs.

	Regarding station location, alignments serving existing town centres and railway stations generally perform better in terms of transport connectivity and mode shift than stations remote from town centres. This is because they make interchange with other transport modes (rail and non-rail) easier and mean that more existing homes and businesses are located within easy pedestrian and cycling distance. Bicycle Storage on Trains Provision for cyclists on EWR is a key consideration. We are looking at how the entire journey can be improved for all users of bikes, scooters, etc from getting to your home at the start of your journey to the point that you reach your end destination. We are also ensuring flexibility for future growth in active travel. We recognise that customer needs in relation to their luggage vary. We are therefore considering how flexibility can be embedded in design from the outset, allowing us to evolve and adapt spaces to improve how customers store their luggage, including bicycles, safely and conveniently on board the trains. We are considering the end-to-end journey including how our services can connect with other transport links. As we develop our station designs the provision of cycle facilities will be key to promote active travel to and from the station. We will look to provide CCTV at each of the new stations to provide optimum security for customer's bikes. The facilities we provide at stations will consider a range of cyclist needs and could include: • Different types of cycle racks based on suitability, accessibility, space, demand and an ease of use. • Easy to access, and use, cycle repair kits. • Secure, 'controlled access' storage shelters. • Charging points for e-bikes and other electric-powered micro-mobility modes. • Hire facilities for cycles and micro-mobility, including those that are electric powered. Further information will be presented at the statutory consultation. **Cycle paths**

	The integration of the new railway into the local transport network, including cycle paths, has formed a key consideration in the decision-making to date and Route Option E – which would directly serve existing transport hubs such as Bedford town centre and Cambourne – offers good opportunities to deliver meaningful improvements and enhancements on this front. All route options and route alignments offer opportunities in this regard, which means that it has not been a material differentiating factor between alignments. While further design work is required, we have placed a particular emphasis on how we can encourage people to access the new EWR stations by cycle. This will require further consideration to identify the correct solution for each local area which might include new bridges or underpasses so that people can cross from one side of the railway to the other, or potentially cycle paths running alongside the railway line where these would integrate into the wider area and improve connectivity. **Car Parking** Although sustainable modes will be prioritised, we recognise that access by car will still be required, so we are also considering the parking requirements and available space at each station. We will also provide EV charging facilities in our car parks. **Great Shelford Cycle path** We have considered the potential impacts on public rights of way, including the DNA path between Great Shelford and the Cambridge Biomedical campus. Ongoing design development will determine the location of the two new railway tracks, and we will present information at the statutory consultation for comment. We aim to enhance local connectivity and to encourage the use of active travel modes, including new and improved pedestrian and cycling routes, throughout the EWR corridor. We want bike and foot travel to become a realistic and attractive choice for short journeys. EWR would not be responsible for cycling routes such as the Great Shelford Cycle path but will work with local authorities to consider the needs of users including horse riders and pedestrians. **Motorcycle Considerations**

	We will consider requirements for motorcycles as part of its ongoing assessments - for example when considering parking requirements. **A428 Proposals** Although we will continue to work closely with the A428 Black Cat improvement scheme, we are not responsible for the delivery of infrastructure as part of this project. **Proposal for a cycle path down the northern side of the A413 to access Winslow train station** Whilst Buckinghamshire Council is responsible for addressing issues, such as crossing provisions that fall outside of the station (red line) boundary, we and the operator will raise such issues, propose potential solutions and provisions to address impacts through collaboration on the Station Travel Plan. **Active Travel for CS1** We have allocated space for c.60 cycles at Winslow station and have been working with Buckinghamshire Council to develop a Station Travel Plan for that station. We are working closely with the proposed station & train operator for CS1 who will be responsible for the active travel solutions.
EWR were asked to consider Network Rail's report suggesting that an alternative track configuration at Bedford station could avoid the demolition of houses in the area. Strong frustration was expressed at the delay of decisions made regarding the required number of tracks required through Bedford Station and concern was expressed that the benefits of the	The capacity of the rail infrastructure in and around Bedford is already constrained, which means demand for infrastructure capacity cannot be fully satisfied during certain periods or a period of the day. Therefore, sharing it with EWR services would be very challenging and would have significant operational risks related to the knock-on delays and disruption to EWR services from other service operators and vice versa. It would also mean EWR services would have to be timetabled between other trains at Oxford and Cambridge, which would restrict when they could arrive at Bedford.

project will not outweigh the disruption caused by constructing the route.	In developing the proposals for North Bedford, including consideration of input from Network Rail, several different track options have been explored (as detailed in 8.5.7 - 8.5.98 of the 2021 Non-Statutory Consultation Technical Report). We absolutely recognise that the emerging preferred option of six tracks has the potential to impact on communities, property and land in North Bedford. These impacts will be assessed and reported on in the Environmental Statement (ES) to be submitted alongside the DCO application. The environmental impacts will also be described in the PEIR, which will be shared at the statutory consultation. If mitigation measures are required during construction, these will be undertaken in line with the Code of Construction Practice' (CoCP), or similar. The CoCP will set out how we will monitor, control and manage potential impacts from the construction process. Compliance with the CoCP will be secured through the DCO requirements. Since the 2021 consultation, we have undertaken further timetable and performance modelling of the level of service that can be provided using the existing four-track railway north of Bedford Station. The modelling assumptions and scope were validated and agreed with various stakeholders including train operators and Network Rail. The findings indicate that even if the freight capacity growth enabled by previous investment by Network Rail on the Midland Main Line (MML) as part of the Corby enhancement scheme was curtailed, operating EWR services on the existing MML four track north of Bedford Station remains poorer in operational terms than the six-track option and would form a 'bottleneck' on the MML, constraining future growth of rail services in the area. Consequently, the six-track infrastructure option remains the emerging preferred option due to increased confidence in the integration of the EWR timetable. We will continue dialogue with key stakeholders including the local authority during the development of the options and design. Regarding the benefits of EWR, East West Rail is a once in a generation opportunity to connect communities between Oxford and Cambridge with jobs, education and opportunities. Further details are available in the Route Update Report.
It was noted that there is a lack of bus provision serving Cambridge station. Concern was also expressed how bus timetables will link into the train timetables. This was a particular issue in Oxford where most buses coming from the	One of EWR's core priorities is to increase connectivity across the Oxford to Cambridge region. This includes consideration of local connectivity, bus services and customer experience while travelling to EWR stations. We will work with key stakeholders including Oxford City Council and Greater Cambridge Partnership, to integrate the proposals with other forms of transport. Although EWR Co is not responsible for bus routes, we will work with other organisations, including bus operators, to improve facilities at EWR stations. This will include reviewing

north do not go to station or do not alight there regularly. Buses that do call at the station seem to not align well the train timetable. The lack of public transport information was also mentioned.	interfaces and interchanges with existing bus services at stations and the quality of onward travel information.
Many questions were asked about the business case including: - Clarity on what information HM Treasury needs to decide on the proposals and whether the Treasury will take into account information that is not in the BCR. - Would the business case be based on passenger travel and freight? - Would it consider developer contributions and to what extent would EWR Co consider paying back to local stakeholders and communities.	We want to provide a much-needed transport connection for communities between Oxford and Cambridge. We'll aim to deliver a safe and secure railway, which is quicker, greener, and cheaper for the taxpayer. We are developing a business case to underpin decisions about how the railway will be built and delivered. The business case will use a range of evidence to ensure that money is spent in the most effective way and delivering value for money. This will consider both passenger travel and freight. This is an iterative process and ongoing work is underway to gather more evidence, both qualitative and quantitative in nature. We'll also work with the Department for Transport to assess opportunities to simplify fares and purchase options for consumers. EWR is an investment that is complementary to other activity that the Government may undertake to grow areas around the country, enabling growth to the UK economy as a whole. While no consensus has formed about long-term rail demand in the UK, we have started testing the possible impact a long-term increase in working from home could have on the route. However, EWR is addressing a fundamental lack of east-west connectivity in the region and the benefits should not be considered based on potential short-term fluctuations in demand. It is a long-term investment that will provide sustainable economic growth, will help to attract investment and will connect communities along the route for decades to come. We will continue to monitor these figures and to factor them into our iterative business case process. **HM Treasury information** We will follow government guidance, procedure and best practice when we create our business case. This includes, but is not limited to, the HM Treasury's Green Book and the Department for Transport's Transport Analysis Guidance. Developing the business case for the project is an iterative process and we will make sure that we have a broad range of evidence to give decision

	makers a good understanding of the costs, benefits and strategic merits of the scheme. This includes social and environmental impacts. We will learn from other comparable infrastructure projects to inform our approach to delivering the railway. We'll use a range of techniques to estimate costs and monitor and manage risk. This will include risks associated with costs, for example by applying approaches such as reference class forecasting, sensitivity analysis, quantified risk analyses and optimism bias, in building the commercial case. Value engineering and innovative approaches to design, construction, and operation of the railway, will help us to monitor and manage costs to minimise the likelihood of overspend. More information on cost estimates will be presented at the statutory consultation. As we develop our proposals we will consider if means such as developer funding could support funding the scheme. As we develop our proposals we are discussing with our funders (DfT) and government how we might engage with local authorities to consider if funding could be provided for areas impacted by EWR. We are engaging with Government regarding this funding and expect further announcements on how and to whom it will be made available in due course.
Concerns were raised regarding the bridge over the railway at Long Road in Cambridgeshire, which is considered an important access route for the local community. It was felt that any disruption could affect the quality of life of the people living in this area.	We may need some bridges to be altered to accommodate the proposed upgrade from two to four tracks. Current proposals include the possible replacement of the Long Road Bridge. While works are undertaken to the bridge, we would put temporary traffic diversions in place. We will prepare a Code of Construction Practice, or similar document, which will explain the steps that will be taken to reduce or mitigate disruption to local people, communities and the environment during construction. Additionally, we will explain our approach to construction and operation of the railway and provide further details of potential effects of this during a phase of statutory consultation. We have considered both long and short-term impacts of the project through the option selection and design process. During the next phase we will also consider how to maintain access across the railway for pedestrians and cyclists during construction, including the potential for diversions, temporary structures or access via other routes.

A comment was made that enquiries about the Need to Sell Scheme should be dealt with within 48 hours. It was pointed out not just home owners but also tenants are potentially affected by EWR and that they also should be considered for compensation to cover moving costs.	For the owners of properties which will need to be acquired in part or wholly to construct the railway, full unaffected market value compensation will be provided in accordance with the Compensation Code as explained in the Guide to Compulsory Acquisition and Compensation. Where no land is taken, under Part I of the Land Compensation Act 1973 compensation may be claimed for reduction in the value of the property due to physical factors caused by the use of a new or altered railway, which is explained further in the guide on the EWR Co website: Guide to Part 1 Claims. We will look at ways to reduce the impact of the construction and operation of the railway as part of the design development process. Once a detailed design has been created, we'll discuss the potential impacts with the owners of land and property likely to be required for the scheme and seek to mitigate these. If a business is located where land or a section of land is required by the project, the landowner may require us to acquire the whole plot if the rest is deemed incapable of reasonable beneficial use. The landowner will be able to engage a surveyor to advise the owner of their options and to act on their behalf in relation to the compensation claim. The surveyor's reasonable costs will be reimbursed as explained in the Guide to Compulsory Acquisition and Compensation for which the link is as above. We consulted on a proposed Need to Sell scheme at the same time as the main non-statutory consultation and introduced the Need to Sell Property Scheme which aims to assist eligible property owners who have a compelling need to sell while the EWR Project is in development and delivery, but who have been unable to do so other than at a substantially reduced value because of the EWR Project. The Need to Sell Property Scheme is separate to the statutory blight notice process and (as the trigger for statutory blight is the submission of a DCO application) it provides early support for eligible property owners who can satisfy the criteria of the Need to Sell Property Scheme. The details for the Guide to the Need to Sell scheme are available on our website. We have launched the Need to Sell (NTS) property scheme – to support property owners who have a compelling reason to sell their property but are not able to because of the construction of EWR. This includes owners who may have to sell their property at a reduced value or, if they are unable to sell their property, would face an unreasonable burden in the next three years.

	Applicants will need to meet five criteria, which includes providing evidence that they currently have a compelling need to sell. The NTS scheme reflects non statutory consultation feedback and NTS consultation feedback, both received in 2021. More information can be found in the NTS Property Scheme Guidance and Application Form on our website.
A query was raised about the impacts of any temporary infrastructure put in place to build the railway and the cost to remove it.	We will use proven construction practices that have been carried out successfully on other projects. This will include temporary infrastructure that will be removed after construction. To set out how we will manage the construction of the East West Rail Project a Code of Construction Practice (CoCP), or similar document, will be developed. The CoCP will contain provisions aimed at reducing disruption to local communities and mitigating impacts on the wider environment (including temporary works). The costs associated with temporary construction works will be considered as part of the cost assessment factor. Our proposals will be selected following a rigorous process using a range of assessment factors, including whole life cost, which are outlined in Chapter 5 and Appendix C of the Non-Statutory Consultation Technical Report. Details of proposals will be shared at statutory consultation. We are aware that construction activities and traffic could have an impact on local residents and businesses, such as through dust or noise – and we will manage this appropriately in accordance with best practice for projects of this type. With regard to impacts to the highway network during construction, we will develop a comprehensive logistics strategy that must be adopted by all contractors and suppliers. This will enable us to plan the way in which people, materials and equipment are moved to and from the various worksites along the route of the proposed railway, working with local authorities and other developers to ensure that our use of the local highway network is managed and to ensure that construction traffic is restricted to those routes which have the capacity to safely accommodate the additional traffic. As a result, this is not a consideration that differentiates between Route Alignments. Following consultation with all the relevant highway authority or other bodies, we will prepare a Traffic Management Plan (TMP) that includes measures aimed at maintaining safety for road

	users and reducing the impacts of construction traffic.
Concern was expressed at the delay of the statutory consultation and reporting of the findings from the last consultation. A person asked at what point a SoCC will be produced and published.	We take the views of local people, communities, and their representatives seriously and we will keep listening to feedback so that we can build a railway that meets the needs of the communities we serve and for the UK as a whole. All feedback received from the non-statutory consultation has been considered and used to inform the development of the railway design. So far, we've held two phases of non-statutory public consultation – one in 2019 and a second in 2021. A Public Feedback Report was published in March 2020 that gave a summary of the 2019 consultation responses and how that feedback had been considered. A similar approach has been taken with this document for the 2021 consultation, and we expect this approach will also be taken for any future rounds of consultation. We're committed to making sure that communities have the information they need to help us make informed decisions about our proposals, with a level of detail appropriate to each stage of the Project's development. We have continued to listen to all project stakeholders, including community groups, since the end of the last public consultation in June 2021. We communicate with communities and individuals in a number of ways, including a regular email newsletter, public information events, the project website and via local media. We are also engaging directly with individual property owners/occupiers of land that may be directly affected by our proposals. We'll keep communications channels under review to make sure that it's easy for people to receive updates on our work as the project progresses. Alongside this ongoing engagement there will be more opportunities for communities and other stakeholders to comment on the proposals during the statutory consultation, which will be undertaken before the submission of the DCO application. The Planning Inspectorate will then also carry out a public examination of the application, giving further opportunity for comment. We will produce a Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC)before the statutory consultation, collaboratively engaging with Local Authorities. As a minimum we will give Local Authorities 28 days to comment on the draft SoCC.

Several people stated that they cannot support the demolition of homes in the Bedford area (including Chesterton Mews) and strongly oppose the proposal to build 6 rail tracks at Bedford station.	The capacity of the rail infrastructure in and around Bedford is constrained, due to the high volume of traffic currently passing through or terminating at Bedford station. Therefore, the addition of EWR services would be very challenging and would have significant operational risks related to potential knock-on delays and disruption to EWR services from other service operators and vice versa. It would not be possible to fit the new EWR services into the timetable on the current four-track MML. This is because the timetable is driven by constraints further afield, for example, the timing of the GTR services through central London to the south coast, and the need to 'weave' freight services through the station area on specifically timed paths because of the high occupancy of platforms by GTR services. If the lines north of Bedford are shared between EWR and non-EWR services, these constraints mean that Thameslink and freight services would likely be prioritised in times of disruption and perturbation, because of the need to reduce knock-on effects across the wider network, increasing the performance risk to EWR. The punctuality of EWR services is critical to minimising congestion and performance issues for other operators who route share in and around the Bedford area – which is already categorised as congested infrastructure due to the amount of trains that pass the area per hour. The impact of delays has the potential to affect the wider geographical railway network due to increased interactions with services on numerous corridors running out of London to destinations across England, Wales and Scotland. The risk of delays transferring from EWR to MML or vice versa is substantially decreased with additional track capacity and therefore a reduction of direct interaction with the MML. In addition, it would be less complex to develop a timetable that is flexible enough to work around the existing services on the approaches to both Oxford and Cambridge. As a result, in developing proposals for the north of Bedford, several track options have been explored (as detailed in 8.5.7 – 8.5.98 of the 2021 Non-Statutory Consultation Technical Report). The application of our assessment factors - for a description of these, see the NSC documentation, "Technical Report Appendices. C. Assessment Factors: definitions and considerations" – which include capital cost, railway operations and transport user benefit considerations, as well as environmental impacts and opportunities, has resulted in our

	emerging preference for the construction of two additional tracks to the east of the existing MML tracks. Since the 2021 consultation, we have undertaken further timetable and performance modelling of the level of service that can be provided using the existing four-track railway north of Bedford Station. The modelling assumptions and scope were validated and agreed with various stakeholders including train operators and Network Rail. The findings indicate that, even if the freight capacity growth enabled by previous investment by Network Rail on the Midland Main Line (MML) as part of the Corby enhancement scheme was curtailed, operating EWR services on the existing MML four track north of Bedford Station remains poorer in operational terms than the six-track option and would form a bottleneck on the MML, and would constrain future growth of rail services in the area. Consequently, the six-track infrastructure option remains the emerging preferred option due to increased confidence in the integration of the EWR timetable. This position is shared by Network Rail. We absolutely recognise that the emerging preferred option of six tracks has the potential for demolition of homes in North Bedford and impact on communities. We are aware that EWR may affect people's homes and businesses, particularly in the Poets area of Bedford. The environmental impacts will be described in the PEIR, which will be shared at the statutory consultation. We will look at ways to reduce the impact of the construction and operation of the railway as part of the design development process. Once a detailed design has been created, we'll discuss the potential impacts with the owners of land and property likely to be required for the scheme and seek to mitigate these.
It was mentioned that the impacts of the many developments in all areas should be considered including the 18,000 capacity stadium at Stratfield Brake (Oxford). Concerns were expressed about the impact of a new development creating 4,000 new jobs who will be using the A40/A44 junction close to Oxford Parkway Station, leading to more traffic.	We are working closely with stakeholders across the route including Oxford City & Oxford County council. Other development projects in the Oxford area (such as the proposals at Stratfield Brake) will be considered and their potential cumulative impacts and interfaces with EWR reported in the ES. The ES will be presented at DCO submittal. We recognise that increased traffic from new developments are important to consider in our proposals. The potential effects of this will be considered as we develop the designs for the project and we will continue to engage with local people and communities to understand the

	arrangements which are least disruptive to people's lives and businesses. Further information will be available within the ES, and presented at DCO application. We will work with Local Authorities to understand existing and future traffic patterns, as well as different ways for customers to access stations. We'll also undertake traffic modelling to inform our designs.
Concern was raised regarding the environmental impacts and noise of diesel trains and the time it takes for new technology to be developed and approved. Electricity or hydrogen were suggested as alternatives to diesel.	We will use existing diesel trains on CS1 stage of the railway between Oxford and Milton Keynes as this allows us to begin operations sooner than would be possible with trains powered by other means, including electrification. This is because additional infrastructure, such as overhead line equipment, is needed for electric trains to operate, and battery-powered trains are still being developed to improve their range. We have an ambition to be a net-zero carbon railway, with reduced emissions, including carbon, nitrogen oxides and particulates. We're working to meet the government's vision for the rail industry to remove all diesel-only trains from the network by 2040. We'll provide more information about this, as well as detail on the potential impacts of the railway at the statutory consultation. We are considering the most appropriate solution, including hydrogen power and full or part electrification, for the long-term train fleet and infrastructure. We will consider resilience for all weather conditions, including lightning and any potential future impacts brought about by climate change, as part of the design for any of the infrastructure and its supporting systems.
Concerned was expressed about the journey time savings methodology used by EWR Co, believing it to only consider the time spent travelling from station to station rather than door-to-door. A question was raised whether EWR Co had compared the time and cost of car and bus journeys from rural areas to Central Bedford to access an EWR service.	Door-to-door journey times are an important part of the case for East West Rail. We will be comparing door-to-door journey times (for example comparing car to EWR) as part of our design work. This will also include comparison of travel costs. We use forecast rail service levels and population and employment levels within station catchments to estimate demand for EWR services, based on detailed information on demand for existing rail services. Further information will be presented at the statutory consultation. We will work with local stakeholders to develop an integrated planning approach, promoting and prioritising both active and sustainable transport modes, including the provision of secure cycle parking facilities and safe pedestrian and cycling routes.

Concerns were raised that the First Mile Last Mile solutions seem aspirational and won't improve the situation at Bedford Station. A suggestion was made to conduct a survey about how long it takes to get to Cambridge station and whether this is quicker than travelling in a car. Some residents reported that those living in the Milton Keynes area are faced with reduced and inconsistent bus services, and increased fare costs and that this would affect EWR Co's First Mile Last Mile goals.	As part of the station design, we will consider pedestrian and cycle access in and around the station, based on user needs. This will be presented in more detail at the statutory consultation. We will also continue working with other organisations, including bus operators, to seek to improve facilities, including interfaces and interchange with bus services at stations, and the provision of onward travel information. Although we are not responsible for bus routes, we have noted requests to consider access to the station from rural areas and surrounding villages, including Clapham and Great Barford. Although sustainable modes will be prioritised, we recognise that access by car will still be required, so we will also consider the local road network around Bedford station and any potential mitigations required, as well as how much parking the new station will need. Our stations are able to integrate into the wider transport network across all modes – including bus, pedestrian and cycling. We will make sure that public transport connectivity and the ability to use new and improved active travel modes over personal vehicles are appropriately considered in the development of our station designs. While further design work is required, we have placed a particular emphasis on how we can encourage people to access the new EWR stations by cycle. This will require further consideration to identify the correct solution for each local area, which might include new bridges or underpasses so that people can cross from one side of the railway to the other, or potentially cycle paths running alongside the railway line where these would integrate into the wider area and improve connectivity. We consider that the best way to provide competitive journey times, while also encouraging people to use our services without reliance on the private car, is to use a combination of centrally located stations with good access to other transport modes and connecting train services as well as implementing measures to integrate the new EWR stations into the wider local transport network, including footpaths and cycle paths. One of the strategic objectives for EWR is to contribute to improved journey times and inter-regional passenger connectivity by connecting with north-south routes and routes beyond Oxford and Cambridge. In general terms, the Oxford to Cambridge minimum journey time by car, existing train services and coach is longer than the proposed EWR journey time. This trend is

	accentuated during peak hours when road congestion is at its highest. Consequently, it is expected that EWR will provide competitive journey times to its customers as well increased capacity to both offer a competitive mode of transport in terms of journey times and to accommodate future growth aspirations such as in the Cambridge area. There are many different factors that influence how people travel, such as reducing their carbon footprint, convenience, speed, cost, safety, and accessibility. When comparing the cost of travelling by car against that of travelling by rail, people must consider the various expenses that this brings, such as fuel costs, parking fees, road tax, motor insurance and vehicle maintenance, which can all become a significant total cost. The cost differential between travelling by car versus travelling by rail is largest when comparing the cost of solo travellers such as commuters, when it is cheaper, on average, to travel by rail. When people are travelling in groups or need to use a combination of road and rail, the differential reduces.
Disappointment was expressed that the local community, and parish and town councillors did not hear about the community drop-in events in time and the view was taken that leaflets should have been distributed and councillors updated sooner.	Engaging with local communities across the route is very important for us. This is why we decided to carry out two non-statutory consultations in 2019 and 2021 to enable local communities to share their views on our emerging proposals at an early stage in the project's development. Public engagement events have been held to inform and update residents and will continue to take place. In addition, Local Representative Groups have also been formed and take place regularly to update local groups and a Statutory Consultation will be held to present updated designs. We ran an extensive advertising and communications process to promote the 2021 consultation along the route. This included posting consultation information directly to 270,000 households, placing adverts in locations along the route, on local radio, on social media and in local print media. We also sent press releases to local media and conducted interviews with a range of outlets. Local representatives including parishes, councillors and Members of Parliament were also briefed in advance of the consultation launch so they could pass information to their constituents and communities. More than 9000 pieces of feedback were received by us raising over 190,000 matters, all of which have been considered in detail.

	The community drop-in events held in 2022 were information events, not a consultation, therefore we chose not to send a postal notification of the events to every address along the route, as we did not feel this would be an efficient use of public funds. We have a duty to spend public money sensibly, and as such opted to publicise these events as thoroughly as possible without sending postal invites to the 270,000+ addresses in the mailing zone. We instead opted to publicise these events in a range of ways: · On 10 June we sent out our community newsletter, which has 7198 recipients inviting people to drop-in and speak to the team. · An email was sent out to 670 locally elected representatives including our contacts at Parish Council's, the nominated Local Representative Group attendee, as well as local ward councillors. · We contacted 232 Community Groups and organisations across the route with details of the events. · Our emails to community groups and elected representatives also contained links to social media posts and information to advertise the events within other networks than those we can access directly. · We sent notifications to local media and worked with local journalists to promote the events. We also publicised the events in adverts online and in print. · The information was also shared in posts on our own channels including the Project Community Hub, the LinkedIn page, and the website.
Concerns were raised around the lack of electrification between Oxford and Bicester and whether the line had been designed so that it can be electrified in the future.	We are continuing to work with the Government to review long term traction options for the railway and electrification is one of the options being considered. We will need to ensure the railway aligns with relevant policy and legislation for a net zero carbon UK by 2050. We are committed to running a sustainable railway. This includes the use of greener traction power in the long term. While diesel trains are being used to enable the opening of the first part

	of the railway between Oxford and Milton Keynes, we are exploring how to introduce new and emerging technologies in the long-term train fleet and will be seeking input from bidders across the market to ensure they understand the company's environmental goals. Information about this aspect of the Project will be provided at the statutory consultation. We are considering the most appropriate solution, including hydrogen power and full or part electrification, for the long-term train fleet and infrastructure. We will consider resilience for all weather conditions, including lightning and any potential future impacts brought about by climate change, as part of the design for any of the infrastructure and its supporting systems.
Concern was raised about the height of the embankments in the Cambridge and surrounding areas, for example at Bourn and Highfield, Bourn Airfield. Concerns were also expressed with the proposals that would require a tunnel under Chapel Hill in the Harlton area.	**Cuttings and Embankments** Assessing the potential impact of EWR on the environment is a fundamental part of our design process. We will carefully consider the setting and context of landscapes and historic views, to look at how the development can be designed to blend in with the local environment. This includes thinking about where to create embankments and where viaducts are potentially required; where landscape earthworks can be used to soften the appearance of embankments and integrate them into the wider landscape context; or how the sensitive placement of appropriate planting can be used to screen views from sensitive receptors, or to soften the appearance and presence of engineering earthworks. Since consultation, we have been reviewing the design of the Section D route and looking for opportunities to reduce the height of embankments and viaducts within the design, including for areas within Cambridgeshire. Opportunities considered include taking the railway under roads in cuttings instead of building viaducts over them and making minor diversions to the railway alignment to allow the railway to be lowered. Roads would then be diverted over the railway on smaller overbridges, instead of building railway bridges/viaducts over existing highways. **Chapel Hill** The preferred southern approach to Cambridge and the preferred route alignment, which performs best against the Assessment Factors, means that EWR would pass through Chapel Hill. We are developing the design and considering options to reduce the potential impacts on Chapel Hill and are still considering whether or not this will require a tunnel. The preferred option for the infrastructure solution at Chapel Hill will be selected following a rigorous process using a range of Assessment Factors; for a description of assessment factors see the NSC

	documentation, "Technical Report Appendices. C. Assessment Factors: definitions and considerations". Further information will be presented at the statutory consultation.
Concerns were expressed about the impact on the Great Crested Newts in the area around Roxton and Tempsford. Some people expressed the view that there had been a lack of flood surveys undertaken. A question was raised whether the project factors in the impacts of tree felling along the route.	We consider the importance of environmental sustainability in the activities and the decisions made in order to ensure that the Project is designed, constructed, operated and maintained in an environmentally responsible manner that minimises negative environmental impacts as far a reasonably practicable. We are determined to be an industry leader on environmental sustainability across the whole life cycle of the Project. We aim not just to reduce impact but to realise opportunities to enhance the environment in line with the Government's 25 Year Environment Plan and our own vision for the East West Rail Project. We aim to protect and enhance the natural and historic environment; to be a net zero carbon railway; to ensure the resilience of the infrastructure; and to contribute to the wellbeing of communities and customers. The company will identify elements of the programme activities that could result in significant environmental effects, primarily by undertaking an Environmental Impact Assessment in accordance with UK legislation, which will be informed by associated environmental assessment and environmental survey activities. Great Crested Newts We are mapping where the new railway may cross and border habitats used by other important protected species, such as Great Crested Newts, so that we can consider how best to avoid impacting them altogether or to reduce impacts on them as far as reasonably practicable. We will design a programme of habitat surveys and species-specific surveys to help understand where species and habitats are in the landscape and how they use the landscape so that we can avoid, reduce, mitigate and if necessary, compensate for identified impacts throughout the design of EWR as much as is reasonably practicable. As described, we will develop a PEIR for statutory consultation and an Environmental Statement DCO submission to describe the likely environmental effects of the proposals, including those on great crested newts, and report the results of survey work. Flooding Our work is ongoing in this area, and we regularly engage with the Environment Agency, to share information, data and modelling to support this work. We aim to extend this engagement

	to include relevant LLFAs, Internal Drainage Boards and other key stakeholders. Further information on flood risk and drainage will be shared at the statutory consultation. In line with the requirements of current national planning policy, we will undertake detailed flood risk assessments to help inform the design process, especially where the route crosses major floodplains and has the potential to impact on flood risk elsewhere. These assessments will consider flood risk over the lifetime of EWR – accounting and planning for the effects of climate change – and will be informed by hydrological and hydraulic modelling where necessary. The design of EWR, in line with regulatory requirements, will ensure that the railway is resilient to flooding and that it does not increase flood risk elsewhere. We will look at ways to reduce flood risk by considering appropriate flood protection measures, including drainage design and flood compensation. Protecting local communities from flooding is one of the Project's key environmental principles. Additionally, in light of the increasing frequency and severity of extreme weather events associated with climate change, best industry practice and new standards, the condition and capacity of the railway drainage systems are also being reviewed with a view to reducing the future risk of the railway flooding. Trees The potential loss of trees was considered as part of the options developed and presented at NSC in 2021. Information on the potential loss of woodland and trees was included in Appendix E of the NSC Technical Report. We recognise the importance of biodiversity and protecting the habitats of local wildlife including priority habitats such as woodland and ancient woodland as well as parks and greenspaces. We will think carefully about protected species and their habitats when designing the railway. Further information on plans for achieving BNG will be provided during the statutory consultation. We will also undertake an assessment of the potential impacts of the Project on biodiversity. The outcomes of his will initially be published within the PEIR, published during statutory consultation, and then in the ES, submitted as part of the DCO application.

Clarification was sought about the different approaches to EIA that might be taken in future phases of the scheme – the example of the Oxford to Bicester line was given.	We will undertake an Environmental Impact Assessment and present the results of the EIA in the Environmental Statement, setting out the likely significant effects of the project on the environment, which will be submitted as one of the documents to support our DCO application. Before this however, we'll make a Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) available at the statutory consultation. This will include preliminary environmental information, from both desk-top analysis and on-the-ground surveys including baseline conditions, land use, environmental conditions, historical features, geological conditions, and information on protected species and habitats that could affect the design, construction, or operation of the railway. This document will provide an overview of the potential impacts and mitigation strategies arising from the proposals at that stage of design. Part of the EIA process includes procedures for consultation with statutory bodies and other stakeholders including the making of representations by them about the environmental effects of the development. We will engage with statutory bodies and other stakeholders to build positive relationships, promote best practice, engage on key issues to help inform the design and develop proposals for mitigation. For further information on our approach to the environment please visit: https://eastwestrail.co.uk/planning/environment-sustainability.
There was some support for freight services as it was acknowledged that this would relieve traffic pressures from HGV's utilising local traffic routes. Frustration was expressed at the lack of information on the timetable of freight services as people were concerned about the number of trains passing during the day and night. People should be made aware of the true impact of freight trains, for example, if the Marston Vale line will have a large freight element. Concern was also expressed that some people are making the assumption that freight trains will be	We will continue to consult with communities as our plans develop, including about freight and its potential impacts. EWR have also set up a number of local representatives groups (LRGs) along the route, to help facilitate discussions about localised impacts. For people that might be directly impacted by the scheme, we'll continue to work to identify and reduce any impacts that can't be avoided and work closely with people who could be affected. EWR is principally intended to be a passenger route. It is, though, being designed to maintain current capacity for freight trains on the existing railway and we are considering the potential for future growth in demand for rail freight. We don't yet know how much freight would use the railway, as this is subject to government policy and market demand – and we haven't confirmed the exact operating hours for the railway. As set out in the 2021 consultation, we currently envisage that EWR could accommodate roughly one freight train per hour in each direction, although the actual number of freight services is a matter for the wider industry and freight operators.

powered by electricity as is the plan for the passenger services. Concerns were raised about the proximity of freight trains travelling to residential areas and the impacts of noise and pollution. A question was raised as to how the proposed freight depot at Ardley may affect EWR and concerns were raised about the effect of the Luton freight terminal on EWR.	In 2018, the Government challenged the rail industry to remove all diesel only trains from the network by 2040, and we are committed to running a sustainable railway. We are currently looking at how we can use new and emerging technologies within our long-term train fleet. Further details will be published at the statutory consultation. We will seek to reduce any negative effects the new railway, including passenger and freight operations, could have on air quality, as well as any noise and vibration that could be generated by trains, wherever reasonably practicable. We will assess changes in pollutants as the scheme develops, including nitrogen oxides and fine particulates, and the potential effects of noise and vibration as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process. We will present emerging findings in the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR), which will be available during the statutory consultation. The final results of our assessments will be set out in an Environmental Statement that's submitted alongside the DCO. We will consider specific measures to reduce the impact of the Project in the design of the works. This includes the impacts associated with potential future freight operations on homes, people's well-being, and the surrounding environment during operation. For example, the use of landscaping and screening could reduce visual intrusion, and noise barriers could be used to reduce noise impacts. We are working closely with wider industry stakeholders and aware of proposals such as the new freight yard at Ardley. The impact of wider train operations (including freight) will be considered as part of the development of our plans. Integration with the national network is one of the most significant and complex challenges for EWR Co. In collaboration with Network Rail and the operators, we must consult on, develop, and integrate service levels and existing/ proposed timetables. As well as EWR infrastructure being a solution, rather than an exacerbating factor, to any current constraints on capacity, there are also options to look at harmonising and optimising existing trains to provide the best overall service and timetable including the needs of Freight. More generally, we recognise our responsibility to avoid disruption to existing services, both in terms of operational impacts, and any disruption to other railway users and existing services during construction works. A primary objective in how we deliver the Project, is to manage

	disruption with due care and consideration, and to work in partnership with all others involved in the delivery of the train service.
A question was asked to what extent EWR Co will be financially supporting or funding local authorities, for example to regenerate villages that are impacted by EWR, and when such benefits would be realised.	As we develop our proposals we are discussing with our funders (DfT) and Government how we might engage with local authorities to consider if funding could be provided for areas impacted by EWR. We are engaging with Government regarding this funding, and expect further announcements on how and to whom it would be made available in due course.
A question was raised whether a separate Health Impact Assessment will be undertaken.	We are considering potential impacts on the community and how to reduce or mitigate disruption to local people, communities and the environment and how to avoid significant adverse impacts on health and quality of life. Further information on potential impacts to human health, alongside an assessment of the likely effects and measures to avoid or minimise these will initially be reported within the PEIR, published during statutory consultation, and then within the ES, submitted alongside the DCO application.
Comments were received that the potential demolitions and delay on project timescale were impacting the sale of their homes. People have reported that obtaining mortgages is difficult for properties along the EWR route.	Following a study by the National Infrastructure Commission, the Department for Transport established strategic objectives applying both to elements of EWR between Oxford and Bedford and from Bedford to Cambridge. One of these objectives was to stimulate economic growth, housing and employment through the provision of new, reliable and attractive inter-urban passenger train services in the Oxford to Cambridge area. However, this is only one of seven strategic objectives for the scheme and the project does not cater specifically to housing. The objective to provide a sustainable and value for money transport solution to support economic growth in the area will also help to address concerns that access to the cheaper transport presents challenges to attracting and retaining talent. Further information about the project objectives is available in the 2021 Non-Statutory Consultation Document. New Housing In designing route options for the railway to date, we have stayed informed about proposals for new housing across the route, including in these locations. In selecting the preferred route alignment following the 2019 consultation, we took account of how the new railway could serve developments in the Bedford and St Neots areas. We considered the potential impact of the scheme on existing housing – including housing that has been granted planning permission and is in the course of being built – when we looked at detailed potential route alignments.

	We have also thought about how the railway might best support future housing development by providing cost-effective, sustainable and accessible public transport alternatives for new residents and settlements. This built on the preference for Route Option E and has formed a key part of the approach to selecting a preferred route alignment. Property For the owners of properties which will need to be acquired in part or wholly to construct the railway, full unaffected market value compensation will be provided in accordance with the Compensation Code as explained in the Guide to Compulsory Acquisition and Compensation. Owners of properties in the vicinity of the railway, where no land is taken as part of the scheme, may be entitled to compensation when the railway is in operation under Part 1 of the Land Compensation Act 1973. This factors in the devaluation of property due to effects such as noise. We will look at ways to reduce the impact of the construction and operation of the railway as part of the design development process. Once a detailed design has been created, we'll discuss the potential impacts with the owners of land and property likely to be required for the scheme and seek to mitigate these. We consulted on a proposed Need to Sell scheme at the same time as the main Non-Statutory Consultation and introduced the Need to Sell Property Scheme which aims to assist eligible property owners who have a compelling need to sell while the EWR Project is in development and delivery, but who have been unable to do so other than at a substantially reduced value because of the EWR Project. The Need to Sell Property Scheme is separate to the statutory blight notice process and (as the trigger for statutory blight is the submission of a DCO application) it provides early support for eligible property owners who can satisfy the criteria of the Need to Sell Property Scheme. The details for the Guide to the Need to Sell scheme are available on our website. We have launched the Need to Sell (NTS) property scheme – to support property owners who have a compelling reason to sell their property but are not able to because of the construction of EWR. This includes owners who may have to sell their property at a reduced value or, if they are unable to sell their property, would face an unreasonable burden in the next three years.

	Applicants will need to meet five criteria, which includes providing evidence that they currently have a compelling need to sell. The NTS scheme reflects non statutory consultation feedback and NTS consultation feedback, both received in 2021. More information can be found in the NTS Property Scheme Guidance and Application Form on our website.
The view was expressed that a joined-up approach between the local developers and EWR is important e.g. developments in Lidlington and Woburn. Research by the Transport for New Homes on housing developments highlight that they are often dominated by cars. People suggested the Project team should look at this research and consider the impact.	Developers: Where there are already proposals (such as housing development proposals at Lidlington and Woburn Sands) in place, we are working with local planning authorities, developers and other stakeholders to align and coordinate our proposals as much as possible, while recognising that each project has its own timescales and constraints. Similarly, although highway improvements that are not directly related to the Project are outside of our scope, we will continue to work with local highway authorities to understand any interdependencies and identify potential mitigations where required as a result of the Project. Transport: We recognise that new developments will have an effect on our proposals and the local road network such as at Lidlington and Milbrook. As part of the Environmental Statement that will be part of the DCO application, we will prepare a Transport Assessment to consider the potential impact on the strategic and local highway network, road safety and local sustainable modes of transport, including public transport. It will also set out the potential impact of construction on the road network. Consideration will include congestion, access (including access restrictions), parking, and any health and safety impacts. The Preliminary Environmental Information Report will include information regarding the baseline for transport, access and non-motorised users, together with a preliminary assessment of impacts and will be published at the statutory consultation. New Housing: In designing route options for the railway to date, we have stayed informed about proposals for new housing across the route, including in these locations. In selecting the preferred route alignment following the 2019 consultation, EWR Co took account of how the new railway could serve developments in the Bedford and St Neots areas. We have considered the potential impact of the scheme on existing housing – including housing that has been granted planning

	permission and is in the course of being built – when EWR Co looked at detailed potential route alignments. We have also thought about how the railway might best support future housing development by providing cost-effective, sustainable and accessible public transport alternatives for new residents and settlements. This built on the preference for Route Option E and has formed a key part of the approach to selecting a preferred route alignment. We note the research by Transport for New Homes on housing developments. Providing transport links and linking in with wider developments is key to EWR plans.
A question was raised whether the project factors in the impacts of archaeological sites along the route.	We understand concerns around the potential impact of the proposals on heritage and historic buildings. We have sought to avoid or reduce direct impacts on the most sensitive nationally and internationally designated heritage assets. We considered the potential for impacts to archaeological sites in developing the options presented at NSC in 2021. The outcome of this was set out under Assessment Factor 14 (environmental impacts and opportunities) which is one of 15 factors used by us to support decision making. Going forward, we will consider the setting and context of historic and cultural assets including conservation areas, archaeology, listed buildings and structures, historic views, and landscapes. As far as is reasonably practicable, we will aim to avoid harm to the setting of designated heritage assets, prioritising those of the highest sensitivity such as Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Grade I and Grade II listed buildings and parks and gardens. We'll carry out early identification and surveys of those assets most likely to be affected so that EWR can be designed to avoid these or, where this is not possible, to incorporate appropriate mitigation measures into the design and construction of the Project.
Extended barrier downtime at level crossings and possible road closures could cut off local communities. Concerns were raised about the disruption to the connectivity between villages due to the project.	We appreciate that level crossings play an important role in local connectivity and allowing people to move around their communities, so we recognise local people's concerns about EWR Co's proposals for level crossings. We will complete further work to assess the impact of barrier down-times and associated impacts on traffic and use this to inform the option selection and proposals at each level crossing.

Concerns were expressed about the measures used by the project to assess community severance.	As far as practicable, we will aim to minimise the impact to communities from any crossing closures by providing reasonable alternatives where possible. During construction, provision will be made to maintain connections that are intended to be retained after the Project is completed, even if they have to be temporarily diverted, including to key community facilities. Further information will be presented at statutory consultation. We will prepare a Code of Construction Practice for the Project, or equivalent document, which will explain the steps we will take to reduce or mitigate disruption to local people, communities and the environment during construction. Additionally, we will explain its approach to construction and operation of the railway and provide further details of potential effects of this during a phase of statutory consultation.
Concerns were expressed that the Project will impact individuals, families and livelihoods and that villages will lose their identity.	Supporting local communities The introduction of EWR will lead to many benefits for local communities. It will bring more jobs within reach of local people and it will open up new areas for businesses to grow. Affordable, reliable and faster public transport will mean less time spent in traffic and less carbon emitted from congestion, improving the quality of life for local people. It will also mean people can choose to live more affordably and have more space within an easy commute, rather than paying premium house prices to live close to work as many do today. More information about how EWR will support local communities is available on our website. We appreciate the concerns around the impacts on the countryside and access to green spaces, and we will work to identify and reduce impacts and protect the countryside wherever reasonably practicable. To help reduce impacts, we are following the environmental mitigation hierarchy which firstly seeks to avoid significant adverse effects on the countryside and, where this isn't possible, then seeks to reduce impacts. If this isn't possible, if necessary we would seek to provide compensation for any impacts, where feasible. At this stage we will primarily focus on seeking to avoid and reduce impacts, by making decisions that help us to 'design out' potential adverse environmental impacts. As mentioned, we have committed to delivering BNG, supporting the UK Government's 25-year Environment Plan. Impact on local communities

	We understand that severance is a significant concern to people living in homes and villages in the vicinity of the railway. We are committed to ensuring so far as reasonably practicable that the project is able to mitigate disruption during the planning, construction and operation of the Project. Further information on this, alongside an assessment of the likely environmental effects, including those relating to noise, air quality and landscape, as well as the measures to avoid or minimise these will initially be reported within the PEIR, published during statutory consultation, and then within the ES, submitted alongside the DCO application. With regards to personal safety and security, all options considered for EWR are subject to a rigorous process using a range of assessment factors. These factors are outlined in Chapter 5 and Appendix C of the Non-Statutory Consultation Technical Report. This will include an assessment of safety and security of the proposals and the mitigation requirements, such as additional lighting, to address issues such as personal safety, anti-social behaviour and vandalism (under the Safety Risk assessment factor). Further details will be presented at the statutory consultation.
Concern was raised that the countryside needs to be preserved. A question was asked whether the cost of the impact on the landscape will be considered and how they are quantified and would these not outweigh the benefits of EWR.	We recognise the importance of biodiversity and protecting the habitats of local wildlife including priority habitats such as woodland and ancient woodland as well as parks and greenspaces. It is our intention to build on the commitment of 10% Biodiversity Net Gain made in relation to the part of EWR between Bicester to Bletchley and will work with the stakeholders to do this. We will prioritise avoiding high value and priority habitats and where necessary enhance existing and create new habitats. To date, we have considered the potential for impacts on the countryside and biodiversity in developing options set out in our NSC. Going forward, we will think carefully about protected species and their habitats when designing the railway. As mentioned, we intend to build on the commitment of 10% Biodiversity Net Gain made in relation to the part of the route already built between Bicester to Bletchley. We will consider enhancing some existing habitats and look at opportunities to create new habitats. Further information on plans for achieving 10% BNG will be provided during the statutory consultation.

A concern was raised about how the railway would interact with other transport systems to provide for the needs of local users. Concern was expressed about the number of transport infrastructure projects applying to pass through the Great Shelford village (EWR, CSET, Sawston Greenway, Cambridge South Station, works at Shephreth branch junction, the Haverhill railway line and Cambridge Connect light rail line). It was said that people travelling from Great Shelford already have two railway lines to transport them into Cambridge and that EWR should consider joining existing lines rather than build a new railway line. Queries were received about the red rating of the project in the Infrastructure and Projects Authority (IPA) Report 2022 and how EWR's have responded.	Whilst EWR will contribute to an integrated transport network across the region, through alignment other transport projects, it is noted that CSET, Sawston Greenway, Cambridge South Station, the Haverhill railway line and Cambridge Connect light rail line are not part of the scope of EWR. It is also noted that our proposals include for additional trains on the Royston Branch Line but no new tracks. It is noted that the additional tracks proposed on the West Anglian Mainline to the north of Great Shelford village are a key part of us achieving the additional capacity to meet the forecast demand. On the IPA's 2022 report, developing a project like East-West Rail is an iterative process and we will continue to keep the business case and delivery programme under review. We have already been refreshing the business case and testing the options for the future development of the scheme. We anticipate once that work is complete, we will update our programme and improve on this rating.
Some people who live in the Harston Village have commented that they see no benefits from the scheme for their village.	EWR is addressing a fundamental lack of connectivity in the region. We are aware people want to understand the specific benefits EWR will provide their local communities and businesses. As the design develops, we will be able to provide more detail on what these benefits will look like for specific locations such as Harston Village, and work with local authorities and communities to refine and shape these plans in line with Local Plans and wider development. More broadly, EWR will offer new, reliable, sustainable transport for people and businesses across the entire area and improve connectivity between key towns and cities including Oxford, Milton Keynes, Cambridge and beyond. It will significantly reduce journey times and provide

	safer, cheaper transport that's better for the customer, greener for the environment and will provide value for the taxpayer. Oxford and Cambridge are home to leading universities, life sciences companies and a manufacturing cluster known for high-performance technology and motorsport engineering, but people and businesses in between these two cities are being let down by a lack of transport solutions. EWR will bring this vibrant mix of communities an affordable and sustainable public transport alternative, linking people with jobs and access to new homes across the region. The National Infrastructure Commission estimated that creating these transport links and supporting the entire area will be worth nearly £80bn extra a year to the UK economy. As stated, EWR will provide increased connectivity to households and businesses across the route. Businesses will be able to attract an increased pool of labour due to the reduction in journey time from areas along the EWR route. For households, residents will benefit from decreased journey times to areas along EWR and workers will be better connected to additional job opportunities along the route. We are updating the business case for EWR as the project develops, which demonstrates the project benefits. Further details will be shared at the statutory consultation.
It was suggested that where a bridge is to replace an existing level crossing, the land required might be reduced if the speed of traffic is considered.	Traffic speed and land take will be considered as part of the option selection and design process and further detail on level crossing proposals including bridges will be presented at statutory consultation.
Queries were received whether the bridge over the Charlbury Lane Level crossing was designed for a dual carriage way.	We are not aware of a level crossing at Charlbury Lane. If this is in relation to Charlbury Village the closest railway lines are from Oxford to Evesham / Worcester which is not part of EWR proposals.
Some views were received that the London Road level crossing must close and that an engineering solution in this area must be found. A request was also received for EWR Co to identify how much of the traffic on London Road is above 7 ½ tonnes and a suggestion was made for London Road to impose a weight limit.	We are committed to providing a safe means to cross the railway and, where closure of crossings is essential, minimising the impact on local communities as far as is practicable. As detailed in the non-statutory consultation documentation we explored six concepts for the London Road level crossing. During subsequent design work this has been expanded to include options which result in retention of the existing facility. In parallel to considering whether to retain the existing crossing to traffic, the options being considered include an accessible pedestrian overbridge or underpass either at or near the existing London Road level crossing. For vehicles we are working to identify the most suitable location for an alternative road bridge.

Other raised concerns that EWR Co must find an option that keeps the London Road vehicular crossing open especially considering the planned housing developments in that area.	Before preferred options can be confirmed, safety, risk and traffic assessments need to be completed. This will include consideration to the types of vehicle (such as heavy goods vehicles) using the crossing. Weight limits will be considered as part of the option selection and design process. During the optioneering phase, following the completion of the second non-statutory consultation, Assessment Factors will be applied to take account of the potential for each option to cause disruption for local communities. The relevant Assessment Factors are included in Appendix C of the Consultation Technical Report. This work will be carried out at the next stage and presented at the statutory consultation.
Concerns were expressed that proposals will sever the villages of Harlton to Hauxton and people asked how EWR will prevent this from happening.	We haven't made a final decision about whether the Hauxton Road level crossing will be closed, but to inform this decision, EWR will do an updated risk assessment. This will determine whether the crossing would continue to comply with rail industry safety standards, as the number of trains in each direction are set to increase. If a decision is made to close the crossing, we will consider how the connection could be maintained for general traffic use or use by sustainable transport users, such as pedestrians and cyclists. This could include creating a diversion, or a grade separated crossing, such as a bridge. We will consider how the Hauxton Road level crossing is currently used, and how its closure might impact local communities. We will manage construction-related impacts on the environment, as far as reasonably practicable, through a Code of Construction Practice submitted alongside a Development Consent Order (DCO) application. This will include measures to control impacts related to construction noise and vibration, air quality, contaminated land, ecology, historic environment, construction traffic, tree protection, surface and groundwater management, waste management and general site operations. We are continuing to develop designs, which includes taking account of and managing effects on properties, including residences. As part of the statutory consultation process, we are required to state exactly which homes (as well as all other types of property), if any, will be required for the scheme, and to engage with their owners.
The general observation was made by several stakeholders that a joined-up approach should be	**Consideration of future housing development:**

sought between EWR Co, the local planning authorities and developers when considering future housing and the railway. As such, a request was made for EWR Co to ensure they input in Oxfordshire County Council's Local Transport and Connectivity Plan, the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and the Oxford Infrastructure Strategy. Concerns were raised as to how the Greater Cambridge Local Plan process is being tied into EWR Co's work. In particular, housing allocations in Cambourne being considered alongside potential new station.	In designing route options for the railway to date, we have stayed informed about proposals for new housing across the route, including in these locations. In selecting the preferred route alignment following the 2019 consultation, EWR Co took account of how the new railway could serve developments in the Oxford – Cambridgeshire area. We have considered the potential impact of the Project on existing housing – including housing that has been granted planning permission and is in the course of being built – when we looked at detailed potential route alignments. We have also thought about how the railway might best support future housing development by providing cost-effective, sustainable and accessible public transport alternatives for new residents and settlements. This built on the preference for Route Option E and has formed a key part of the approach to selecting a preferred route alignment. **Input into local plans:** We have been monitoring the progress of new and emerging development plans across the area, including in Bedford Borough, Central Bedfordshire and the proposed Greater Cambridge Local Plan. Existing or proposed projects will continue to be considered as part of the EWR assessments. In addition to considering how EWR might best support future housing development by providing cost-effective, sustainable and accessible public transport options for new residents and settlements, we also considered how the railway might interact with existing housing and current projects. The proposed new EWR station at Cambourne will support the delivery of the new housing development allocated to the west of Cambourne and to the east at Bourn Airfield in the adopted South Cambridge Local Plan and the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan. People want to understand the specific benefits EWR will provide their local communities and businesses. As the design develops, we will be able to provide more detail on what these benefits will look like, and EWR Co will work with local authorities and communities to refine and shape these plans in line with Local Plans and wider development. Cambourne is identified in the Greater Cambridge Local Plan (GCLP) as a broad location for future growth, demonstrating an early commitment from the Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP) to capitalise on the opportunity presented by EWR and indicating general support for aligning new development with EWR proposals (although a specific development area and the

	amount of development at Cambourne to meet future requirements has yet to be identified). There also remains a commitment from the GCP to deliver the two major existing allocations in Cambourne at Cambourne West (including a further extension) and at Bourn Airfield to which regard has been had in in considering and assessing EWR stations options at Cambourne. **Oxford:** We are working closely with Oxford County Council as we develop our plans. This will include consideration of housing developments and on items such as Oxfordshire County Council's Local Transport and Connectivity Plan, the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and the Oxford Infrastructure Strategy. As part of the Oxford Projects Development and Delivery Group, we are working closely with Network Rail, Oxford City Council, Train Operating Companies and other key stakeholders to conduct a review of the major planned schemes including Oxford Corridor Phase 2, Oxford Station Masterplan and Oxfordshire Connect. Our aim is to develop a plan for capacity enhancements at Oxford which meets the needs of EWR whilst seeking to integrate with other schemes to help contribute to wider growth at Oxford. At Oxford Station, Network Rail and Oxford City Council are currently leading and co-ordinating on schemes to overhaul the station and surrounding area. EWR Co will ensure any proposals it makes in relation to Oxford station integrate with other schemes. There are several established industry and local authority-led schemes in the Oxford area. The Oxfordshire Rail Corridor Study (ORCS) looks in detail at the county's predicted growth in jobs and housing to present an industry vision for how the rail network can best support it. As part of this, Network Rail are delivering the Oxford Corridor Phase 2 scheme which is delivering a new western entrance and platform for Oxford Station. We are working closely with Network Rail to ensure the proposals meet EWR requirements.
People asked for more and clearer information about the Marston Vale Line. One of the queries was	During the consultation, the plans we shared indicated options that could be developed further, and we are utilising the feedback received, as well as the Assessment Factors set out in

about the reduction in the number of stations on this line. Further information was also requested about the transport modes envisaged to the new station at Husborne Crawley and station access points.	consultation material to choose which options to progress. This includes consideration of infrastructure, construction activity and the service provided during and after construction. At the statutory consultation, the public will have the opportunity to comment and provide feedback on more detailed plans. Concept 2 for the MVL, as shown at the 2021 consultation, set out a proposal which rationalises the number of stations along the route. As our proposals continue to develop, we will consider the cost effectiveness of both Concepts 1 and 2. If Concept 2 were to be delivered, some residents would need to travel a little further to their nearest station compared to Concept 1, and part of the development of this proposal would be developing plans for improved pedestrian and cycle routes, as well as working with local stakeholders on better public transport connection. We are developing the Business Case in line with Government guidance and this will present the evidence that has shaped the Strategic Case for the railway. While the Business Case is still in development and will not be completed until we've obtained the required consent for the Project, our work to date has confirmed how the case for EWR is not focused solely on Oxford and Cambridge, but that the areas in between are key to deliver the Government's aspirations for economic growth too. Proposed options will be developed to consider the access to a relocated Ridgmont Station (in the Husborne Crawley area) the potential relocation of the station or the potential for the station to remain in its current location is being reviewed, including for pedestrians and cyclists, and businesses in close proximity will be considered. This will include consideration of local connectivity, bus services and customer experience while travelling to EWR stations within the station design work. Information will be presented at the statutory consultation.
Questions were asked about the relationship and responsibilities between EWR Co and Network Rail regarding the Project and whether the DCO will impact on Network Rail. There was uncertainty also about how EWR interacts with the different railway companies, for example Network Rail advocating for platform 5 at Oxford Station on behalf of EWR Co.	We are working closely with Network Rail and wider industry stakeholders as we plan and develop our proposals. For example at Oxford as part of the Oxford Projects Development and Delivery Group, we are working closely with Network Rail, Oxford City Council, Train Operating Companies and other key stakeholders to conduct a review of the major planned schemes including Oxford Corridor Phase 2 (including platform 5), Oxford Station Masterplan and Oxfordshire Connect. Our aim is

	to develop a plan for capacity enhancements at Oxford which meets the needs of EWR whilst seeking to integrate with other schemes to help contribute to wider growth at Oxford.
Concern was expressed about the increase of trains between Parkway and Oxford city. It was suggested to use acoustic barriers and planting to mitigate the impact of noise.	We recognise that noise from both the construction and operation of a railway is an important issue for local communities. We will develop a noise policy, which will set out a plan designed to establish and mitigate noise and vibration to seek to avoid any significant adverse impacts on health and quality of life. We are committed to developing proposals for measures that will seek to reduce noise and vibration as far as reasonably practicable. This includes: -Choice of trains. -Track technology. -Noise barriers – which form one of a number of mitigations that may be appropriate where tracks may create noise and vibration. We will carry out comprehensive assessments and we'll use industry-leading computer modelling, which can incorporate information on local geology to simulate potential noise and vibration impacts along the whole route, as part of the assessments on any mitigations required. As stated, the PEIR will describe the likely environmental effects of the proposals. This process involves identifying potentially significant adverse impacts resulting from the proposals, allowing them to be avoided or reduced where possible, as well as identifying any potential beneficial environmental impacts. The PEIR will include information regarding the existing baseline noise environment, together with construction and operational noise limits having had regard to the appropriate guidance and legislation. Construction and operational noise levels generated from the proposed works will also be presented as part of the PEIR at the statutory consultation. A full Environmental Statement will then be submitted as part of the Development Consent Order application. Additionally, further detail will be provided on the freight strategy, and the approach to avoiding or reducing potential noise and vibration impacts from freight trains which may run on EWR, during the statutory consultation.
A point was made that residents living south of Bromham Road are largely tenants. There was a	We are aware that EWR may affect people's homes and businesses, particularly in the Poets area of Bedford, and we will aim to reduce and mitigate negative impacts such as those raised in

view that more could be done to enable them to engage with the Project.	the consultation feedback as far as reasonably practicable. We are still in the early stages of developing designs for EWR and we have further design and approval stages to move through before the plans are finalised and we can confirm the need to acquire any land. Nonetheless, at every stage of the project EWR Co are committed to talking to all those who could potentially be directly affected by the railway. During the consultation, we contacted all potentially affected landowners, and we also ran a separate consultation, which included specific consultation questions around land, including the Need to Sell Scheme.
A query was received whether EWR Co is looking at necessary work to all roads in their costings, or just 'A' roads that are maintained by Local Authorities.	We are considering overall transport connectivity in its proposals (including costings) which is not limited to just 'A' roads.
A comment was made that the route should be selected based on the smallest amount of carbon possible.	Environmental impacts and opportunities were assessed and formed a key factor which we took into account when selecting the preferred route option in 2020. The feedback to our 2019 non-statutory consultation also ranked Route Option E as the best performing on this assessment factor. When considering carbon impact specifically, whilst potential emissions arising from the operation of trains are important, it is also necessary to consider potential emissions that arise when constructing the scheme as well. The Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions associated with the creation, maintenance, refurbishment and decommissioning of the railway are referred to as capital carbon. This includes GHG emissions from the use of materials, such as concrete and steel; the use of construction plant, such as excavators; and the transport of materials and plant to construction sites. For the purposes of route option appraisal, only the creation of assets is considered. To help inform the options shared in the 2019 consultation and the preferred route option decision published in 2020, EWR Co carried out various types of analysis. This included a high-level appraisal of transport user-related carbon emissions, in line with the requirements of the Department for Transport's (DfT's) Transport Appraisal Guidance (TAG) Unit A3. At that time, it was not a requirement to carry out capital carbon assessments as part of that process.

	Since the non-statutory consultation, we have carried out a qualitative appraisal of the embodied carbon for the route options we consulted on in 2019 and presented in 2020. In summary, this demonstrated that: Route options with longer lengths of viaducts (such as those which cross longer lengths of flood plains) are likely to have higher embodied carbon. Route options with a better cut-fill balance of material (where excavated material is re-used to build embankments and other structures) are likely to have lower embodied carbon. This is because there is less need to export surplus material for disposal elsewhere, or to import extra material during construction. In this regard, Route Option E performed well compared to other route options, including Route Option B passing to the south of Bedford and serving Cambourne. Minor differences in capital carbon emissions between route options do not have a major impact on EWR's Net Zero Carbon Railway ambition, and would thus not be considered a significant differentiator. Regarding the operational efficiency of the line, both Route Options B and E result in similar gradient and radius in the route and, accordingly, operational carbon emissions are also unlikely to be a material differentiating factor.
A suggestion was made to provide a car club at Bedford station to enable onward travel and provide easier access to villages in the area. Concern was expressed about what would happen to the station itself.	The suitability of all existing station facilities at Bedford station will be considered during the development of the design. Any proposed station facilities will be designed to improve the customer experience by focussing on the areas that people have told us matter the most to them. This may include waiting areas, retail facilities, cycling facilities, car parking, provision of a car club, onward travel as well as considering how passengers change platforms, are provided with information, move around the station, connectivity beyond the station. The non-statutory consultation was undertaken at an early stage of design, with various proposals presented at a high level. As we develop designs to a greater level of detail, we will engage with stakeholders to align the designs with wider regeneration and development proposals for the area, ensuring that accessibility and sustainability are key design considerations as we develop the design principles.

	At the non-statutory consultation we proposed that at Bedford station, new platforms and a new station building would be required to service both existing services and EWR services. Further information about the station design will be presented during the statutory consultation stage.
There was interest to learn more about plans for an eastern entrance at Bletchley station.	Whilst providing an eastern entrance to Bletchley station does not currently form part of our scope, we continue to consider if there are opportunities to take such an option forward in future. Further information and proposals for station facilities at Bletchley Station will be presented at the statutory consultation.
The view was expressed that Oxford Station will need improvements to increase the customer experience and to provide additional parking.	Network Rail and Oxford City Council are currently collaborating on schemes to overhaul the station and surrounding area, and we will seek to integrate any proposals we have at Oxford station with these as far as reasonably practicable. We will look at the suitability of all existing station facilities as we carry out further design work - information on this will be shared at statutory consultation. Any new or improved facilities that we propose would be designed to improve the customer experience, taking account of the areas that people have told us matter to them the most. We have considered these responses carefully and will continue to consider how parking can be optimised at the station. For example, as we develop our proposals, we will be undertaking traffic surveys and modelling work to understand future capacity requirements. We will also consider how to provide suitable parking facilities for motorcycles and charge points for electric vehicles, as well as disabled persons parking bays. We continue to work with other organisations, such as bus operators, to seek to understand how we can interface with other public transport and provide consistent onward travel information. Further information will be made available at the statutory consultation.
A concern was raised that some stations do not have adequate car parking, which makes it difficult for residents with mobility issues or those living in rural areas to reach stations. This should be borne in mind when designing transport solutions for the community.	We have considered these responses carefully and will continue to consider how parking can be optimised at the station. For example, as we develop proposals we will be undertaking traffic surveys and modelling work to understand future capacity requirements. We will also consider how to provide suitable parking facilities for motorcycles (including security considerations) and charge points for electric vehicles, as well as disabled persons parking bays. We will continue to work with other organisations, such as bus operators, to seek to understand how we can interface with other public transport and provide consistent onward travel information. Further information will be made available at the statutory consultation.

A comment was made that the motorcycle parking at Bicester Village Station is located at the back of the car park which increases the risk of thefts.	
Concerns were expressed that the development of Wixams Station being subject to consultation will cause delays to the EWR Co Project.	The development and consultation on Wixams Station as promoted by Bedford Borough Council is not expected to cause delays to EWR.
A request was made to provide an eastern entrance at Cambridge South station. Concern was expressed about rural areas accessing Cambridge South station and the impact of increased traffic this could have on the Queen's Edith area.	EWR is aligned with Network Rail, who are responsible for the Cambridge South station project, in ensuring that the new Cambridge South station is aligned with EWR proposals. We will continue to work with Network Rail as our designs develop. Although this is not an EWR Project, it is noted that the plans for Cambridge South station are that it is accessed from the east so there will be an eastern entrance. EWR will aim to provide new, faster connections for local communities along the route. Cambridge South station recently had its Transport and Works Act Order (TWAO) approved, and the preferred option affords direct connectivity to the station. It should be noted that delivery of Cambridge South station does not fall within EWR Co scope as set out by the Department for Transport, although we will work closely with Network Rail to ensure any opportunities for efficiencies or to reduce overall impacts between the two projects are taken. Regarding increased traffic in the Queen Edith's area, we will undertake road traffic modelling during the next stage to understand any potential impacts.
There was a comment that more stations are needed from Cambourne into Cambridge from the South, in particular in Harston. Greater parking capacity at Cambourne station is also required.	One of the key objectives of EWR is to enable sustainable housing and economic growth. The proposed EWR station locations have been chosen to support the delivery of new housing and help create new jobs along the corridor, as well as helping to ease pressure on the housing market, notably within Cambridge. Consideration has been given to access to suitable road infrastructure, potential demand and viability of adjacent development in choosing station locations. There are no stations proposed as part of the SATC between Cambourne and Cambridge South. Whilst there is not considered to be sufficient demand at other locations on the SATC routes to justify an additional station stop in terms of cost and additional journey time, the SATC design does not preclude the possible construction of additional stations at a future time. Parking will be considered within the design of our stations.

Concerns were raised that putting a train station too distant from the town of St Neots would create infrastructure problems for the town. Commuters wish to be nearer stations to gain easier access to Cambridge, therefore another station would be beneficial for St Neots.	One of EWR's core priorities is to increase connectivity across the Oxford to Cambridge area, supporting economic growth, housing and employment. Therefore, understanding how station location options might influence the development potential of their surrounding areas has been taken into account when comparing the route alignment options. However, following further review of the opportunities associated with a station at either St Neots or Tempsford, it emerged that a station at Tempsford is expected to have greater potential for development to support significant economic growth than a station at St Neots, further enhancing our understanding in this area from the 2021 consultation. It is understood that Tempsford station would be more likely to enable this development to come forward, be able to utilise the former RAF Tempsford site and avoid the risk of the new settlement coalescing with the built-up area of St Neots and severance caused by the new A428 dual carriageway. The use of a station within St Neots is not expected to enable the same level of housing development as we anticipate would be unlocked by a new station at Tempsford (between St Neots and Sandy). However, EWR is committed to increasing prosperity and connectivity across the area, and therefore options to efficiently connect existing communities, such as St Neots, with EWR remains important and we will continue to develop proposals to enable easy accessibility for these communities, including through the provision of improved first mile/last mile connectivity (I.e. how people travel to and from the station), to our proposed network.
The case for EWR was questioned by some people from the Bedford area when the issues of congestion, poor bus services and access to new infrastructure such as the A428 are taken into account.	Developing the business case for the Project is an iterative process and we will make sure that we have a broad range of evidence to give decision makers a good understanding of the costs, benefits and strategic merits of the scheme. We continue to learn from other comparable infrastructure projects to inform our approach to delivering the railway. We'll use a range of techniques to estimate costs and monitor and manage risk. This will include risks associated with costs, for example by applying approaches such as reference class forecasting, sensitivity analysis, quantified risk analyses and optimism bias, in building the commercial case. Value engineering and innovative approaches to design, construction, and operation of the railway, will help us to monitor and manage costs to minimise the likelihood of overspend. More information on cost estimates will be presented at the statutory consultation stage.

A query was raised whether there would be a direct train service to Milton Keynes and Bedford or whether passengers would need to change at Bletchley.	The current plans for Connection Stage 1 (CS1) are to run 2 trains per hour from Oxford to Milton Keynes (direct). It is currently anticipated services will come into operation in 2025. The design of the timetable and service patterns for Connection Stage 2 (the 2 CS1 trains per hour plus 2 trains per hour to Bedford) is still being considered. Further detail on the development of train service patterns will be presented at statutory consultation. We have been tasked by Government to deliver much-needed transport connections for communities between Oxford and Cambridge. A direct connection from Cambridge and Bedford to Milton Keynes Central does not currently form part of our remit to provide these transport connections. There are no proposals to provide a Bletchley Chord as part of East West Rail, however the delivery of East West Rail does not preclude this option from being developed in the future.
It was suggested that transport connections from the stations to hospitals could be improved. A person asked if a connection would be made to Stewartby Broadmead. A concern was raised that people travelling west from Cambridge may use the A428 rather than EWR, once this road project has been completed. A concern was raised about Wolverton not being mentioned in the EWR Co plans due to HS2 and a question was asked if any trains will go as far as Wolverton.	Transport connectivity (including stations and links to key facilities such as hospitals) is a key factor that EWR Co is working into our proposals. Proposals will be selected following a rigorous process using a range of assessment factors, including consistency with local plans (AF15), which are outlined in Chapter 5 and Appendix C of the Non-Statutory Consultation Technical Report. Details of proposals will be shared at statutory consultation. Station connectivity is a key consideration for us. EWR will provide connectivity between major areas of housing and employment however it would not be possible to connect to all conurbations along the route, whilst maintaining fast journey times. We will continue working with other organisations, including bus operators, to improve interfaces and interchange with bus services at stations and provide onward travel information. In particular, we are considering opportunities to improve door-to-door connectivity between the new stations and customers' destinations, such as Stewartby Broadmead, timed to connect with the train services. EWR will aim to align with other projects, including the A428 Black Cat improvement scheme, to contribute to an integrated transport solution for the region. We consider the two projects to be complementary, providing alternative means of travel to meet the needs of different users.

	Wolverton is part of the existing Network Rail infrastructure on the West Coast Mainline and does not form part of our scope. Connections will be possible by existing Network Rail services from Milton Keynes.