**Introduction to the project so far**

**The approach to Cambridge**

1

**Please share your views on:**

Because EWR alignments closer to north Cambridge are now being considered, we have looked again at whether we were right to have favoured Route Option E and approaching Cambridge from the south as we confirmed after our last consultation. In particular, we have reviewed our previous assessment that concluded approaching from the south was the better option taking account of a Cambourne North Station outside of Route E to see if we would have made a different decision. We consider that the advantages of approaching Cambridge from the south continue to support this conclusion and that a number of challenges remain for a northern approach even with a Cambourne North station.

We’d welcome your comments on our assessment.

Comments

Despite the lobbying for the northern approach to Cambridge pursued by the "CamBedRail" and "Cambridge Approaches" groups, Toseland Parish Council (TPC) regards a Southern approach to Cambridge as more viable than that from the North. While it seems clear that a Southern approach to Cambridge, will cause problems for villages including Haslingfield, Harston, Harlton and the Eversdens (see "South Cambridgeshire Residents Devastated by East-West Rail plans to devastate Homes and Isolate Villages", Cambridgeshire Live website, cambridgeshire.news.co.uk/news/cambridge-news/south-cambridgeshire-residents- devastated-east-20453824). But if it is the case, as EWR have stated, that the Southern approach would only cost 5 existing houses as against 40-85 houses on the northern approach, then this route looks more viable. In this case, it nevertheless needs to be ensured by EWR in conjunction with local councils that appropriate mitigation is provided to avoid or replace these houses, as well as means to cross the railway tracks safely for pedestrians and cyclists in order that they can access local shops, schools and other facilities.

However, TPC is strongly in favour of the southern approach to Cambridge creating a Cambourne South station, that could serve the present population of that area. The alternative, the creation of a Cambourne North station, while it might be seen as fulfilling an element of EWR's remit - the promotion of housing development - would be a disaster for people in the surrounding area.

The creation of a Cambourne North station would be highly likely to encourage a massive/encroaching development to the North of Cambourne of c10,000 homes, reaching back to, and blurring the boundaries with a number of surrounding, established rural villages, hence causing a deep loss of distinctiveness for all of these settlements, as well as the loss of a vast tract of farmland. Secondly, it would potentially create a new township of “Cambourne North”, divided from the original Cambourne by the A428, which is hardly going to encourage any sort of community identity in Cambourne. Thirdly, it would add support for the lobbies for a northern rather than southern approach to Cambridge Main Station, represented by "CamBedRail" and "Cambridge Approaches", accompanied by an emphasis on a Cambourne North station, and neither of these look favourable or viable as shown in the *Making Meaningful Connections, EWR Consultation Technical Report: Appendices* (2021, pp.42-101) .

Toseland Parish Council does not support any option that follows the proposed route of the A428, for reasons given later in this document.

**Customer experience and railway operations**

2

**The train service**

**Please share your views on:**

* How you might use EWR services - for example for work, to visit friends and family, or to get to leisure destinations?
* Based on your experience of rail travel in the UK what do you think are the main areas that could be improved?
* If you don’t currently travel by rail, what are the reasons for this? Is there anything that would persuade you to use rail services?
* Are there ways in which we could help improve your entire journey? For example:
- How and where you research your trip
- The actual rail journey itself
- Getting from your home at the start of the journey, to the point that you reach your end destination

How could we support our net zero carbon ambitions through the delivery of services to customers? For example, through the design of stations, the trains we operate or through forms of active travel, for example cycling or walking.

Comments

Taking the last point first, the net zero carbon contributions required by the government by 2050, can only be secured by ensuring that the proposed railway - whatever route taken - is electric from the start. Otherwise, this project cannot be seen to live up to its aim to promote an environmentally beneficial “modal shift” for both” passengers and freight” from cars and container lorries to rail transport (Making Meaningful Connections: Consultation Technical Report, 2021, 1.4, p.1). There has already been an Early Day Motion in Parliament requiring that the chosen route is electrified from the start ("Electrification of East-West Rail", EDM 1695 tabled on 24 March 2021, edm.parliament.uk/early-day-motion/58327).

There are all sorts of potential leisure, and research destinations that might be opened up by this railway, depending on the above (see point 2). But in terms of access to regular work in - say Cambridge - from the rural villages in Huntingdonshire and South Cambs., there is no immediate perceivable benefit, since these villages largely have no access to public transport any more. Car transport would be necessary to get from Toseland and other villages to St Neots South Option B/ Tempsford Option B/Cambourne South stations, and there would need to be a notable reduction in travel and car parking fees at those stations by contrast with those at the current St Neots station, to make commuting by rail to Cambridge for work an attractive proposition.

Moreover, the rail route would need to be faster and perceptibly more convenient than the road route offered by the existing dual carriageway A428. The only EWR routes options that potentially promise this are Route Alignment 8 (yellow) Tempsford Option B to Cambourne South, and Route Alignment 6 (pale blue) St Neots South to Cambourne South. Of these, the St Neots South/Cambourne South option (Route Alignment 6 - pale blue) looks the most viable, as it entails far less viaduct construction, and also less building on flood plains, which would in turn create fewer engineering problems.

It is worth noting that, In the Covid/post-Covid context, when many people now choose, or are obliged to work from home, the 19th century concept of building dwellings near to railways for commuters, upon which one of the government-inspired aims of the EWR project is based, is no longer necessarily valid. Better broadband provision may ultimately be paramount for the location of housing development. In relation to this, the carriage of heavy freight by environmentally-friendly means may turn out to have a greater importance than commuter travel.

3

**Station experience**

**Please share your views on:**

* Thinking about your experience of stations, how would you like your rail journey to link with other parts of your journey? For example, arriving or leaving the station on foot, by bike, car, or bus.
* How can station forecourts and approaches be designed to offer the most convenient access for walking, cycling and bus services?
* What sort of facilities would you like to see at stations – both those that contribute to the overall journey experience, as well as those that might serve a wider community purpose?
* Are there any particularly good examples, either in the UK or abroad, of stations with good facilities or facilities for changing between different transport modes?
* Are there specific factors that you would like us to consider that may improve safety and security at stations?
* How can stations be better designed to manage customer flows around the station environment?
* How can customers be guided through the station experience (particularly during busy periods)?
* How should we ensure inclusivity, for example in terms of accessibility and the broader station experience?

Comment

The forecourt area/approaches to the station need to have enough space to accommodate buses and cars and to keep these separate from pedestrians and cyclists. Provision of a café/kiosk would be important, selling drinks and snacks, and seating outside the stations and on the platforms. Accessible toilets would also be important.

To ensure disabled access to platforms there should be lifts, and to disabled access to trains from the platforms the floor of the train carriages should be level with the platform.

Thought should be applied to the egress routes from the station to prevent congestion in the station and on approaches. Also, many passengers are dropped off or picked up at train stations by others, so proper short-term waiting areas that do not encroach on the flow of traffic through the station should be considered.



4

**On-train experience**

**Please share your views on:**

* How can we create an engaging environment that suits the unique needs of our customers, for example, working effectively, relaxing or being entertained?
* What types of things should we put in place to create a clean, safe and secure environment for you and your belongings on your train journey?
* What facilities and services would provide the optimal train experience for customers on the EWR route?
* What types of areas/spaces would you like to see on EWR trains beyond seating and standing space?
* What on-train experience(s) might encourage customers to switch to rail from other modes of transport?
* Are there any examples, either from the UK or from abroad, of good seating layouts or on-train facilities?
* How might we consider sustainability in the on-train environment?
* How can the on-train environment support customers’ wellbeing throughout their journey?



Comments

Comfortable seating and accessible toilets would be important. The carriages and seats should have numbers on, so that in the event of unpleasant behaviour by occupants of the carriage, or emergency illness, the passenger could be identified and assisted by staff. A helpline app for mobile phones would be useful to back this up. Sockets for charging laptops and mobile phones would also be useful. Tables of some sort would be helpful for using laptops or eating/ drinking. Separate bins should be provided for recyclable and non-recyclable rubbish. There should be adequate provision for bicycles and pushchairs, and also for defibrillators in each carriage.

Free wireless connectivity should be provided as standard for all travellers.

5

**Interaction with colleagues**

**Please share your views on:**

* What types of attitudes and behaviours would you like to see our staff displaying to make your experience with EWR a positive one? This may relate to contact you have online, over the phone, at the station or on the train.
* How and where would you like to have access to staff members on your journey and why? Again, this may relate to virtual support or face to face contact.



Comment

Friendly, helpful and well-informed staff would be ideal, whether face-to -face or virtual/online. It would also be important to have a member of staff available at the station and on the trains, to call upon in the event of sudden illness of a passenger, or unpleasant behaviour of one or more passengers towards others.

6

**Customer information**

**Please share your views on:**

* What sort of information do you find most critical when you are making a train journey?
* What ways of communicating travel information do you think will be most effective as you arrive at the station or on the train?
* Are there other types of travel information, not directly relating to the train journey, that you think it would be valuable for EWR to provide before or during your journey?
* How could we provide better or different customer information, to help our customers be more relaxed and feel in control throughout their journey?

Comments

In the first place, it would be important to have the EWR train timetable/stations on a website for planning journeys, such as the National Rail website, so that people can synchronise travel on EWR with connections to further destinations and become aware of any delays or problems on their entire route. Printed EWR timetables to take away, at each station would be beneficial to those who do not have mobile phones or computers, but it would also be good to have the timetable as an app.

At the stations, indicator boards showing arrivals/departures, as well as a clear tannoy system making these announcements would be important to ensure accessibility of the information to blind/deaf people.

All information should follow the recent legislation on accessibility, including indications of which stations do/do not have disabled access/lifts from ground level to platforms.

**Infrastructure Development**

**Section A Oxford-Bicester**

**Section B Bletchley & Marston Vale Line**

**Section C Bedford**

For all of the above sections:

The general comments box reads N/A.

No options/concepts have been ranked in the tick boxes lists.

The comments boxes explaining the ranking reads:

“Toseland Parish Council has not ranked the concepts because it has no inside knowledge of the local issues, and therefore also cannot propose any sensible alternative suggestions. It is the responsibility of EWR to provide the community with more specific detail and interact positively with their queries and perceived problems.”

**\*\*Section D Clapham Green to the Eversdens – (Our bit)**

38

**Please rank your preference for the proposed Clapham Green to The Eversdens alignment options.**

Please use a scale of 1 to 5 to indicate your preferences where 1 indicates your preferred option and 5 the option you favour least.

2



×

Alignment 8 – yellow: Tempsford Option B station to Cambourne South station



Alignment 1 – dark blue: St Neots South Option A station and a Cambourne North station



Alignment 2 – red: St Neots South Option A station and a Cambourne South station



×

Alignment 6 – light blue: St Neots South Option B station and a Cambourne South station



5

Alignment 9 – purple: Tempsford Option A station to Cambourne North station

39

**Please tell us why you have ranked the proposed alignment options above and provide any other comments.**

**Comments**

Toseland Parish Council has deliberately only ranked two of the five options. The other three options are equally valued at "5" - least desirable. The options element of the online form, however, will not allow for the simple expression of this view, presumably in order to manipulate the resulting statistics resulting from the consultation. We wish to note that this is an unfair use of computer technology in order to manipulate data for your own benefit, rather than a genuine desire to see people’s real views.

The two options favoured by Toseland Parish Council are:

1. Alignment 6 light blue: St Neots South Option B station and a Cambourne South station; and

2. Alignment 8 yellow: Tempsford Option B to a Cambourne South station.

There are three strong reasons for this choice of route options from TPCs viewpoint:

1. The EWR's own promotional material suggests that their goal is to initiate a more ecologically sustainable, "modal shift" from car and container lorry to rail transport, and that this is best served by offering shorter travel times "as a minimum” (Making Meaningful Connections: Consultation Technical Report, Appendices, 2021, 1.4.1 & 1.3.). The routes noted above are the shortest and fastest routes and thus best able to fulfil EWR's criteria for encouraging sustainable use of the railway ​(as long as the line was electrified from the start and suitable parking provision was made). TPC’s no 1 choice, Alignment 6, in particular, offers shorter lengths of viaduct and fewer engineering problems with the Ouse floodplains than Alignment 8, this is turn would mean less “locked in” carbon, which would be more environmentally friendly, as a construction scheme.
2. The above two options are also the only routes that do not run parallel to the proposed route of the new A428. This latter project, on its own, will cut a large swathe through viable Grade II agricultural land, requiring extra works to accommodate public Rights of Way (PROWs) field accesses and access to the old A428 - which is to be kept accessible as a “local road”. The A428 project will also bring noise, light and other forms of pollution to the tiny, tranquil rural villages of Toseland, Croxton, Eltisley and Yelling, both during its construction and in its use. If the railway runs parallel with the A428 but closer to Toseland, this will exacerbate the loss of farmland, difficulties with PROWs, and with various forms of pollution.
3. The two options, Alignment 6 and Alignment 8 also go through Cambourne South station, where the line has the possibility of conveniently serving some of the surrounding, established local communities in that vicinity such as Great Cambourne, Caxton, Croxton, Toseland, Yelling, Abbotsley and the Gransdens – as long as there is suitable provision for parking of cars and bicycles, as there is very little, or no public transport available in these villages, and it is extremely unlikely that there will be in the future.

Toseland Parish Council is strongly opposed to the other three options - Alignment 1, Alignment 2 and Alignment 9 - for several reasons:

1. All of these run parallel with the proposed route of the new A428 which is unacceptable to TPC for the reasons given in point 2 above;
2. Alignments 1 (dark blue) and 9 (purple), moreover, go to a proposed Cambourne North station on the opposite side of the A428 from the current Cambourne settlement, and would provide incentive to developers to build an inappropriately large housing estate of c10,000 homes, which would encroach on, and mar the distinctiveness of other historically established rural villages such as Elsworth, Boxworth, Knapton and their extensive list of confederates. It would also encourage the supporters of a northern approach to Cambridge to continue to lobby for this unviable approach. Finally, it would make access to the station from Great Cambourne, Caxton and possibly other villages more difficult and less sustainable;
3. Alignment 2 (red), while it would, at least, avoid the problems noted in point B by going to Cambourne South station, it is still unacceptable because it would run parallel to the proposed new A428, with the attendant problems set out in point 2 above.

**Section E: Harlton to Hauxton**

40

**What do you think is important to consider when developing our proposals for the Harlton to Hauxton area. In particular, what do we need to take account of:**

a. In relation to building a new railway junction which would join our new railway to the Shepreth Branch Royston existing railway

b. In relation to our emerging preferred option to build a new junction which uses a bridge to connect the railways (a grade separated junction) and to extend the existing railway to connect to the new junction (using an offline construction)

**Comments**

It is the view of Toseland Parish Council that EWR needs to pay much closer attention to the voices from this area, including the Local Authorities, in developing their proposals. It is clear from the lack of detail in this section of the feedback form that not enough thought has gone into the planning proposal for the area as yet, and this is reflected in the media outcry that has resulted.

**Section F: Great Shelford to Cambridge station**

41

**What do you think is important to consider when developing our proposals for the Great Shelford to Cambridge area? In particular, what do we need to take account of:**

a. In relation to our options for the Hauxton Road level crossing

b. In relation to our proposed modifications to the Shepreth Junction

c. In relation to our emerging preferred option to increase the existing railway line between Shepreth Junction and Addenbrooke’s bridge from two tracks to four tracks

d. In relation to our emerging preferred option to increase the existing railway line between Long Road Sixth Form College and Cambridge station from two/three tracks to four tracks

e. Anything we should consider at Cambridge station.

Comments

It is the view of Toseland Parish Council that EWR needs to pay much closer attention to the voices from this area, including the Local Authorities, in developing your proposals. It is clear from the lack of detail in this section of the feedback form that not enough thought has gone into the planning proposal for the area as yet, and this is reflected in the media outcry that has resulted.

In relation to Cambridge station in particular, it needs to be ensured that there will always be always a vacant track that allows freight trains to travel straight through, without stopping. This will be both a logistical and a timetabling issue. Neither of these have been adequately addressed so far in the EWR promotional or consultation materials.

Top of Form

**And finally, please tell us a bit about yourself**

**Note:**

We will collect and process the information you provide to us in order to record and analyse any feedback or questions you raise during the Consultation. If you give us personal information about other people you must first make sure that you have obtained all necessary permission from that person for you to pass this information on to us. We may need to share personal information with third parties which could include public bodies and third parties working with us on the Project. You have the right to object to the processing of your personal data in certain circumstances and you may ask us to delete your personal information if you believe that we do not have the right to hold it. For further information in relation to how we process personal data, please see our Personal Information Charter at [**www.eastwestrail.co.uk/personal-information-charter**](http://www.eastwestrail.co.uk/personal-information-charter)

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Title

2/255

43

First name

3/255

44

Last name

6/255

45

Email address

23/255

46

Phone number

12/255

47

Street

23/255

48

City

8/255

49

County

14/255

50

Postcode

8/255

51

Organisation (if applicable)

23/255

52

Please select the option that best represents the capacity in which you

are responding to this consultation. I am a:

1. 

Local resident

1. 

Commuter to the area

1. 

Visitor to the area

1. 

Local business owner

1. 

Future resident

1. 

Elected representative

1. 

Local authority

1. 

Statutory body

1. 

Directly impacted land/property owner

1. 

Other (please specify)

53

Age range

1. 

19-34

1. 

35-50

1. 

51-65

1. 

Over 65

54

Would you like to receive further information from East West Rail

as the proposals develop? By selecting ‘yes’ you consent to us contacting you with occasional information and updates about East West Rail.

1. 

Yes

1. 

No

BackSubmit

Bottom of Form

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