

Making Meaningful Connections

Consultation Document:
The Approach to Cambridge

**East West Rail Consultation:
31 March – 9 June 2021**

This document contains the portions of the full Consultation Document which cover The Approach to Cambridge. To access the full Consultation Document, please visit www.eastwestrail.co.uk





01.

Consultation Summary

The East West Railway Company (EWR Co) is asking communities, local representatives and stakeholders to give us comments and thoughts on our developing plans for East West Rail (EWR).

This non-statutory consultation is your opportunity to tell us what you think about the options for building the railway that we have identified, as well as your expectations for the customer experience on the new railway. We would like to hear from you while our plans are still at a formative stage, so we can create the best possible railway for the communities the line will serve and minimise any negative impacts. There will be a further opportunity for you to tell us your views as the Project develops.

This summary document provides:

- An introduction to the East West Rail Project and EWR Co
- A summary of the developing plans on which we are consulting
- Where to find further information about our plans if you want to know more
- The ways you can respond to this consultation. Please note, the deadline for responses is 9 June 2021
- Next steps in the process, explaining how and when you will get further opportunities to share your thoughts.

What is East West Rail?

East West Rail is a proposed new rail link, which would connect communities between Oxford, Milton Keynes, Bedford and Cambridge. By making it cheaper and quicker to get around, by boosting the local economy, creating jobs and supporting more affordable new homes locally, the new railway line would create a range of opportunities for people right across the area. It will also help spread prosperity across the UK by supporting opportunities for economic growth in towns and cities outside London.

The Project is being delivered in stages. Trains are already running between Oxford and Bicester, and we aim to have trains running the full length of the line between Oxford and Cambridge by the end of the decade.

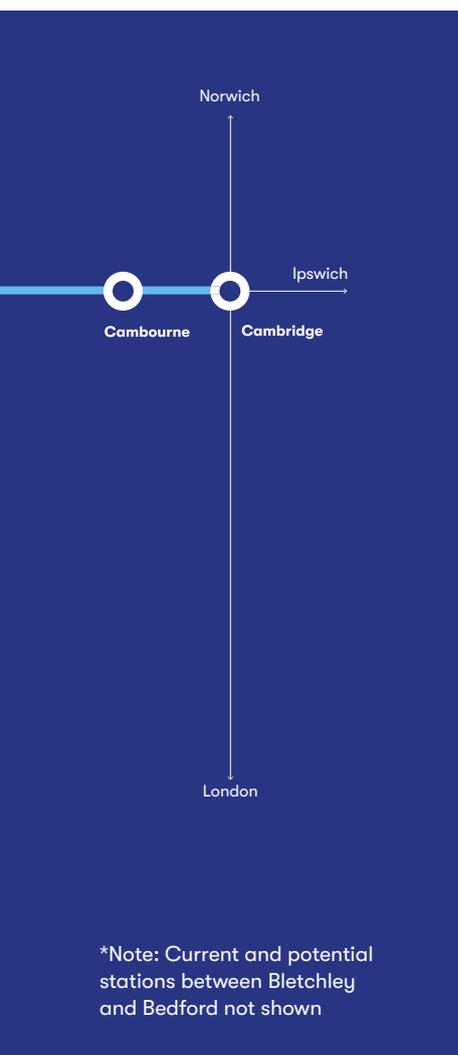


EWR route between Oxford and Cambridge

The consultation process

This is the second public consultation we have carried out to share our Project plans. Following this consultation we will carefully analyse all your responses and publish a summary report in which will explain how we have taken them into account. We will use your consultation responses alongside continuing environmental, economic and technical studies to help us shape various aspects of the Project. We will have a further stage of consultation following which we will submit the application for powers to build the new railway to the Secretary of State for Transport.

Visit www.communityhub.eastwestrail.co.uk for previous consultation information and up to date Project information.



This Consultation Summary provides an overview of the proposals on which we are consulting. Other documents available which provide further information are set out in the table below.

Document	Description
Consultation Document	A document setting out all of our proposals that we are consulting you about, with more detail than this Summary.
Consultation Response Form	Please use this form to share your thoughts. We encourage you to respond online. If you do not have access to the Internet or would like to respond on paper, please let us know.
Consultation Technical Report	This contains detailed, technical information which supports the Consultation Document. It sets out how we have assessed options during design development, and how we have considered environmental factors.
Consultation Drawings	These drawings show the proposed alignment options between Bedford and Cambridge and the location of any proposed works between Oxford and Bedford.
Engineering Long Section Drawing	A Long Section Drawing is available for each route alignment option between Bedford and Cambridge, which shows its vertical alignment (height) relative to ground levels. These are draft and will change as design progresses.
You Said, We Did	This document refers to our previous consultation about the route option between Bedford and Cambridge and how your responses informed our proposals.
Appendices	There are several additional documents which provide further background information.
Guide to the proposed Need to Sell Scheme	A consultation guide to our proposed discretionary purchase scheme which aims to support owner occupiers who have a pressing need but are unable to sell their property, except at a substantially lesser value, due to the project following the announcement of the preferred route alignment for the railway. We are seeking your views on our proposal.

Please visit
www.eastwestrail.co.uk
 for more information about
 East West Rail, and to
 hear more from the
 EWR Co team.

Summary of the consultation

We want to hear your views on developing plans for East West Rail. We are grateful for any thoughts you'd like to share, including on two particularly key themes:

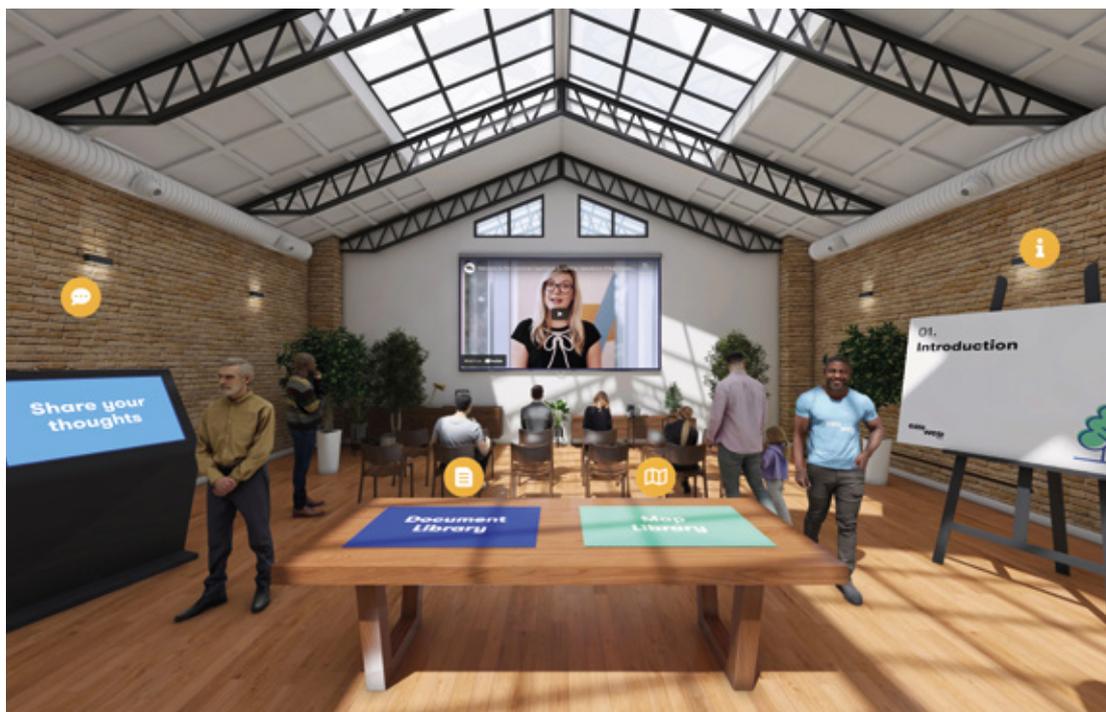
1. Customer experience and railway operations
2. Our infrastructure proposals – such as route alignments, stations and level crossings.

We are taking into careful consideration a number of important factors as we continue to develop plans for East West Rail. These include how we provide the right type of service for our customers, which route alignment works best for the communities we plan to serve and the overall plan for stations as the Project progresses.

We have used several assessment factors to assess and compare different options for the Project. You can find more information on these factors in the Consultation Document.



A local briefing on the Bedford to Cambridge Preferred Route Option (2020)



Virtual
Consultation Room

Please let us know your views

Ahead of our programme of online meetings, we will be opening our Virtual Consultation rooms where you can learn more about the developing plans for East West Rail:
www.eastwestrail.co.uk/virtual

Here you can:

- View and download detailed chapters from the Consultation Document and Technical Report
- Watch videos explaining key aspects of the consultation
- Take part in consultation events
- Respond to the consultation

Please respond by 9 June 2021.

For environmental and cost reasons, we urge as many people as possible to use the website to view materials and the online feedback form to share your views. If you are not able to get online to view the documents, please do get in touch. You can find our contact details at the end of this document.

Ongoing COVID-19 restrictions relating to people gathering together mean that we are unable to plan face to face events in the community during this consultation. However, we believe it's critical that as many people as possible are able to take part. We have made every effort to reach out to communities through town and parish councils, local authorities, rail user groups and other local groups, for whom we will be holding virtual briefing sessions during the consultation.

We have sent one of these summary documents to around 300,000 homes and businesses in the area, have arranged for adverts to be placed in local media, and will be holding online events for the public during the consultation. If you are unable to join online, call our team on 0330 134 0067 and discuss how you can join by phone. We hope you take the opportunity to share your views. There will be a further consultation so there will be another opportunity to tell us your views.

Thank you for helping create a great railway for your community.

1. Customer experience and railway operations

EWR Co has been created to develop a railway with customers and communities at its core.

Whether you plan to use the new rail service to get to work, for business, education, leisure activities or to visit family and friends, we want you to have the best possible experience. That includes not only frequent, punctual services that you can rely on, but the wider experience, such as:



How, when and where you receive information on train services



Your interactions with our colleagues



The on-train facilities



The design of new stations

We are keen to hear from potential future customers including people who live and work in the area. We want to hear your ideas and understand what's important to you. All feedback will help ensure we deliver an excellent rail service as well as a great customer experience for you and your community.

Details about where to access more information and how to respond to this consultation can be found in the final section of this document.

2. Infrastructure development

East West Rail will connect communities between Oxford and Cambridge, improving parts of the existing rail network – and building a new section of line – to deliver a reliable service for passengers and communities.

We have divided the East West Rail route into sections to help focus on the most important questions in each area.

- **Section A:** Oxford to Bicester - improvements to the existing railway and stations
- **Section B:** Bletchley and the Marston Vale Line - improvements to the existing infrastructure, stations and level crossings
- **Section C:** Bedford - a new Bedford Station, a new Bedford St Johns Station, improvements to the existing railway and a new section of railway
- **Section D:** Clapham Green to The Eversdens - the main section of new railway and new stations

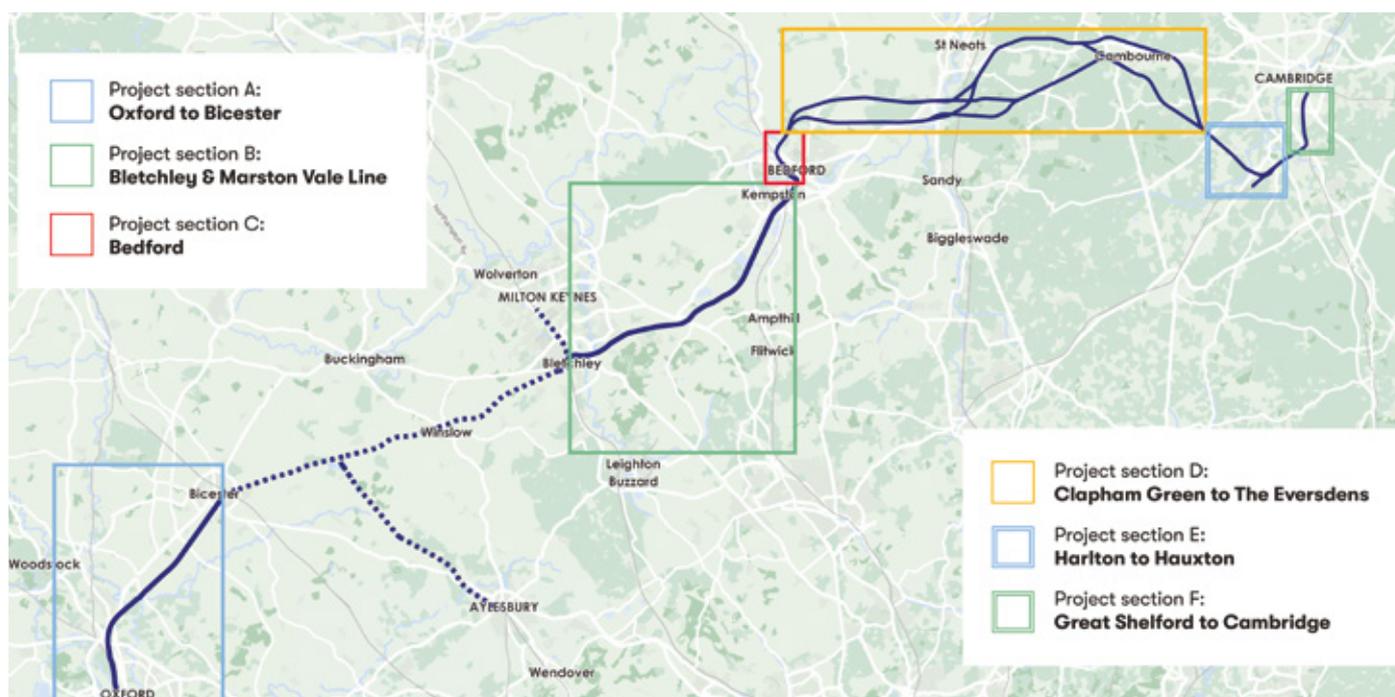
- **Section E:** Harlton to Hauxton - new railway and a new railway junction
- **Section F:** The Shelfords to Cambridge station - improvements to the existing railway and Cambridge station.

Supporting property owners

In developing our proposals, we aim to minimise the negative impact this may have on people's land and property and mitigate any impacts we cannot avoid. While we don't yet know for certain which land or property will be needed, we know that publishing our plans could potentially affect people needing to sell their home or small business. We are consulting on a discretionary purchase scheme, the Need to Sell Scheme, that, if introduced, could support owner occupiers once the announcement of the preferred route alignment for the railway has been made. The proposals are set out in our Guide to the proposed Need to Sell Scheme which is available on our website

www.eastwestrail.co.uk

Sections of the route which we are consulting on



Section A: Oxford to Bicester - improvements to the existing railway and stations

Why are we proposing this work?

The stations and railway lines between Oxford and Bicester do not have the capacity to run the four trains per hour service that is planned for East West Rail. Therefore, we need to create more capacity for these services.

The proposed changes would provide people living, working and visiting the area around Oxford and Bicester with fast and reliable train services to Bletchley, Cambridge and stations in between - as well as better connectivity to the wider rail network.

The changes would also seek to improve the customer experience at Oxford, Oxford Parkway and Bicester Village stations.

Section A proposals map





London Road level crossing, Bicester

What are the developing plans for this section?



Improvements at Oxford, Oxford Parkway and Bicester Village stations to accommodate more trains and more customers



Proposals for one or more additional platforms at Oxford station



Improvements to the track in the Oxford area to increase capacity for EWR trains to approach Oxford



Alternative ways for vehicles and pedestrians to cross the railway at London Road in Bicester to improve safety, to enable a faster, more reliable train service, and to reduce traffic disruption.

Details about where to access more information and how to respond to this consultation can be found in the final section of this document.

Section B: Bletchley and the Marston Vale Line - improvements to the existing railway and stations

Why are we proposing this work?

It is not possible to introduce a fast, reliable and frequent service between Oxford and Cambridge without making a significant investment in the Marston Vale Line.

The line, which runs between Bletchley and Bedford, was first built in 1846 and continued to operate after the original Varsity Line closed in the 1960s. In recent years, the Marston Vale Line Community Rail Partnership has worked proactively to engage local people with the railway and promote the rail line. The underlying infrastructure however has not seen significant investment for decades, and the communities it serves have changed and grown considerably over that time.

Why investment is needed:

- The signalling system is obsolete and has, at times, been unreliable. This has led to train services having to be suspended on numerous occasions
- The existing infrastructure means the line is slow, with just one train an hour, taking 42 minutes to do 16 miles – an average speed of just 25mph.
- The stations are all unstaffed, and are very constrained in terms of the facilities and experience they can offer passengers, whether that’s warm waiting areas, drop off points, or car and bike parking.
- Many of the stations have amongst the lowest usage on the national network. Indeed, three of the ten stations see fewer than 40 passengers on average each day.

Section B proposals map



East West Rail represents a once in a generation opportunity to provide a reliable, frequent train service for communities along the Marston Vale Line. Communities have an opportunity to protect the line, whilst making sure it meets the needs of local people today and into the future. This opportunity would result in a railway line sitting at the heart of an integrated transport network, making journeys from door to door both quicker and more convenient.

What are the developing plans for this section?

We have identified two ways this part of the line could be upgraded:

Concept 1: The existing hourly stopping service would continue to serve all Marston Vale Line stations, with a new limited-stop EWR service calling at two stations – Woburn Sands and Ridgmont – four times an hour.

The hourly stopping service at intermediate stations would enable a change onto a faster EWR train at either Woburn Sands or Ridgmont, for connections to Oxford and Cambridge.

The ability to change to the faster EWR services at Ridgmont will make journeys from some intermediate stations to either Bletchley or Bedford quicker. Two EWR Oxford - Cambridge trains and two EWR Bletchley - Cambridge each hour would call at Woburn Sands and Ridgmont. These trains would take 22 minutes to travel from Bletchley to Bedford. The hourly-stopping service would need to wait in additional sections of track known as 'passing loops' to allow faster EWR trains to overtake so may need to run more slowly, and the timetable would be modified. Most of the stations would see minimal - if any - upgrades, but the station at Ridgmont would need to be relocated to enable

passing loops to be built and Bedford St Johns station would also be relocated.

Concept 2: There would be five new merged stations on the Marston Vale Line – all five would benefit from at least two EWR services every hour, and some would have four. This would mean more communities have access to more frequent and faster services, direct to more locations.

Two EWR stopping trains would run every hour between Bletchley and Cambridge calling at all five stations. These trains would take 27 minutes to travel from Bletchley to Bedford instead of 42 minutes today. In addition, two EWR Oxford-Cambridge trains would call at Woburn Sands and Ridgmont. These trains would take 22 minutes to travel from Bletchley to Bedford.

These services would replace the current hourly stopping service and the ten existing intermediate stations would be merged, creating five new modern stations with better facilities in locations more suitable for existing needs and to ensure that the right transport infrastructure is in place for the growth that is already starting to happen in the local area. Some residents would need to travel a little further to their nearest station, but EWR are developing plans for improved pedestrian and cycle routes, as well as working with local stakeholders on better public transport connections.

Given the increased frequency and speed of the service, even for those who do have to travel further to the station, overall journey durations are likely to be shorter or at least the same as they are today. Upgraded and new stations would be designed from the start to ensure that onward transport – whether by bike, car, bus or on foot – is convenient and minimises disruption by reducing traffic in constrained village centres.

Merged stations have been considered in the following locations:

- Woburn Sands station relocated a short distance to the west of the current station
- Ridgmont station relocated between the current Aspley Guise and Ridgmont stations (in a similar location to that required by Concept 1)
- Lidlington station relocated a short distance to the east of the existing Lidlington station
- Stewartby station relocated between the current Stewartby and Kempston Hardwick stations
- Bedford St Johns station relocated a short distance to the south or west

All of these stations on the line would benefit from direct connections east between Bedford and Cambridge. Woburn Sands and Ridgmont would have direct services to stations west – like Oxford or Bicester, whilst for the others this would be a short interchange.

Whilst we have identified these five locations by working with local stakeholders, we are open to your suggestions for alternative merged station options, provided the overall number does not increase beyond five in Concept 2.

Both of these concepts are viable options. We recognise that despite its reliability challenges and low usage, the existing service is important for some members of the community. It would though be a missed opportunity if we were not to at least consider the alternative, given the potential benefits it offers to local residents both today and for the future.

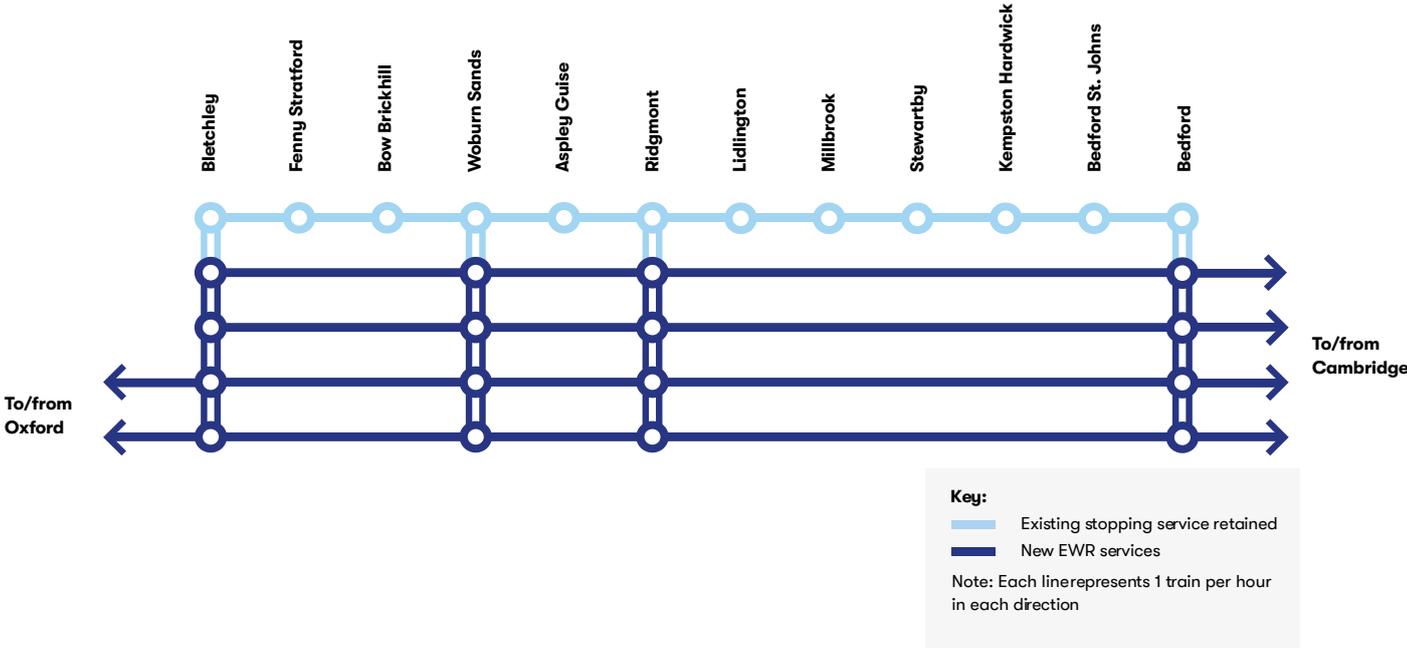
Both of these concepts would require:

- Changes to the way vehicles and pedestrians cross the railway, replacing level crossings with safer alternatives to enable a faster, more frequent and more reliable train service
- Improvements to the track, including the reinstatement of a second track between Bletchley and Fenny Stratford
- A range of improvements to Bletchley station, which would become an important hub with the extension of East West Rail's services to Bedford and Cambridge
- Consideration of how to carry out the required upgrades, which could involve the suspension of the existing train service between Bletchley and Bedford, during the construction period.
- When we have reviewed responses in relation to these concepts, we will prepare designs in greater detail for each of them, along with assessments of their effects. We will share these at our statutory consultation.
- Details about where to access more information and how to respond to this consultation can be found in the final section of this document.

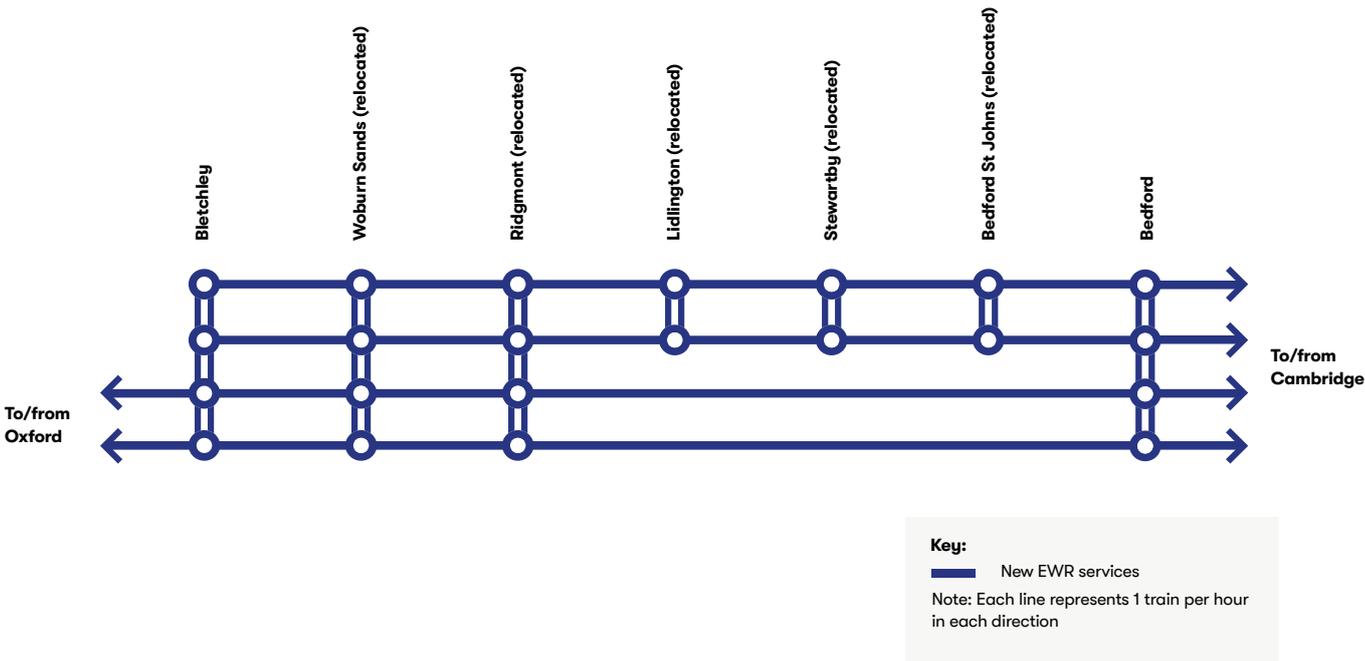
When we have reviewed responses in relation to these concepts, we will prepare designs in greater detail for each of them, along with assessments of their effects. We will share these at our statutory consultation.

Details about where to access more information and how to respond to this consultation can be found in the final section of this document.

Concept 1: Retain the existing hourly service that stops at all current intermediate stations, and introduce fast limited-stop Oxford – Cambridge services alongside it.



Concept 2: Provide more people easier access to more frequent, faster and direct trains at five merged stations on the Marston Vale Line.



Section C: Bedford - improvements to the existing railway and a new section of railway

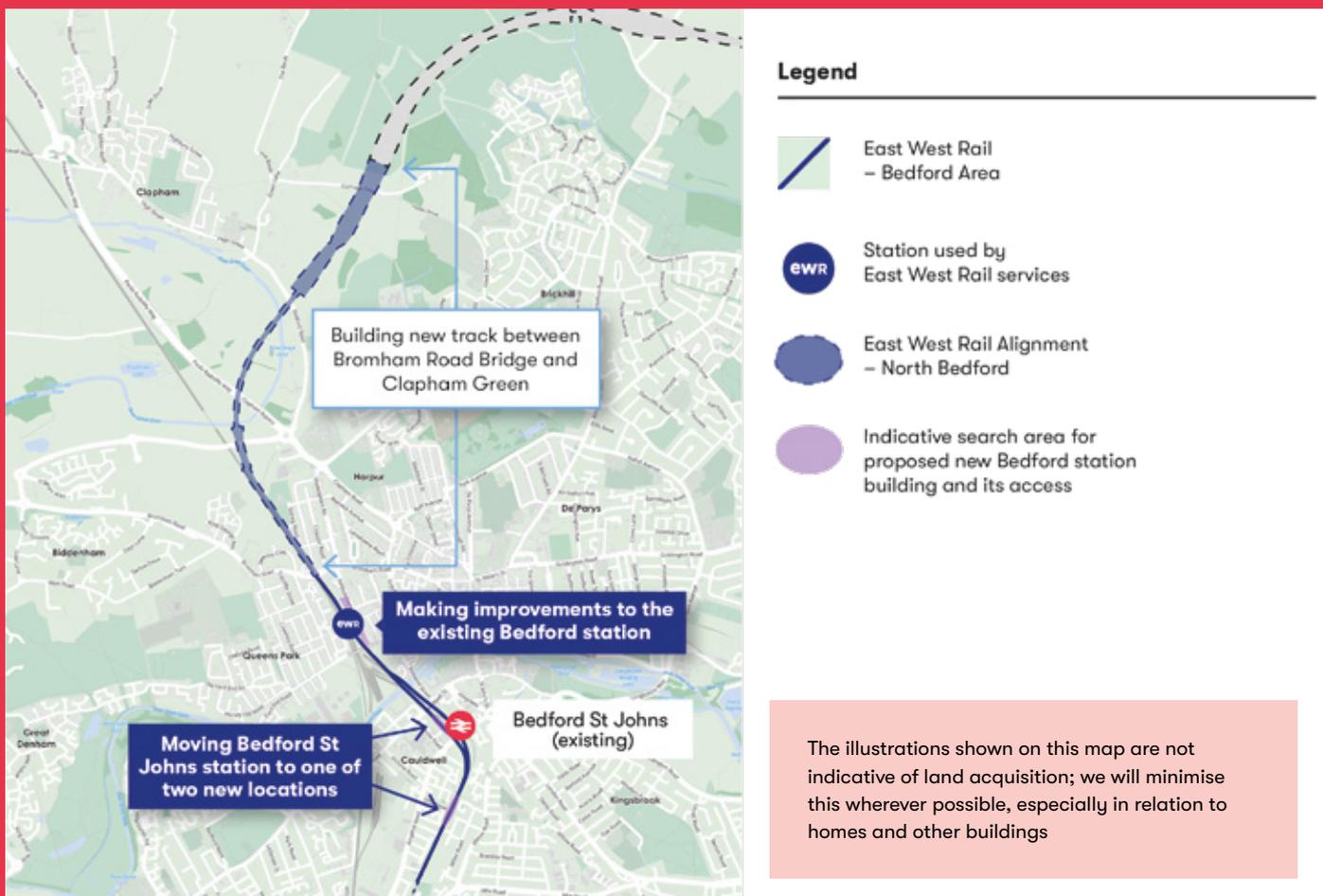
Why are we proposing this work?

Bedford station is already an important transport hub in the region. The introduction of East West Rail services means the station and supporting infrastructure need a range of improvements to make sure sufficient capacity is available for trains to be punctual, so that customers receive the service and experience they should expect.

In restoring a vital rail connection between Oxford, Bedford and Cambridge that was lost to local people in the last century, these improvements can support local stakeholders' future aspirations for more jobs, prosperity and growth in this lively, diverse town.

In particular, improvements to Bedford station would contribute to the regeneration of the area immediately around the station, and for the centre of Bedford.

Section C proposals map





Bedford St Johns station

This would need to be accompanied by changes to the track alignment around Bedford St Johns station, and the relocation of that station itself, as the existing track and station would currently be unable to accommodate proposed East West Rail services. In addition, new tracks are needed north of Bedford alongside the existing Midland Main Line to connect the new East West Rail platforms to the section of new railway that would connect Bedford to Cambridge.

What are the developing plans for this section?

- **Bedford St Johns station:** a new Bedford St Johns station on a different section of track into Bedford, either closer to the hospital or to the south west of the existing station, close to the Ampthill Road – Elstow Road Pedestrian Link bridge.
- **Bedford station:** building new track to Bromham Road Bridge. The existing station building is proposed to be demolished and a new station building would be built.
- **North Bedford:** building new track in between Bromham Road Bridge and Clapham Green, creating the new connection to Cambridge.

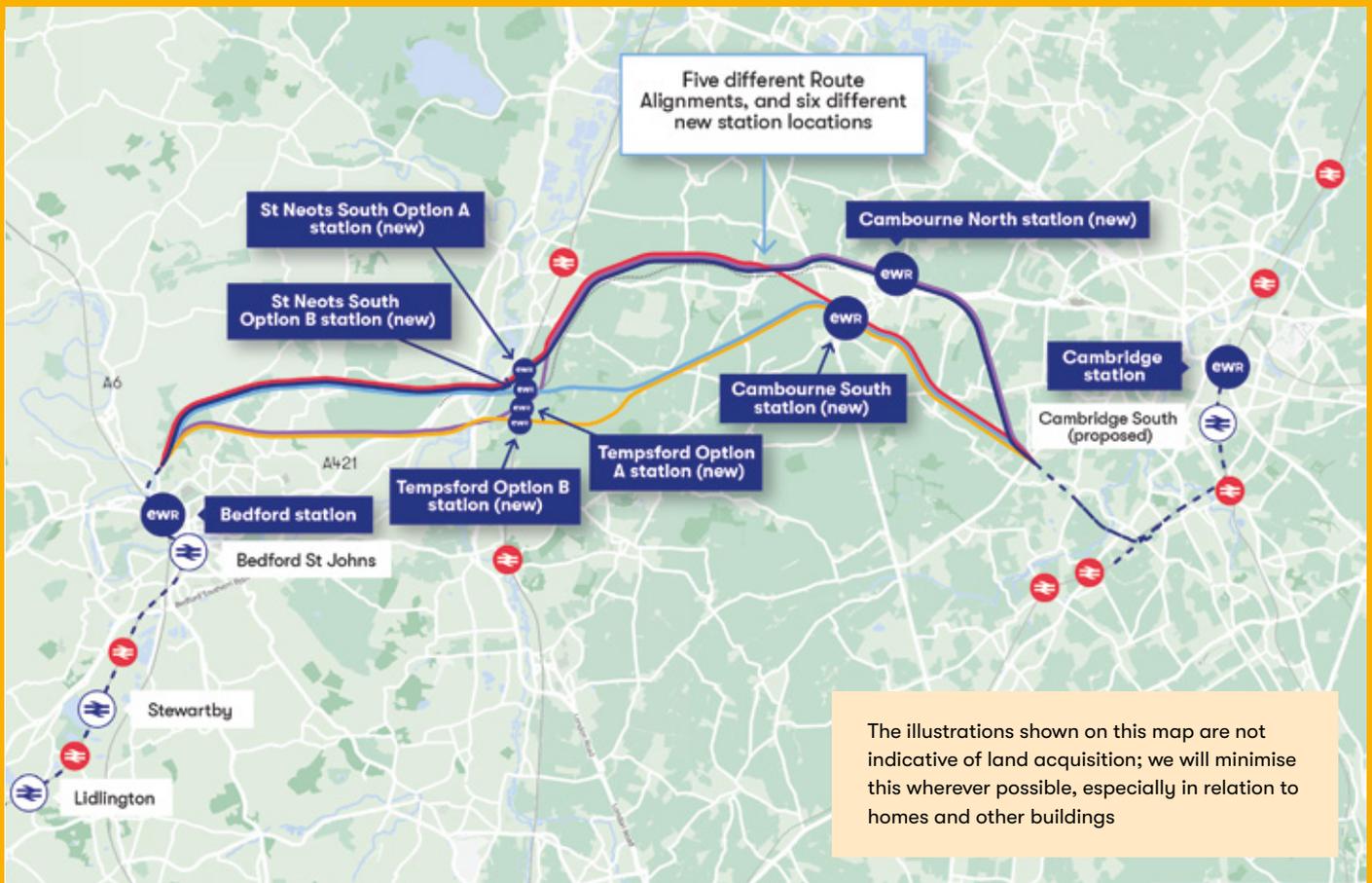
Details about where to access more information and how to respond to this consultation can be found in the final section of this document.

Section D: Clapham Green to The Eversdens - new railway and new stations

Why are we proposing this work?

East West Rail would bring faster and better long term connectivity to communities between Bedford and Cambridge. People living in Cambourne and in the area between Sandy and St Neots would benefit from new stations and a potential new connection to the East Coast Main Line (London-Edinburgh).

Section D proposals map



Legend

	Route Alignment 2 St Neots South Option A station to Cambourne South station		Route Alignment 1 - Emerging preference St Neots South Option A station to Cambourne North station		Route Alignment 6 St Neots South Option B station to Cambourne South station		Route Alignment 9 - Emerging preference Tempsford Option A station to Cambourne North station
	Route Alignment 8 Tempsford Option B station to Cambourne South station		Other area of East West Rail		Proposed A428 Alignment		National Rail station
	Station used by East West Rail services		Station that may be used by East West Rail services				

The new line would also support local aspirations to create more jobs and develop homes for people in areas along the route. Businesses would find it easier to start up and grow locally as they would benefit from better access to suppliers, customers, and skills as more people will be able to afford to live and work in the area.

For the benefits of East West Rail to be realised, a new section of railway needs to be built between Bedford and Cambridge. In early 2019 we consulted on five potential route options for this section of new railway.

In January 2020, following consideration of responses to our previous consultation, further design development and environmental assessment, the Government announced our preferred route option (route option E). The preferred route option defines the area within which the actual railway line maybe located.

Following the announcement of the preferred route option, we have now identified and assessed potential route alignment options, as well as considering possible station locations on each of these route alignments.

Alignments 1 (dark blue) and 9 (purple) have been identified as emerging preferences for a number of reasons:

- Joined up infrastructure – they benefit from a shared ‘travel corridor’ with the proposed A428 Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet Improvement Scheme, meaning they already cover a route used regularly to connect people to places
- New housing and communities – we believe that there is more potential for new homes and communities in the area (particularly for Cambourne North compared to Cambourne South)
- Economic growth – alongside the development of new housing, a new station could bring economic growth to the community, creating more jobs and prosperity
- Value for money – they are expected to be less costly to deliver than other alignments connecting to the same station pairings.

Details about where to access more information and how to respond to this consultation can be found in the final section of this document.

What are the developing plans in this area?



Construction of a new railway - nine options have been identified and we have shortlisted these to five options for the route alignment of East West Rail. Out of these five options, we have identified two emerging preferences



A new station in the area near Tempsford or St Neots, which could connect East West Rail with the East Coast Main Line



A new station either north or south of Cambourne

Section E: Harlton to Hauxton - new railway and a new railway junction

Why are we proposing this work?

We propose that the new railway between Bedford and Cambridge enters Cambridge from the south via the West Anglia Main Line.

We need to build a new railway junction to join the proposed new railway to the existing Shepreth Branch Royston line (the King's Cross line), which then connects to the West Anglia Main Line at the Shepreth Branch Junction to the north east.

Construction of the new junction would allow fast and reliable East West Rail services to run into Cambridge connecting communities and businesses across the Oxford to Cambridge Arc.

What are the developing plans in this area?

- New railway infrastructure south west of Cambridge including a new railway junction near Harston and Hauxton.

Details about where to access more information and how to respond to this consultation can be found in the final section of this document.

The illustrations shown on this map are not indicative of land acquisition; we will minimise this wherever possible, especially in relation to homes and other buildings

Section E proposals map



Section F: Great Shelford to Cambridge station - improvements to the existing railway and Cambridge station

Why are we proposing this work?

To enable the existing railway between the new Hauxton Junction and Cambridge to accommodate the additional East West Rail services we need to make a number of changes to the railway. Changes are also required at Cambridge station to help with the anticipated increase in passengers.

What are the developing plans in this area?

- Improvements or closure of a level crossing on Hauxton Road, between Little Shelford and Hauxton

- Maintaining the existing two track railway of the Shepreth Branch Royston line (the King's Cross line) to Shepreth Branch Junction
- An additional two tracks in some areas to create four tracks on the West Anglia Main Line between Shepreth Branch Junction and Cambridge station, and modification of Shepreth Branch Junction
- Additional platforms at Cambridge station and the opportunity to stop at the proposed Cambridge South station.

Details about where to access more information and how to respond to this consultation can be found in the final section of this document.

Section F
proposals map



The approach to Cambridge

Before we chose our preferred route option in January 2020, we assessed whether we should take a northern approach into Cambridge. At that stage, and taking into account the response to consultation, our assessment showed that a northern approach to Cambridge wouldn't perform as well as our options that approached Cambridge from the south.

Due to the fact that we are now looking at options with a station north of Cambourne, which could facilitate a northern approach to Cambridge, we have updated the information relating to our previous conclusion that the additional route length on the northern approach would lead to higher costs and lower passenger benefits.

Our updated information on approaching Cambridge from the north, including a station at Oakington and a junction at Milton, is contained in the Technical Report.

The updated information continues to show the reasons why a southern approach remains our preference in terms of value for money, benefits and impacts on communities, and in terms of operating the railway.

Details about where to access more information and how to respond to this consultation can be found in the final section of this document.



Cambridge



02.

Introduction to the Project and the story so far

Introduction to the Project and the story so far

The East West Railway Company (EWR Co) is asking communities, representatives and stakeholders to give us comments and thoughts on developing plans for East West Rail.

This consultation focuses on two different aspects:

- Customer experience and railway operations
- The infrastructure including route alignments, stations and level crossings.

This non-statutory consultation is your opportunity to tell us about your expectations for customer service and what you think about the options we have identified. We are consulting you while plans are still at a formative stage, so we can create the best possible rail service for the communities the line will serve. There will be a further opportunity for you to tell us your views as the Project progresses.

This section provides information on:

- East West Rail (EWR), including the benefits of the Project
- East West Railway Company (EWR Co), including our objectives and the objectives for the Project
- Some of the factors that we are taking into account
- Background to this consultation.

East West Rail — creating meaningful connections

The vibrant mix of rural and urban communities between Oxford, Milton Keynes, Bedford and Cambridge blend beautiful landscapes and a rich cultural heritage with globally renowned centres of education, business, technology and an increasingly dynamic business scene, which together contribute around £111 billion to the national economy each year.

It's a fantastic place to live and work, but a lack of good transport links is limiting people's ability to enjoy everything the area has to offer - from easy opportunities to travel between home and work, to days out with friends and family.

East West Rail is a once in a generation opportunity to provide frequent, fast and reliable rail links for communities between Oxford, Milton Keynes, Bedford and Cambridge, connecting people with the things that matter most to them.

By making it cheaper and quicker to get around, the new railway line would create a range of opportunities for people right across the area and help to spread prosperity across the UK, supporting opportunities for economic growth in towns and cities outside London.



Skateboarder, Oxford

The full proposed East West Rail link



Figure: EWR route between Oxford and Cambridge



Key:



Proposed East West Rail link



Proposed East West Rail station



Potential future section of East West Rail

The benefits

EWR will create opportunities for people right across the area by:



Making it cheaper and quicker to get around – connecting people to their jobs, homes and families, as well as businesses to their employees, suppliers and customers



Supporting new homes to make the area a more affordable place to live and work



Making it easier for businesses to create more jobs and increase productivity



Achieving biodiversity net gain, and aiming to deliver a net zero carbon railway as part of our proposals.

As well as improving quality of life for people locally, it would help the local economy by:



Making places more appealing for people wanting to start and grow businesses – attracting and retaining the best talent in the region, while encouraging new investment to support the economy



Spreading prosperity across the UK – creating growth for towns and cities outside of London. The National Infrastructure Commission estimated that creating these transport links and supporting the area between the world class education hubs of Oxford and Cambridge was worth nearly £80bn extra each year to the British economy¹.

¹ <https://nic.org.uk/app/uploads/Economic-analysis-Cambridge-Econometrics-SQW-report-for-NIC.pdf>

EWR is being delivered in stages, and trains are already running between Oxford and Bicester. The next stage will extend EWR further north and east, allowing services to run between Oxford and Milton Keynes. Creating this link requires the reinstatement of an out of use railway line between Gavray Junction at Bicester and Bletchley including a new bridge over High Speed 2 (HS2). In 2020, permission was granted for the railway between Bicester and Bletchley and major civil engineering construction work has commenced.

Construction of the Bletchley to Bedford improvement and Bedford to Cambridge routes are expected to begin by 2025, with the ambition of trains running the full length of the line between Oxford and Cambridge by the end of the decade.

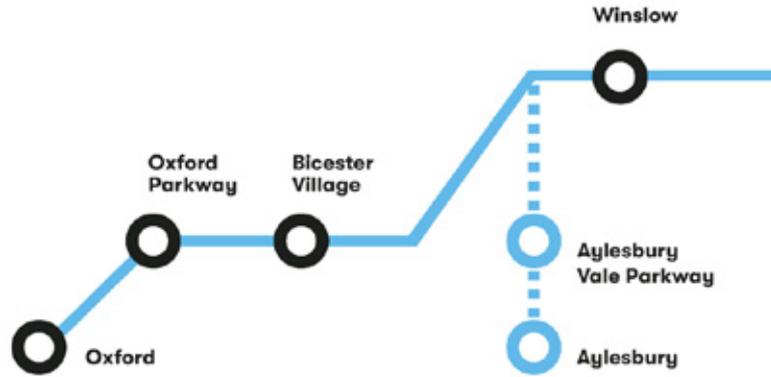
EWR services would be introduced in three Connection Stages (CS) as follows, in each direction:

- CS1: two passenger trains per hour between Oxford and Milton Keynes
- CS2: an additional two passenger trains per hour between Oxford and Bedford
- CS3: extension of the two passenger trains per hour between Oxford and Bedford to Cambridge and an additional two passenger trains per hour between Bletchley and Cambridge.



Bedford River Festival

The Three Connection Stages



Connection Stages

Oxford to Bicester (current)



Connection Stage 1: Oxford to Milton Keynes



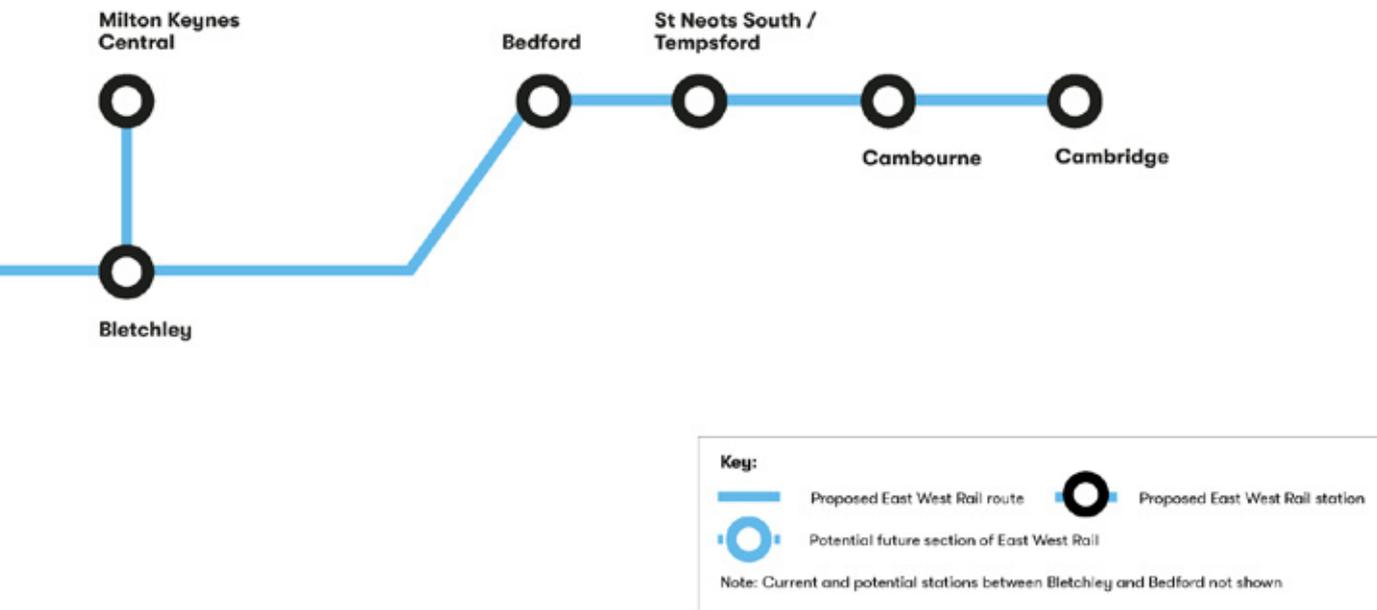
Connection Stage 2: Oxford to Bedford



Connection Stage 3: Oxford to Cambridge



Figure: EWR services



In order to run the services shown on this map and build the associated infrastructure, we must first go through a detailed planning, consultation and approvals process. To learn more about this process, please refer to the diagram on page 57.

What is East West Railway Company?

East West Railway Company Limited (“**EWR Co**”) is responsible for developing the East West Rail Project (**the “Project”**) and was created to plan a railway with customers and communities at its core. We are passionate about developing a railway which best serves people living and working between Oxford, Milton Keynes, Bedford and Cambridge.

The Sponsor of the Project is the Secretary of State for Transport who, through his Department, owns the Project and has overall responsibility for its success. We were set up by the Secretary of State for Transport in 2018 with the following role:

- To improve existing rail lines, including additional upgrades to the Marston Vale Line; and between Bedford and Cambridge – to plan a rail link to complete the proposed line.

We are integrating the above two sections of the Project to get the very best results for all the communities we will be serving right the way from Oxford to Cambridge.

We have a mission to innovate and to challenge the status quo in the rail and construction industries, leading to more efficient and cost-effective Project delivery, and a better experience for passengers. Our distinctive outlook and commitment to doing the right thing for our customers and local communities runs through everything we do and every decision we make.

Oxford-Cambridge Arc Spatial Framework

The Government has announced that it is developing a spatial framework that will guide planning and transport policy in the Arc. It aims to publish proposals in 2021 and 2022. We will be contributing to the production of this framework and will take account of any policies that emerge when we prepare our application for a Development Consent Order.

East West Rail Company

— our ambition



Creating connections:

not just laying down steel and concrete, we are focused on designing a railway that is most likely to create connections between local communities that will support the economic growth and prosperity in the area



Delivering for the community:

at a very early stage in the design of the route between Bedford and Cambridge, we asked communities for comments and points of view on the new route alignment. Your responses were an important factor in the decision on a preferred route option. The route alignment proposals we are now asking you to comment on have been developed following the feedback we received from communities, stakeholders and local authorities.



Protecting and enhancing the environment:

our proposals have been developed with environmental considerations at the forefront. Rather than being an after-thought, we used environmental data as a fundamental factor in deciding which route options to consider. Our communities can have confidence that these proposals have been developed to support ambitions for EWR to increase biodiversity and respect important environmental and heritage sites in its area. In particular, international and/or European sites have been considered as part of our assessments and no such sites are to be directly impacted by any of the alignment options



Delivering better results through innovation:

taxpayers must have confidence in our ability to manage every aspect of the Project, from the way we work with communities, to our financial controls, to the delivery methods we will use. We're committed to seeking out the most appropriate way to deliver this Project, and for the communities EWR will serve.

Project objectives

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. The strategic objectives set by the Department for Transport and stated in the consultation in relation to route options were as follows:

- Improve east-west public transport connectivity by providing rail links between key urban areas (current and anticipated) in the Oxford-Cambridge Arc
- Stimulate economic growth, housing and employment through the provision of new, reliable and attractive inter-urban passenger train services in the Oxford-Cambridge Arc
- Meet initial forecast passenger demand
- Consider and plan for future passenger demand, making provision where it is affordable
- Contribute to improved journey times and inter-regional passenger connectivity by connecting with north-south routes and routes beyond Oxford and Cambridge
- Maintain current capacity for rail freight and make appropriate provision for anticipated future growth
- Provide a sustainable and value for money transport solution to support economic growth in the area.

The Project objectives are made up of two documents: the Sponsor's Requirements (set by the DfT) and the Programme-Wide Output Specification. Section 3 of the Technical Report sets out more information on these documents and how they have been applied to the Project objectives. You can also read the documents, which are appended to the Technical Report.

The most relevant aspects of these objectives for this Consultation Document are:

- **Safety:** this is of vital importance to passengers, staff and those who live near or interact with the railway. It means we need to look at all aspects of the railway, including the safety of level crossings
- **Environment:** in terms of sustainability, the Arc's attractive natural and built environment is one of its key assets. Travelling by train is one of the most carbon-efficient ways to travel and it is intended that EWR will help to reduce road congestion and pre-emptively to avoid increases which may otherwise be associated with new housing or economic development, in favour of a more sustainable form of transport, as a result of quicker and more reliable journeys over long distances, encouraging people to switch their journeys from cars to rail. EWR Co has taken a proactive approach to environmental considerations and put them at the core of the Project.

We will:

- aim to deliver a net zero carbon railway, in line with existing and developing net zero carbon policy, legislation and commitments at a global, national and local level
 - achieve biodiversity net gain in the construction of East West Rail
 - consider the importance of environmental sustainability in our activities and the decisions we make
 - follow the environmental mitigation hierarchy and implement a decision-making process which seeks to 'design out' potential environmental impacts
- **EWR services:** introduced in the Connection Stages (CS) set out above.

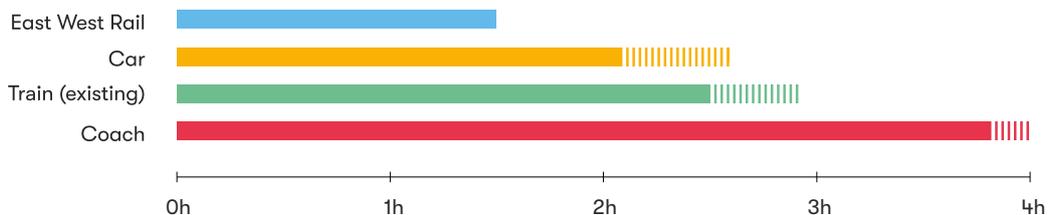
EWR Co aims to develop an attractive, predictable ‘clock-face’ service at regular intervals. This means that trains would call at most stations at the same minutes past each hour all day, and that train services would be evenly spaced as far as possible. Our indicative target maximum times are:

Figure: Indicative target maximum journey times



For comparison, travelling from Oxford to Cambridge by rail takes almost three hours and requires passengers change trains between London stations, which involves crossing London using another mode of transport, such as the London Underground or London Buses. This adds to the risk of delay or cancellation as well as being inconvenient, pushing people away from sustainable transport and onto already congested roads.

Figure: Oxford to Cambridge minimum and maximum journey time comparison by mode



EWR Co aims to provide a reliable service and to protect EWR services and customers from the impact of wider railway disruption. To minimise disruption, EWR services will run on dedicated track, separated from the rest of the railway network wherever possible, whilst maximising connectivity.

- **Connectivity:** the Project would connect to several north-south routes, including provision for a potential new passenger interchange with the East Coast Main Line (ECML) at either Tempsford or St Neots (as a new station, not replacing the existing station)
- **Customer experience and stations:** we aim to set new standards for our customers, and this ethos has been embedded into designing and developing the Project. You can read more on this in the customer experience and railway operations section of the consultation
- **Powering EWR services:** we are aiming to deliver a net zero carbon railway and will be considering conventional and emerging technological solutions for powering trains when all EWR services are fully operational. This could mean we operate conventional electric trains powered by overhead electric lines, or it could be that we use a different technology to help lower our carbon emissions: that decision hasn't yet been taken
- **Freight on EWR:** we are designing the railway to be able to accommodate freight, which means that the railway will be capable of freight operation. How much freight would use the railway is not yet known as this is subject to government policy and market demand and is likely to be affected by interventions on other parts of the rail network. We are studying the potential demand, the capacity considerations on EWR infrastructure, and the potential constraints elsewhere on the network. This work will inform the approach to the next stage of design and the assessment of the environmental impacts of the Project. Our current considerations on freight are available in more detail in the Technical Report. Further information, including how we will avoid or reduce impacts from freight, will be shared during the next consultation.

Other considerations about the Project

Supporting property owners

We are aware that some of the proposals we have put forward in this document could ultimately affect people's homes, businesses and farms. In developing our proposals, we aim to minimise the negative impact this may have on people's land and property and mitigate any impacts we cannot avoid.

While we don't yet know for certain which land or property will be needed, we know that publishing our plans could potentially affect people needing to sell their land or property. This is a matter we take seriously. Although it is not a legal requirement at this stage of the Project's development, we are consulting on a discretionary purchase scheme, the Need to Sell Scheme, that, if introduced would aim to support owner occupiers in this position. The proposal is that the scheme be introduced when the preferred route alignment for the railway is announced later this year, but it is subject to further consideration, including of any responses to consultation.

We would like to hear your views on these proposals for a Need to Sell Scheme and whether this is the right way for us to support those whose land and property could be affected by the publication of our plans for East West Rail. Full details on how you can respond and the deadline for responses, will be available in our Guide to the proposed Need to Sell Scheme, available on our website:

www.eastwestrail.co.uk

The proposed Need to Sell Scheme would be aimed at owner occupiers who can show that they have a pressing need to sell their home, farmhouse or small business but are unable to do so except at a substantially lower price as a result of the EWR project at the point of Preferred Route Alignment.

We will confirm the decision on the proposed scheme as part of our consultation response.

Being a good neighbour

Since taking over the Project, we have identified ways in which we can reduce the disruption of building the railway on local communities. We are already working with Network Rail and the supply chain on CS1 to improve the relationship between the project and local communities. On CS2 and CS3 we are committed to building respectful and supportive relationships with communities from the very start. Our approach to construction and further details of potential impacts from the construction process will be explained during the next consultation. We will also prepare a Code of Construction Practice for the Project, which will explain the steps we will take to control the effects of construction on local communities and the environment. As part of this, we will be working with your local representatives and community groups to make sure we're building EWR not just in the right place, but in the right way too.

Depots and stabling

Stabling and depot facilities are required along the route alignment to facilitate the maintenance and storage of infrastructure and rolling stock. Three types of stabling or depot site have been identified which are detailed on the next page.

Infrastructure maintenance depot(s)

One or more depots could be needed to store materials, equipment and rolling stock (trains) needed to maintain the railway. These depots would need to be connected to the railway. When identifying suitable depot locations, potential impacts on local communities and the environment will be considered, as well as operational requirements.

Train maintenance depot

This depot is needed to carry out maintenance of the passenger trains for the railway. The current assumption is that Bletchley train maintenance depot, an existing depot facility, will be modified and used as the main depot location for the EWR fleet of trains. Currently, the scope of work for the depot is being jointly designed, developed and delivered with West Midlands Trains, the depot facility owner, and it is assumed that this will be carried out using existing powers available to Network Rail and the depot facility owner (known as permitted development rights).

Train stabling location(s) or sidings

Stabling locations – also called sidings – provide space to store trains when they are not in use, such as overnight and for carrying out light servicing activities. These stabling locations would need to be connected to the railway and have provision for various activities, for example interior and exterior cleaning of the trains, refilling water tanks and servicing the train toilets. When identifying suitable locations, potential impacts on local communities and the environment have been taken into account, as well as operational requirements.

Currently, we believe that the most suitable location for stabling EWR trains is in the general Cambourne area. We would try to avoid impacts on the existing community when we are deciding where this would go. Further details will be shared during the next statutory consultation when the alignment of the Project in that area has been established.

Telecommunications

Telecommunications masts are likely to be placed along the new railway between Bedford and Cambridge. As design progresses EWR Co will be mindful of the impacts of telecommunication masts and would consider environmental issues and local communities when choosing where to place them. Details about the placement of telecommunications masts will be provided at the next consultation.

Highways, PRow and Private Access Roads

We have considered the impact on highways, public rights of way (PRow) and private access roads as part of the design and assessment of the Route Alignment options for the new railway between Bedford and Cambridge. We are seeking to maintain existing highway connections wherever feasible. We are not proposing to provide any new level crossings and are aiming to close as many such crossings as possible in the areas we are proposing works to the railway. PRows provide important connections for local communities and we are considering alternative solutions if crossings are closed.

We are continuing to consider our approach for maintaining highways and public rights of way which cross the existing railway between Bicester and Bedford. Options are outlined in chapters 6 and 7 of the Technical Report. We will consult in more detail on proposals for individual highways, public rights of way and private access roads at the statutory consultation.

Statutory Utility Works

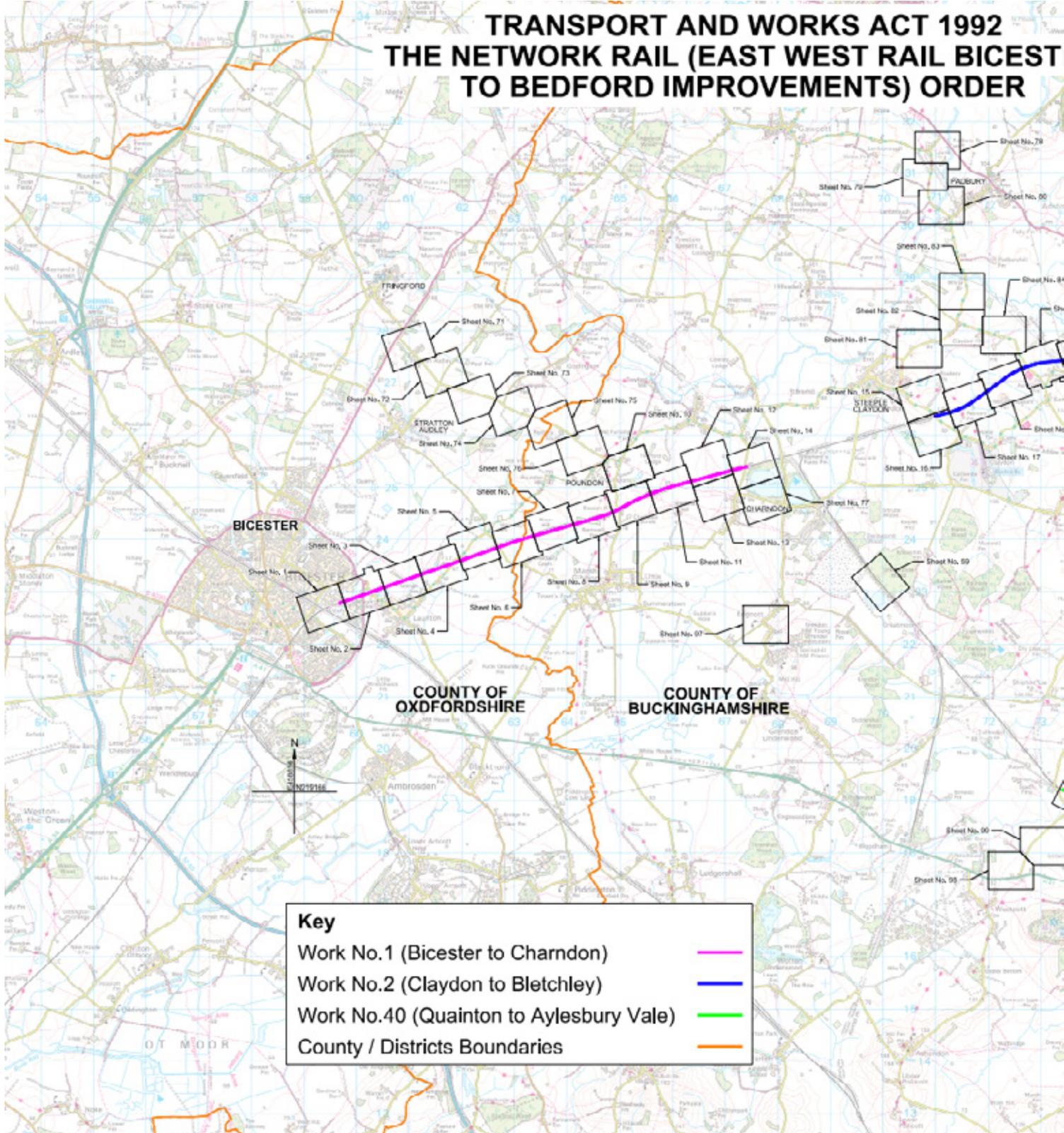
It is inevitable that in constructing a Project of this type, existing underground and overhead services (such as electricity, gas, water and communications) will need to be relocated. This work is usually, but not always, undertaken in advance of the main construction works. We will engage with utility companies with the aim of minimising any disruption that may be associated with utility works.

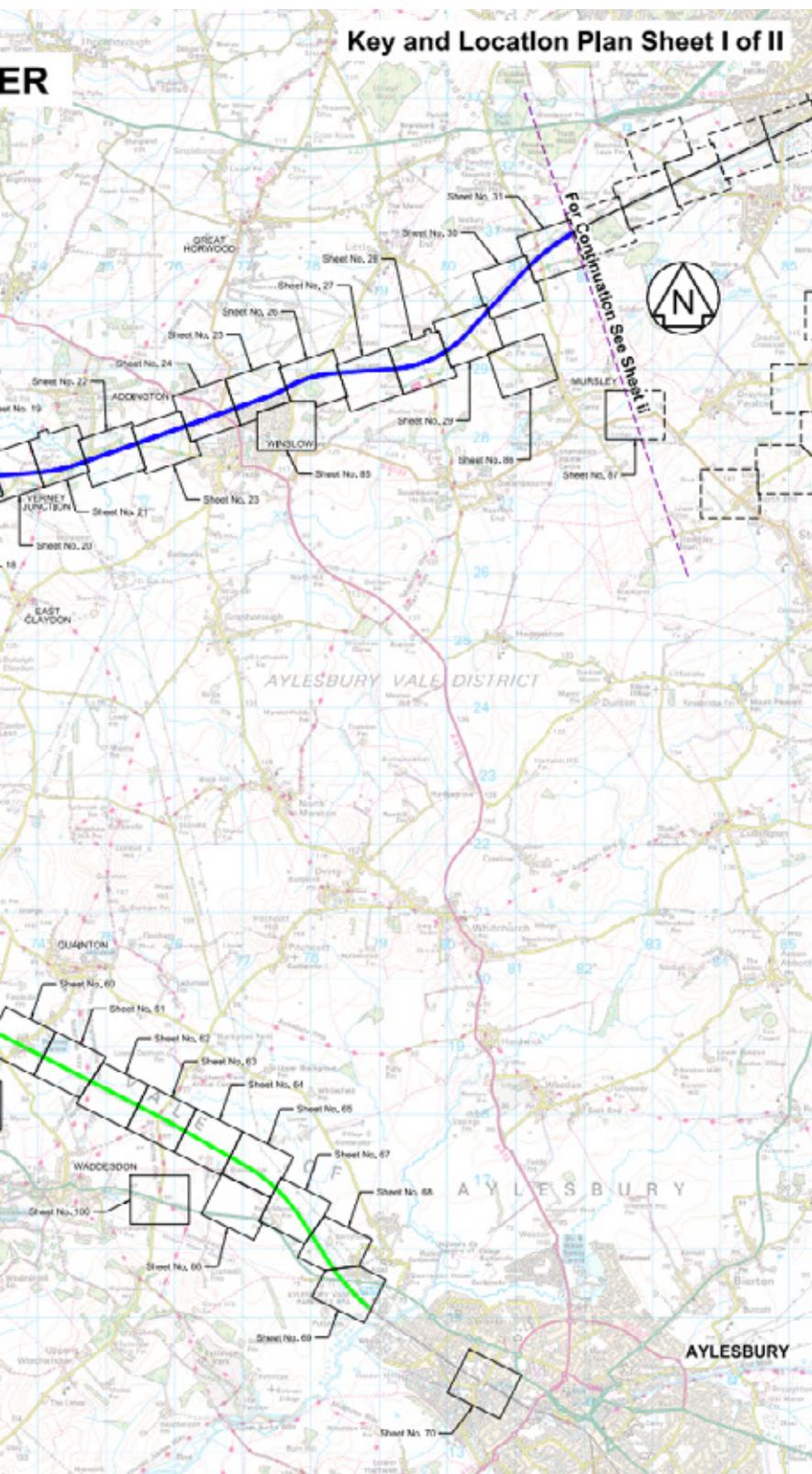
Designs for any utility diversions that may be required to deliver the Project will be discussed and agreed with the relevant utility companies and will be set out at the statutory consultation where appropriate.



London Road level crossing

Developing East West Rail





Oxford to Bicester, Bletchley and Bedford

In 2012, the Government authorised major improvements to the railway and local stations between Oxford and Bicester under a Transport and Works Act Order (TWAO). This work was completed in 2016 and Chiltern Railways began running services from Oxford through to London via Bicester in 2016.

In 2018 Network Rail applied for powers to develop the Bicester to Milton Keynes and Bedford section of the Project. In 2020 the Government granted a further TWAO to authorise the construction, operation and maintenance of the necessary infrastructure to run extra services between Oxford and Bedford. Construction has started on this section. However, changes and additions to existing infrastructure is needed in this area to allow future EWR trains to run all the way through to Cambridge. These proposed developments on the Oxford to Bicester and Bletchley to Bedford lines will form part of our application for development consent and are included as part of this consultation.

You can find out more about these plans in chapter 4 of this document.

Figure: Works already consented through a Transport and Works Act Order

Bedford to Cambridge

Previous consultation

This is the second public consultation on the section of proposed railway line between Bedford and Cambridge. In 2019 we asked for comments on five proposed route options. Over 3,500 people came to our consultation events, and almost 7,000 people sent consultation responses via email, online or by post.

We have summarised how people responded to the last consultation and explained how we have taken these responses into account in our **You Said We Did** report.

Please go to www.eastwestrail.co.uk/the-project/consultations for the full list of documents that were available as part of the 2019 consultation and more information on how to access them.

Preferred route option E

Feedback from communities and stakeholders during the 2019 consultation was central to our decision to recommend route option E as the preferred route option. This route option, linking existing stations in Bedford and Cambridge with communities in Cambourne and the area north of Sandy, south of St. Neots, received the most support from respondents. Route option E was ranked highest in four of the five main factors we used to assess the options:

- **Benefits for transport users:** improving connectivity to towns across the region, with new links to Thameslink, the East Coast Main Line and the West Anglia Main Line
- **Environmental considerations:** the route via Cambourne allows us to avoid the most environmentally challenging areas and avoid potential direct impacts on irreplaceable or sensitive environmental features, including heritage assets, with good opportunities to increase biodiversity

- **Supporting economic growth:** supporting regeneration plans, improving sustainable transport options and integrating with local public transport schemes
- **Supporting new homes:** with the potential to support local aspirations for, and the delivery of, new homes and communities in areas including Bedford, between Sandy and St Neots, and at Cambourne.

Route option E also delivers the best value, returning the most benefits to the taxpayer.

Further details on route option E are included in the Technical Report that accompanies this consultation.

You can access all of the previous consultation and route option announcement materials, including an overview of the responses to the 2019 consultation, on the Community Hub area of our website: www.communityhub.eastwestrail.co.uk/bedford-to-cambridge-preferred-route-option.

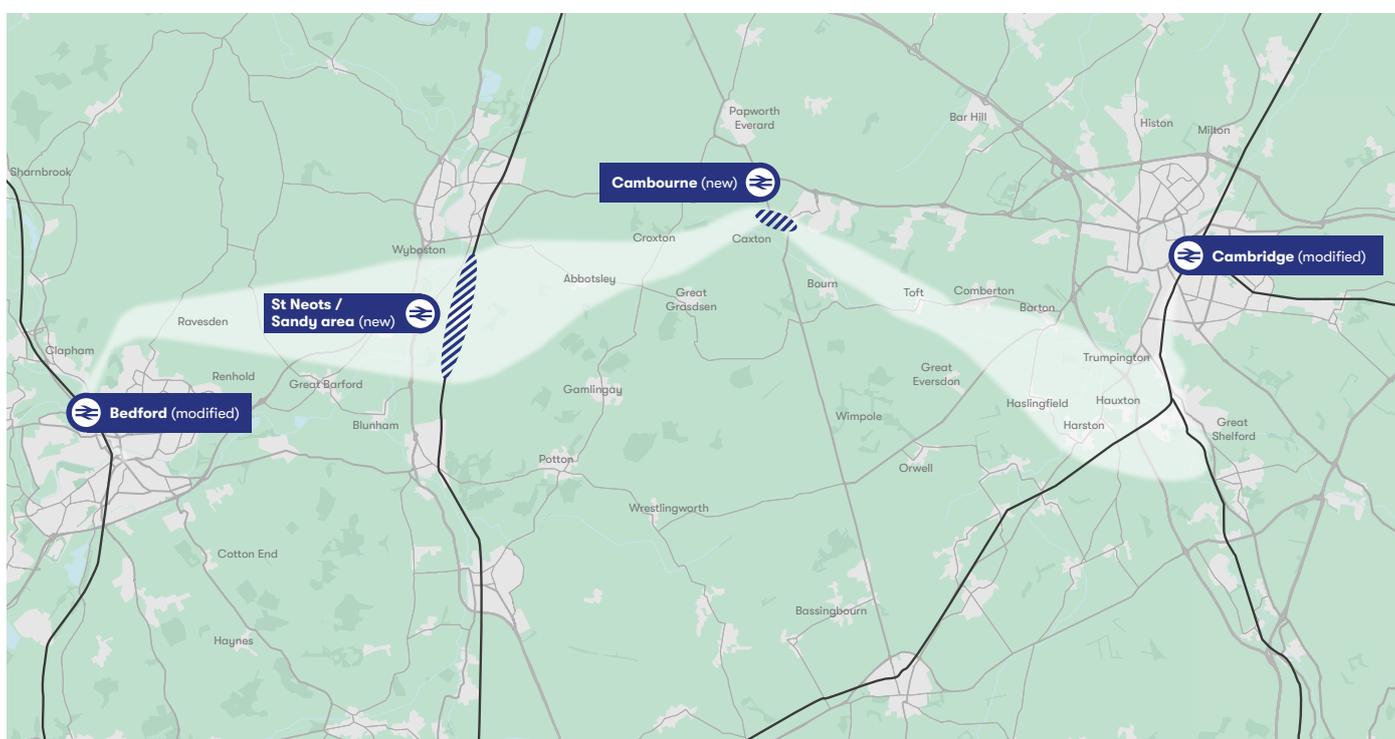


Figure: Preferred route option E

The approach to Cambridge

The selection of a preferred route option following the previous public consultation was based on a combination of fifteen assessment factors, which included transport user benefits, capital and operating costs and performance against the objectives for East West Rail. The decision to enter Cambridge from the south was based on engineering, operational, economic, and environmental reasons, which were described in the Preferred Route Option Report. We have continued to keep the decision to prioritise a southern approach to Cambridge (as opposed to a northern approach) under review, especially in light of new information.

As described later in this consultation document, emerging route alignments between Bedford and Cambridge have been identified. Of these, some adopt a route to the north of the alignment for the proposed A428 Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet improvement scheme and serve a potential new station to the north of Cambourne. The location of the station north of Cambourne would be more-or-less equidistant from Cambridge Station, whether taking the route by a northern and southern approach – about 24 km. Because of this, we have looked at an alignment that could approach Cambridge from the north and how it compares to a southern approach from the south in relation to topics. This is described in appendix F to the Technical Report.

In engineering terms, a northern route from Cambourne to Cambridge is feasible, although it is expected to be complex and expensive. A northern route would cross the newly constructed A14 trunk road to the west of Girton, which at this location is an eight-lane dual carriageway. This would therefore

require a substantial bridge structure. Other bridge structures would be required - the Technical Report describes further structures that may be necessary.

An additional station might be provided at Oakington to the east of Northstowe, but this area is low-lying and forms part of a flood plain so the station and its approaches would necessarily be elevated. Whilst there would be an opportunity to provide a multi-modal interchange, this emphasises that the area is already well served by public transport, for example the guided busway. Soon after the station, the railway passes over the guided busway which could also drive the need for the station to be elevated. A junction with the West Anglia Main Line (WAML) would be located north of Milton and it too sits in a floodplain. The route into Cambridge would be via the WAML railway, a two-track line which would need to be upgraded to a four-track line to accommodate the additional EWR services. This would necessarily require some property demolition and the widening or replacement of several substantial structures, including the A14 bridge at Milton and a new bridge over the River Cam.

Cambridge North station would also need to be modified to accommodate the additional lines. The WAML corridor between Milton and Cambridge is more constrained than a southern approach as it is an urban area with properties against the railway boundary and highway crossings with adjacent properties.

We have considered environmental effects of the northern and southern approaches to Cambridge at a level sufficient for comparison purposes. Our analysis to date indicates that the southern approach is

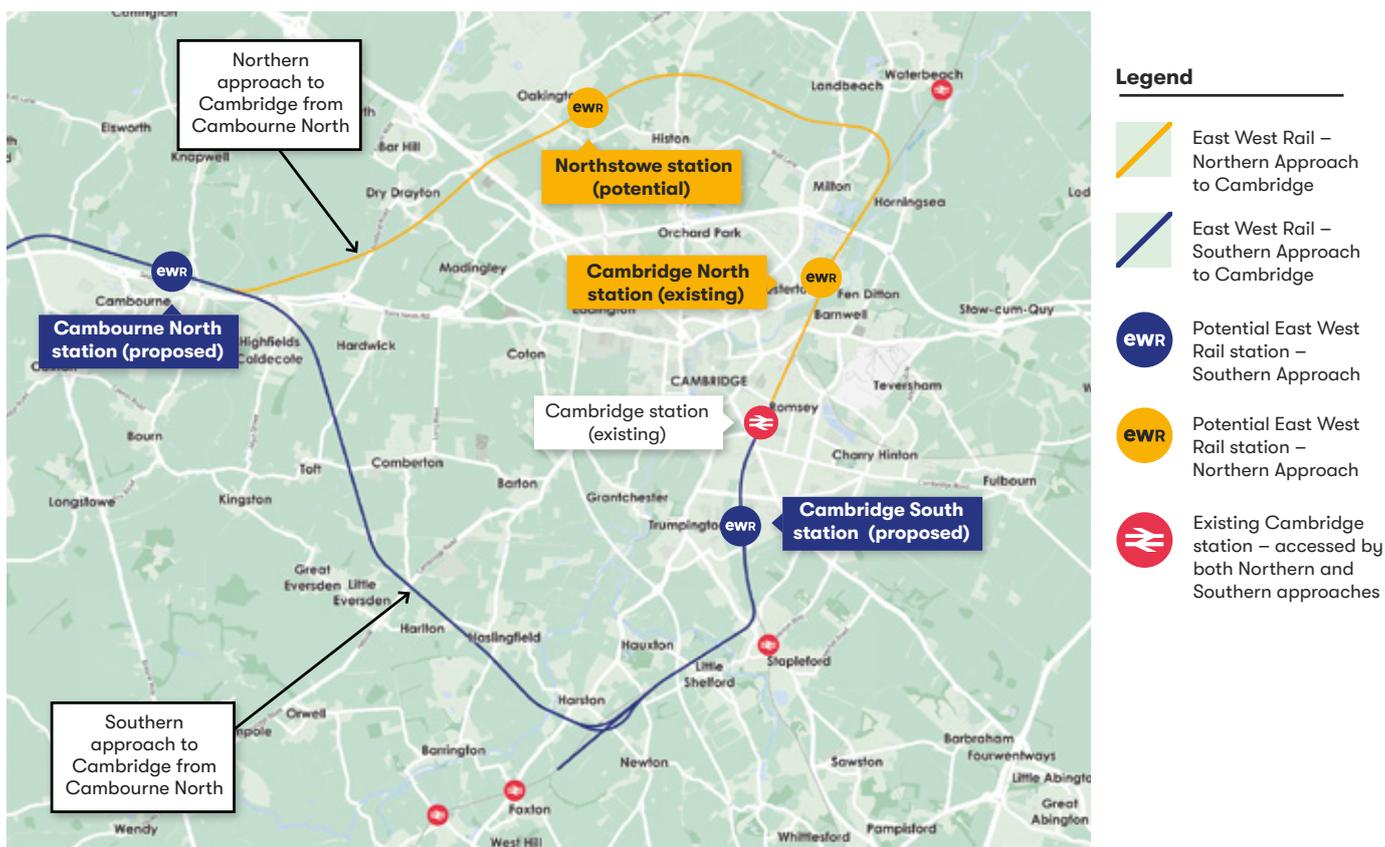


Figure: Map of approach to Cambridge

closer to some ecological and heritage designations, particularly the Wimpole and Eversden Woods SAC. We are confident that impacts on the SAC are capable of being mitigated as part of the design of EWR, meaning that this does not differentiate between the two. However, we will keep this under review.

Conversely, impacts on the environment in terms of property acquisition clearly favour the southern approach due to the predicted number of demolitions that would be required. There are approximately 40 residential and commercial properties that would be likely to require demolition for the northern approach as opposed to five for the southern approach.

We also consider and take account of the potential impacts for other environmental topics. This includes potential impacts to priority habitats, the historic environment and water resources. Also, due to the general topography of a northern approach to Cambridge, and the need to cross both roads and flood zones in this area, the railway is expected to be elevated in locations, for example on viaducts or embankments, which would be likely to result in visual impacts and greater need for importing fill, which would also be taken into account.

Economically and operationally, a northern approach to Cambridge does not provide the same level of benefits as a southern approach

and is less able to satisfy the overall objectives of EWR. In comparison with services entering Cambridge from the south, which in all our assessments are assumed to call at the new Cambridge South station which is being developed to serve the planned biomedical campus in the south of the city, the northern approach would be slower and more complicated. This is because, assuming that EWR services should call at Cambridge South, then EWR services entering Cambridge from the north would need to turn back at the new Cambridge South station, which would also need to be modified.

Furthermore, services on a northern approach utilising the EWR lines to travel further east to Norwich and Ipswich could not do so without reversing manoeuvres at Cambridge station and/or without the construction of further infrastructure to enable these onward journeys. To travel eastwards from the north a new railway chord (connecting track) would need to be constructed at Coldham's Common or Ely. Such construction at Coldham's Common is likely to require a special parliamentary procedure. Furthermore, although the length of railway for northern and southern options is similar (the northern route is around one kilometre longer), journeys to Cambridge from the north would take longer due to any extra time spent at a stop at Oakington for Northstowe.

In terms of service provision and the benefits of unlocking housing development, the additional benefits of a station at Oakington are small as the guided busway already serves this area with a frequent service to Cambridge. The growth of housing in this area is not dependent upon EWR as

planning permission has already been granted and there is limited potential for additional housing land to come forward for development.

A qualitative assessment of capital costs for a northern route has been completed and the extent and complexity of the structures, poor/wet ground conditions between Northstowe and Milton, loss of residential and business properties, and modifications to the railway and existing stations are expected to make this solution more expensive than the southern alignments proposed by EWR Co given that the alignment lengths are similar for each approach.

Overall, we consider that a northern route into Cambridge remains less attractive than a southern route to the city, validating earlier decisions made by EWR Co and reinforcing the case for the proposals described in the Technical Report.

The information in this Consultation Document addresses emerging route alignments in and around route option E, with a southern approach to Cambridge. However, in selecting a preferred route alignment for the approach to Cambridge we will also take into account comments about other approaches such as the one described above and in Appendix F to the Technical Report.

Share your views

1. **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.**

You can share your thoughts with us on this question by filling in our online feedback form at **www.eastwestrail.co.uk/feedback**. You can also send us your views by emailing us at **consultation@eastwestrail.co.uk** or writing to us at **Freepost EAST WEST RAIL**.

Alternatively, you can request a paper copy of the feedback form to be sent to you by:

- Ordering it online at **www.eastwestrail.co.uk/documents**
- Emailing us at **contact@eastwestrail.co.uk**
- Calling us on **0330 134 0067**.

Development consent for the works

The EWR Project has been designated as a nationally significant infrastructure Project (NSIP). This means that instead of applying for planning permission from a local authority, permission is given at a national level by the Government; this is called a Development Consent Order (DCO).

EWR Co is committed to early and ongoing engagement with the communities we serve. For this reason, we are asking for your thoughts on our plans while they are still at an early stage, so we can use your responses alongside continuing environmental, economic and technical studies to help us shape various aspects of the Project. However, there is a statutory, legal requirement to consult on proposals before applying for a DCO.

After the further, statutory stage of consultation, we will submit our application for a DCO to the Government. Our application will then be considered by a single inspector or a panel of inspectors from the Planning Inspectorate who will make a recommendation to the Secretary of State for Transport on whether the application should be approved. The final decision to grant or refuse the DCO application for the Project would then be taken by the Secretary of State in line with the National Policy Statement for National Networks.

You can find more information about the Planning Inspectorate on the National Infrastructure Planning website:
www.infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk

The route to consent, construction and operation

The Project will move through a number of development stages and approvals before we start the next phase of improvement works on the railway between Oxford and Bedford and construct the new railway between Bedford and Cambridge. At every step we seek to involve people so we can deliver the right connections for you and your community.

The dates below are included as a guide. We are always looking for ways to open your new railway sooner. As the team progress with designing and planning the railway we will know more about how long the different stages will take. We promise to be realistic about the timings and will share new dates with you if the programme changes.

A note on the maps used in this consultation

In November 2020, we published an expansive set of initial baseline maps in an interactive feature on the EWR Community Hub. These maps use data from national and local government agencies such as the Environment Agency, Natural England and local authorities, as well as from sources such as the Woodland Trust, and outline some of the complex factors which the EWR Co team has been taking into consideration. We have used the same information as is shown on these maps in identifying where best to route the proposals for EWR.

Where options are shown in this consultation, indicative areas in which works may be carried out are sometimes shown. This is so that you can make as informed a response to the consultation as possible. However, the areas marked are not the final boundaries of land that might be affected.

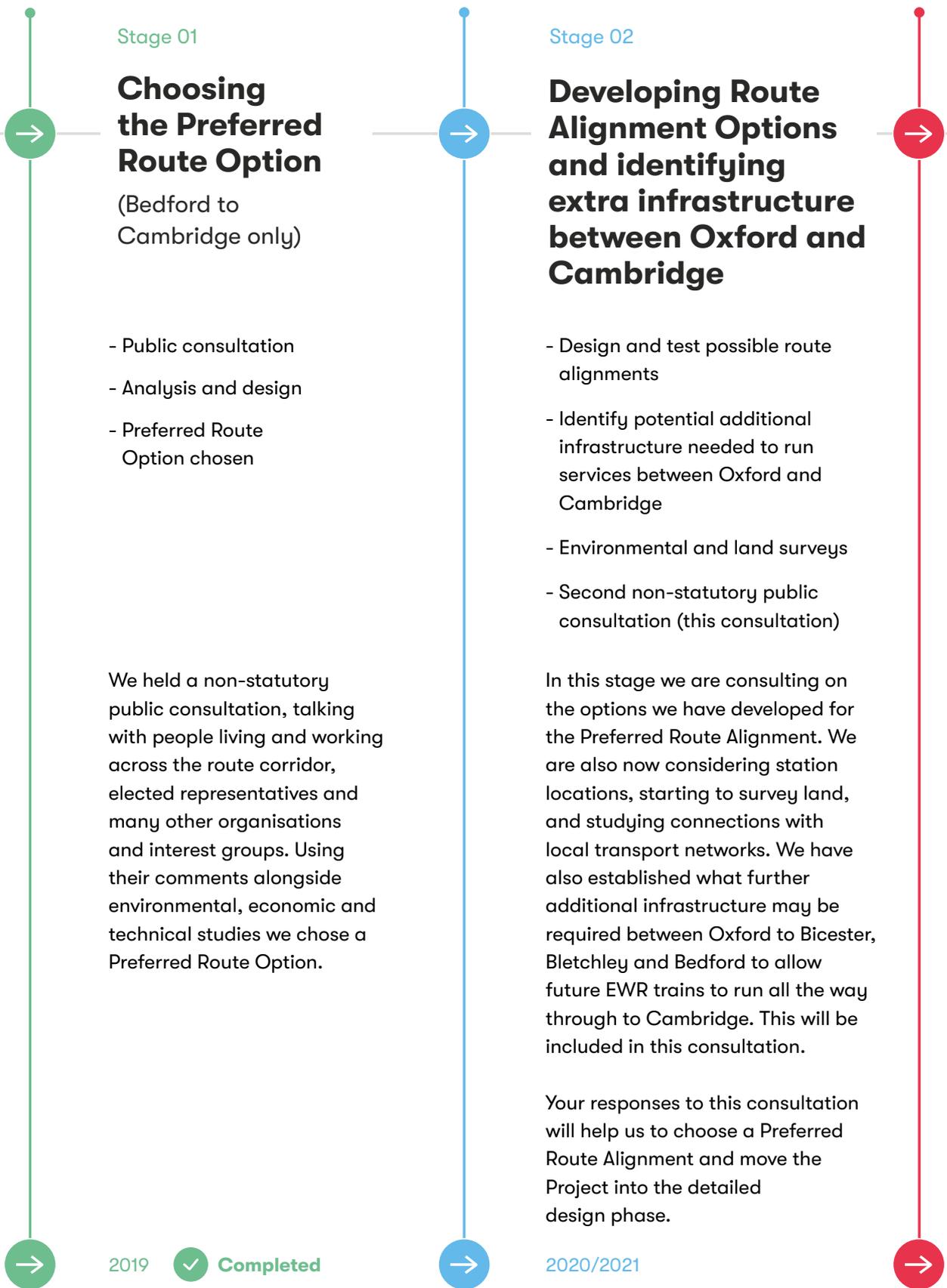


Figure: Stages involved to secure consent and begin construction

Stage 03

Choosing a Preferred Route Alignment and additional infrastructure

- Analysis and design
- Options for additional infrastructure between Oxford to Bicester, Bletchley and Bedford chosen
- Statutory public consultation

We will choose a Preferred Route Alignment between Bedford and Cambridge, and the options for additional infrastructure between Oxford to Bicester, Bletchley and Bedford. We will base this choice on feedback from two previous consultations and continuing environmental, economic and technical studies. It will be presented to the public alongside other parts of the Project, including the proposed design, in a statutory consultation. The information from this consultation will be used to finalise our proposals for the railway. We will also seek the next stage of funding and approval from government.

2021/2022

Stage 04

Securing development consent

- EWR Co submit application
- Planning Inspectorate holds an Examination
- Secretary of State for Transport makes a decision

We submit the proposals to the Secretary of State as part of an application for a “Development Consent Order”. On his behalf, the Planning Inspectorate will carry out a public examination of our application which normally lasts up to six months. People will be able to comment on the application. The Inspectorate goes through a strict process of examination and hearings, before making a recommendation to the Secretary of State on whether our proposals should go ahead. A final decision is usually given within six months of the examination closing.

2022/2024

Stage 05

Construction begins

- Construction begins

Once we’ve complied with any initial conditions or requirements included in the Development Consent Order, the government will consider the full business case for the Project to make the final decision to proceed. Following further conversations with the public and stakeholders, can start to construct your new railway.

2025

If approved and following construction, services will be introduced in three connection stages. To learn more about these connection stages, please refer to the diagram on page 34.



03.

How to respond to this consultation

03.
How to respond to this consultation

Who can take part?

Everybody is welcome to take part in our consultation and we are keen to hear all views.

Why are we consulting now?

We are committed to early and ongoing engagement with the communities we serve.

Consulting on the Project thoroughly at this formative stage will help us to:

- Inform the communities we serve about the development of the Project and make information as widely available as possible
- Gather feedback from stakeholders and the community to help inform the Project design and influence decisions around the further development of the proposals
- Identify key issues and concerns about the impacts and effects of the Project and identify potential ways to avoid or reduce them.

New ways of working during Covid-19

We continue to follow government advice around Covid-19 and the safety of the public and our team is paramount.

It has not been possible to hold large scale public events during this consultation period. In response to this, our approach includes:

- Providing a comprehensive range of accessible information about the proposals
- Engaging through virtual methods.

Each activity has been reviewed in line with:

- Government guidelines
- Comments from local authorities
- Comments from parish councils.

Get all the information you need to respond

If you have questions about anything in the Consultation Document, the topics covered, or would like more information before responding, you can:

- Visit our virtual public exhibition – an online space open throughout the consultation period displaying our full range of consultation materials in accessible and downloadable formats, and ways for you to respond to the consultation
- Join one of our virtual community briefings – a series of online events being held at the beginning of the consultation, hosted by a team of EWR Co experts and members of the design team who can talk to you about key elements of the consultation
- Join one of our virtual expert sessions – our experts will run sessions on specific topics of interest to our communities. These will provide a more detailed look at areas like environmental considerations and station locations. Our experts will answer questions submitted by you, and the sessions will also be made available as videos to download
- Visit our Community hub – a new online platform enabling you to get involved. You can access all of the Consultation materials here and submit your response as well.
- Speak to the team by emailing us at contact@eastwestrail.co.uk or by calling us on 0330 134 0067.

List of consultation materials

This **document** provides the proposals on which we are consulting.
Other documents available which provide further information include:

Document	Description
Consultation Summary	A summary of the Consultation Document
Consultation Document	This document setting out all of our proposals we are consulting you about, with more detail than the Consultation Summary.
Consultation Response Form	Please use this form to share your thoughts. We encourage you to respond online. If you do not have access to the Internet or would like to respond on paper, please let us know.
Consultation Technical Report	This contains detailed, technical information which supports the Consultation Document. It sets out how we have assessed options during design development, and how we have considered environmental factors.
Consultation Drawings	These drawings show the proposed alignment options between Bedford and Cambridge and the location of any proposed works between Oxford and Bedford.
Engineering Long Section Drawing	A Long Section Drawing is available for each route alignment option between Bedford and Cambridge, which shows its vertical alignment (height) relative to ground levels.
You Said, We Did	This document refers to our previous consultation about the route option between Bedford and Cambridge and how your responses informed our proposals.
Appendices	There are several additional documents which provide further background information.
EWR Virtual Consultation	An interactive, online exhibition where all the of the consultation materials can be viewed.
Guide to the proposed Need to Sell Scheme	Consultation guide to our proposed discretionary purchase scheme which aims to support owner occupiers who are unable to sell their property, except at a substantially lesser value, due to the project following the announcement of the preferred route alignment for the railway. We are seeking your views on our proposal.

03. How to respond to this consultation



St Neots level crossing

The impact of Covid-19 on EWR

The team at EWR Co is committed to doing the right thing for the communities we serve: this includes taking account of the impact of Covid-19 while also planning connections for local communities which will last for the next hundred years. Covid-19 undoubtedly generated immediate changes to working practices, but no consensus has formed about the long-term effect this might have on rail demand and we will remain open to new information on this topic

As the area looks to recover from the pandemic, EWR Co's planning will continue to develop and construction will start. Billions of pounds will pour into the local economy through our supply chain and thousands of jobs will be created.

Longer term, EWR will create an unrivalled knowledge arc by linking internationally renowned science parks and world-beating universities, in an environment where high-tech industries cluster, and organisations such as AstraZeneca are at the cutting edge of medical collaboration between private research and academia.

Please give us your views

We're keen to understand what you think about the emerging proposals for the Project, and your views on the broader scheme.

For environmental and cost reasons, we urge as many people as possible to use the online feedback form to share your views. Just go to **www.eastwestrail.co.uk/feedback**.

Alternatively, you can send us your views by emailing us at **consultation@eastwestrail.co.uk** or writing to us at **Freepost EAST WEST RAIL**

For further information, or to request a paper copy of the feedback form to be sent to you, speak to the team by emailing us at **contact@eastwestrail.co.uk** or by calling us on **0330 134 0067**.

Accessibility:

If you or somebody you know requires copies of our consultation materials in accessible formats or an alternative language, please contact us at **contact@eastwestrail.co.uk** or by calling us on **0330 134 0067**.

Closing date for responses

The consultation lasts for 10 weeks and closes on **9 June 2021**.

Please make sure your comments reach us on or before this date.

What happens next?

After the consultation an independent company will:

- Record and analyse all the responses received
- Summarise the responses in a report.

This report will be published on our website.

All of the feedback we receive will be carefully considered as we continue to progress our designs.

The feedback received from all rounds of consultation will be summarised in a consultation report which will be submitted as part of the DCO application.

Data protection

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)





04.
Glossary

Glossary

	Term	Description
A	A428 Improvement Scheme	The scheme promoted by Highways England to upgrade the A428 between Black Cat roundabout east of Bedford and Caxton Gibbet roundabout west of Cambourne
	Air Quality Management Area	An area designated by a local authority, where it believes the Government's objectives for air quality will not be achieved without additional interventions
	Assessment factors	The factors used to assess and compare different options for the Project
	At-grade junction	A railway junction where tracks cross at the same level. Also known as a flat junction
B	Biodiversity net gain	An approach to development that leaves biodiversity in a better state than before the development took place
	Blockade	The closure of a rail route for an extended period (typically more than two to three days)
	Bridleway	A route over which the public have rights to pass on foot, cycle and on horseback
C	Cambourne North station	Option for a new station to the north of Cambourne

	Term	Description
C	Cambourne South station	Option for a new station to the south of Cambourne
	Capital costs	Cost incurred during delivery of a project in purchasing buildings, land, construction works, and equipment as opposed to the costs of operating, maintaining or decommissioning the project
	Clock-face timetable	A timetable arranged so that trains arrive or depart at the same times in the hour, every hour (for instance at 10, 30 and 50 minutes past the hour)
	Code of Construction Practice (COCP)	A public document which will provide contractors and suppliers with details of the measures, controls, and standards of work that they must follow
	Connection stage	<p>Work will be divided into three connection stages which relate directly to a full journey and not just a piece of track:</p> <p>Connection Stage One (CS1): Oxford - Bletchley and Milton Keynes (services may be first opened to Bletchley in a two-phased approach)</p> <p>Connection Stage Two (CS2): Oxford - Bedford</p> <p>Connection Stage Three (CS3): Oxford - Cambridge</p>
	Conservation area	An area of notable architectural or historic interest or importance in relation to which change is managed by law
D	Development Consent Order (DCO)	Order made by the relevant Secretary of State to authorise the construction, operation and maintenance of a nationally significant infrastructure project (NSIP). In relation to East West Rail, this would be the Secretary of State for Transport.
	Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra)	UK government department responsible for safeguarding our natural environment, supporting our world-leading food and farming industry, and sustaining a thriving rural economy.
	Department for Transport (DfT)	Government department responsible for the English transport network and a limited number of transport matters in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland that have not been devolved.

	Term	Description
E	Earthworks	General term for the excavation and placement of soil, rock and other material; or for existing cuttings and embankments
	East Coast Main Line (ECML)	Railway line running from London King’s Cross to Edinburgh through Sandy and St Neots.
	East West Rail (EWR)	A proposed new rail link, which would connect communities between Oxford, Milton Keynes, Bedford and Cambridge
	East West Railway Company Ltd (EWR Co)	Company set up by the Secretary of State for Transport to develop East West Rail.
	Embankment	A construction that allows railway lines to pass at an acceptable level and gradient through the surrounding ground that is composed entirely of soil or rock.
F	Flood plain	An area of low-lying ground adjacent to a river, which is subject to flooding
G	Grade-separated junction	A railway junction where tracks cross at different levels
	Govia Thameslink Railway (GTR)	Govia Thameslink Railway, a train operating company
H	Highways England (HE)	The Government body responsible for managing the Strategic Road Network in England

	Term	Description
H	HS2	High Speed 2, the new railway line under construction between London and the West Midlands, and beyond.
I	Impact Risk Zone (IRZ)	A zone around a Site of Special Scientific Interest used to make an initial assessment of the potential risks posed to that Site by development proposals
	Indicative alignment	The indicative, concept alignment within each Route Option used for the comparison of Route Options A to E in the previous stage of design
	Infrastructure maintenance depot	A depot at which staff and equipment involved in maintaining rail infrastructure are based and from which maintenance operations are coordinated
	Interchange	A station at which passengers may change between trains serving different routes and destinations
K	km	Kilometres
L	Level crossing	A location at which vehicles and pedestrians may cross railway tracks at grade (at ground level). This definition includes accommodation crossings which provide access to specific properties; and crossings which are operated by their users rather than automatically
	Listed building	A building placed on a statutory list, because of its architectural or historical interest, in relation to which change is managed by law
	London & North Western Railway (LNWR)	Historic British railway company, an ancestor of the West Coast Main Line

	Term	Description
M	m	Metres
	Marston Vale Line (MVL)	The existing line and services operating between Bletchley and Bedford
	Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG)	UK government department responsible for housing, community and local government matters in England
	Midland Main Line (MML)	The main railway route between London St Pancras, Nottingham and Sheffield
	mph	Miles per hour
N	National Infrastructure Commission (NIC)	Executive agency responsible for providing the government with impartial, expert advice on major long-term infrastructure challenges facing the UK
	National Networks National Policy Statement (NN NPS)	Sets out the need for, and the Government’s policies to deliver, development of nationally significant infrastructure projects (NSIPs) on the national road and rail networks in England, and will be the primary basis against which the Secretary of State for Transport will assess and determine a DCO application for a new railway pursuant to section 104 of the 2008 Act
	Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP)	A large-scale development (relating to energy, transport, water, or waste) of national significance that meets the thresholds set in Part 3 of the Planning Act 2008
	Network Rail (NR)	Network Rail Infrastructure Limited, the organisation which owns the majority of the railway infrastructure in England

	Term	Description
N	Net zero carbon	The approach of balancing greenhouse gas emissions, offsets or carbon sequestration (for example tree planting or carbon capture schemes), to achieve a net zero state
	Non-motorised users	People travelling on foot, by cycle or on horseback; or by any other means which is not motorised
O	Office of Rail and Road (ORR)	A non-ministerial Government department which is the economic and safety regulator for Britain's railways
	Overhead Line Equipment (OLE)	The wires, known as catenary, suspended above railway lines to provide electrical power to trains, and their supporting structures
	Operating costs	Costs incurred in the day-to-day running of the railway
	Option	In this report, 'option' is used to refer to a possible solution that has been considered and is being taken forward for further design and/or assessment
	Oxford-Cambridge Arc (the Arc)	A region defined by the Government and the National Infrastructure Commission covering local authorities across the counties of Northamptonshire, Cambridgeshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire and the unitary authorities of Bedford, Central Bedfordshire, Luton, and Milton Keynes
P	PA 2008	Planning Act 2008
	Passing loop	A section of track used to allow one train to be passed by another train travelling behind it in the same direction

	Term	Description
P	Permitted Development Rights	Development that may be carried out by certain categories of (for example) statutory undertaker (such as Network Rail) under deemed planning permission (“Permitted Development Rights”), for certain types of work. Permitted Development Rights also benefit other statutory undertakers
	Points	A junction between two railway lines, that can be set to guide a train to or from either of those lines. Can also be referred to as a switch
	Possession	Restriction of access to a section of railway for the purposes of maintaining or renewing infrastructure, at a particular location and for a particular period of time
	Preferred route option E	The Route Option previously selected as the preferred area between Bedford and Cambridge in which to seek alignments in this phase of developing the Project
	Programme-Wide Output Specification (PWOS)	A document containing detailed requirements for the Project, agreed with the Department for Transport
	The Project	The infrastructure, systems, rolling stock and organisational arrangements which need to be created or modified to deliver East West Rail and its intended outcomes
	Project section	One of six geographical areas used to present infrastructure proposals for consultation
	Public Rights of Way (PRoWs)	A way over which the public have a right to pass and repass.
R	Reference alignment	The alignment option against which the performance of other alignment options is assessed

	Term	Description
R	Rolling stock	Any vehicle which can run on a railway track
	Route corridor, Route option and Route alignment	Route Corridors are the broad areas within which the new railway might be located, identified as part of the initial 'sift' of possibilities in 2016. Within the preferred Route Corridor, several narrower Route Options were identified and a Preferred Route Option was announced in 2020. The Project is now at the stage of selecting a Route Alignment
S	Safety risk	The risk of unsafe practices or situations occurring on the railway that may lead to accidents
	Scheme	A project or a group of projects being promoted or undertaken by a party or parties other than EWR Co with objectives which do not directly facilitate, but may be related to, East West Rail
	Scheduled Monument	A historic building or site considered to be of national importance, placed on a list kept by the Government and requiring Government approvals for any works which might affect the Scheduled Monument
	Shepreth Branch Royston (SBR) Line	The line that connects Cambridge to Hitchin via Shepreth
	Siding	A short track at the side of and opening on to a railway line. They are usually used for stabling trains
	Source Protection Zone (SPZ)	SPZs are defined around large and public potable groundwater abstraction sites. The purpose of SPZs is to provide additional protection to safeguard drinking water quality through constraining the proximity of an activity that may impact upon a drinking water abstraction

	Term	Description
S	Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	The land notified as an SSSI under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended. SSSI include the most important sites for wildlife and natural features in England, supporting many characteristic, rare and endangered species, habitats and natural features
	Statutory consultation	A stage of consultation which a promoter of a nationally significant infrastructure project is required to undertake, under section 42 the Planning Act 2008
	St Neots Option A station	Option for a new station in the St Neots area. Both St Neots station options would be located to the south of St Neots. This would be in addition to the existing St Neots station
	St Neots Option B station	Option for a new station in the St Neots area. Both St Neots station options would be located to the south of St Neots. This would be in addition to the existing St Neots station
T	Tempsford station	Option for a new station in the Tempsford area. Both Tempsford station options would be located to the north-east of Tempsford
	Thameslink	Train operator running services between the south coast of England, Bedford and Cambridge
	TWA 1992	Transport and Works Act 1992
	Transport and Works Act Order (TWAO)	A Transport and Works Act Order made by the Secretary of State under the TWA 1992 alongside a deemed planning permission, allowing works to a railway or other transport project to be undertaken
U	Utility company	A company that owns equipment which carries and distributes water, electricity, gas or telecommunications. These commodities are collectively known as ‘utilities’

	Term	Description
W	West Anglia Main Line (WAML)	The main railway route between London Liverpool Street and Cambridge
	West Coast Main Line (WCML)	The main railway route between London Euston and Glasgow
