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eastwestrail.co.uk

East West Railway Company

13 April 2021



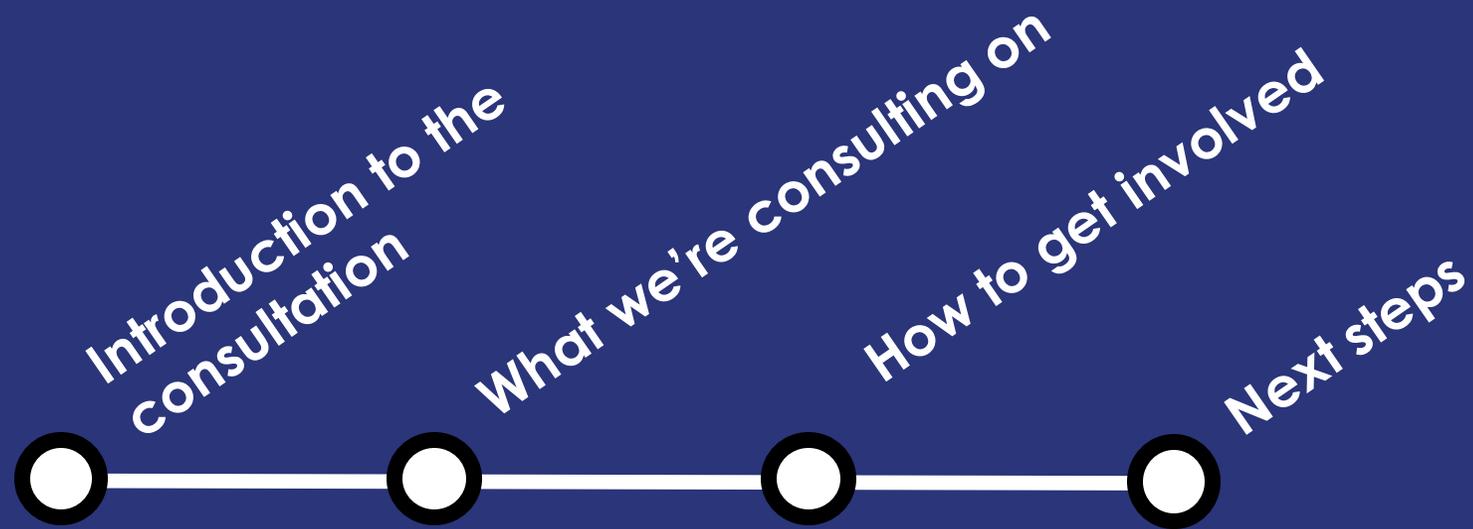


east west
RAIL

Non-statutory public consultation

31 March – 9 June 2021

What we'll cover today

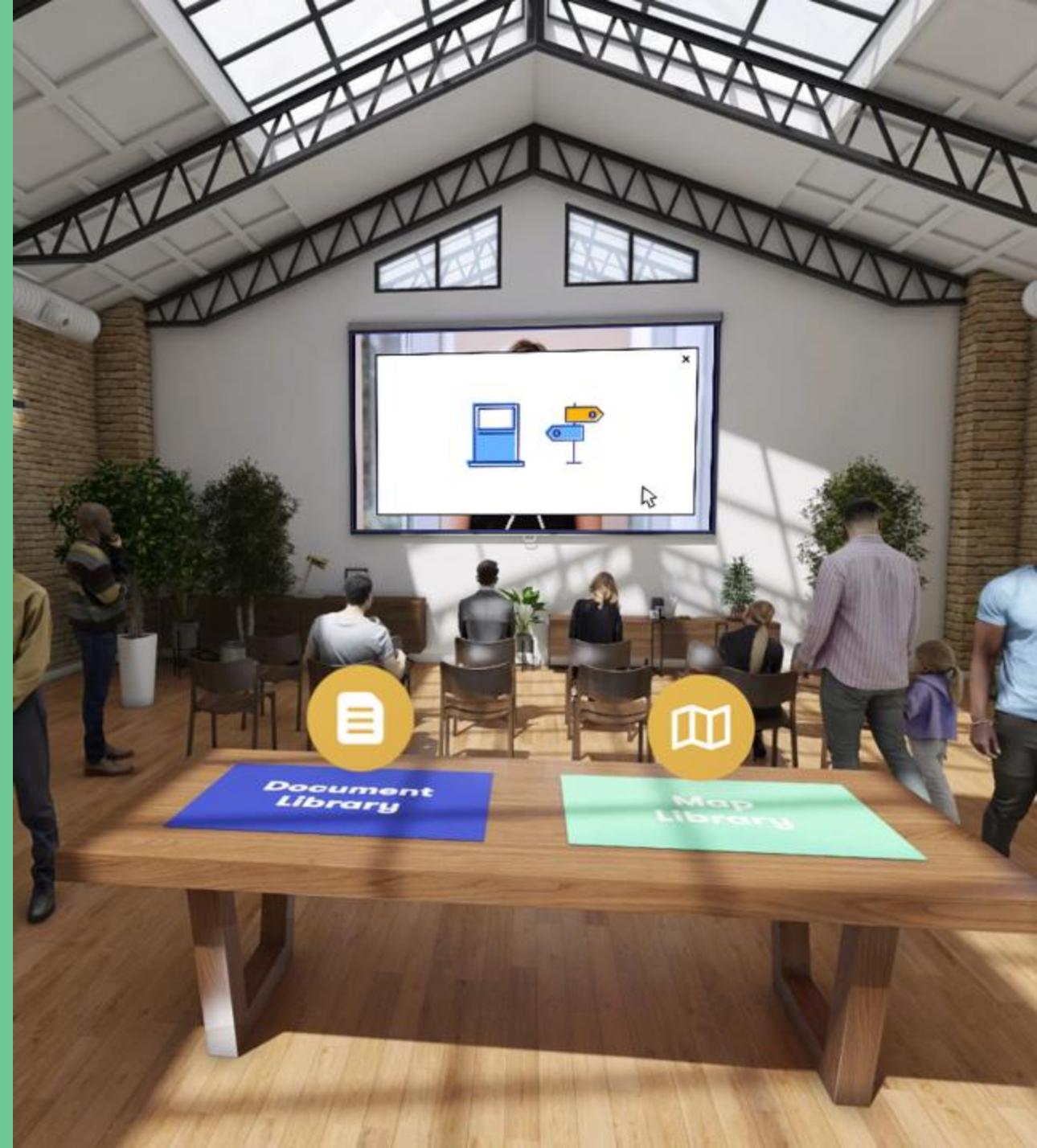


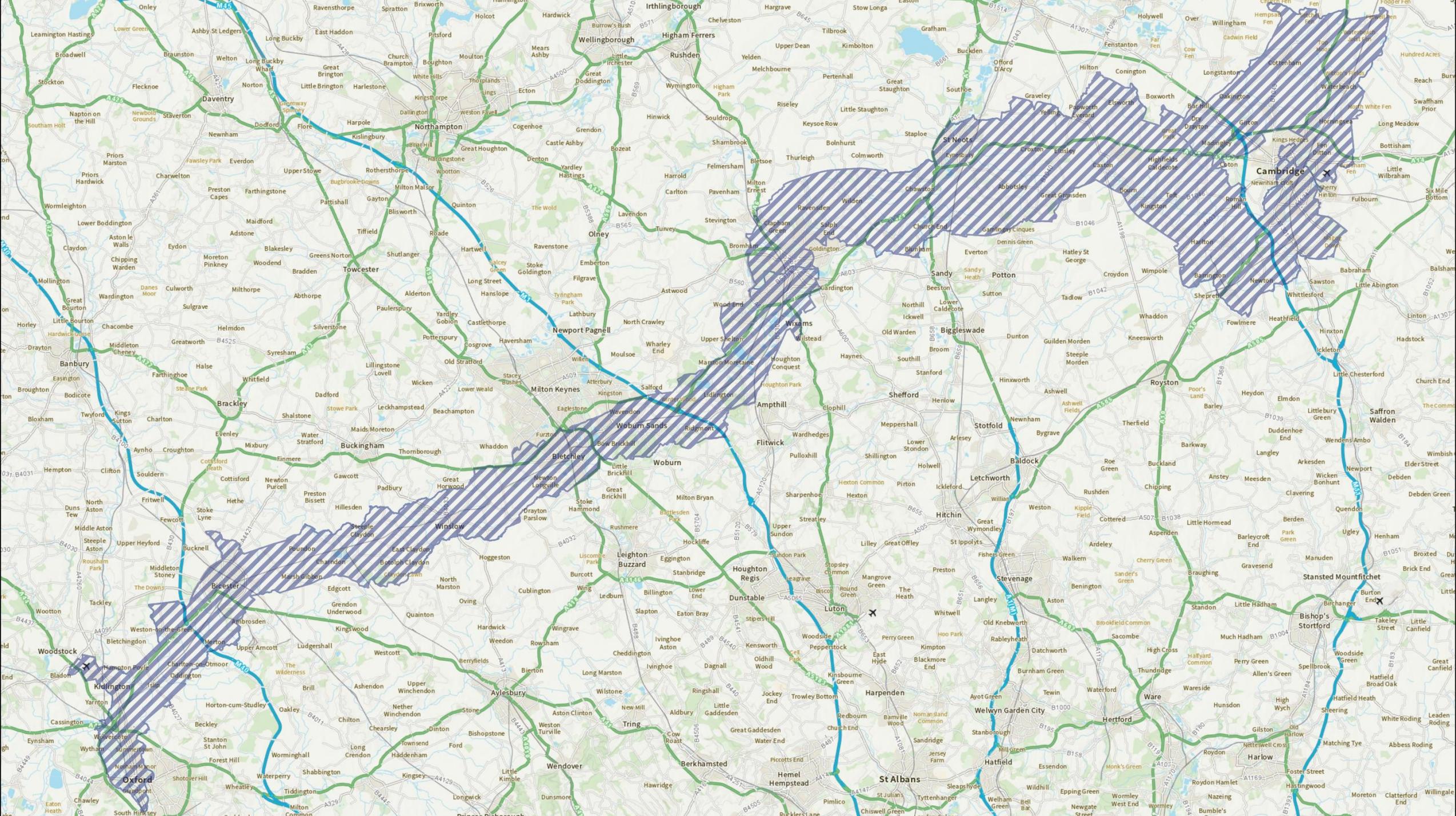
What we are consulting on

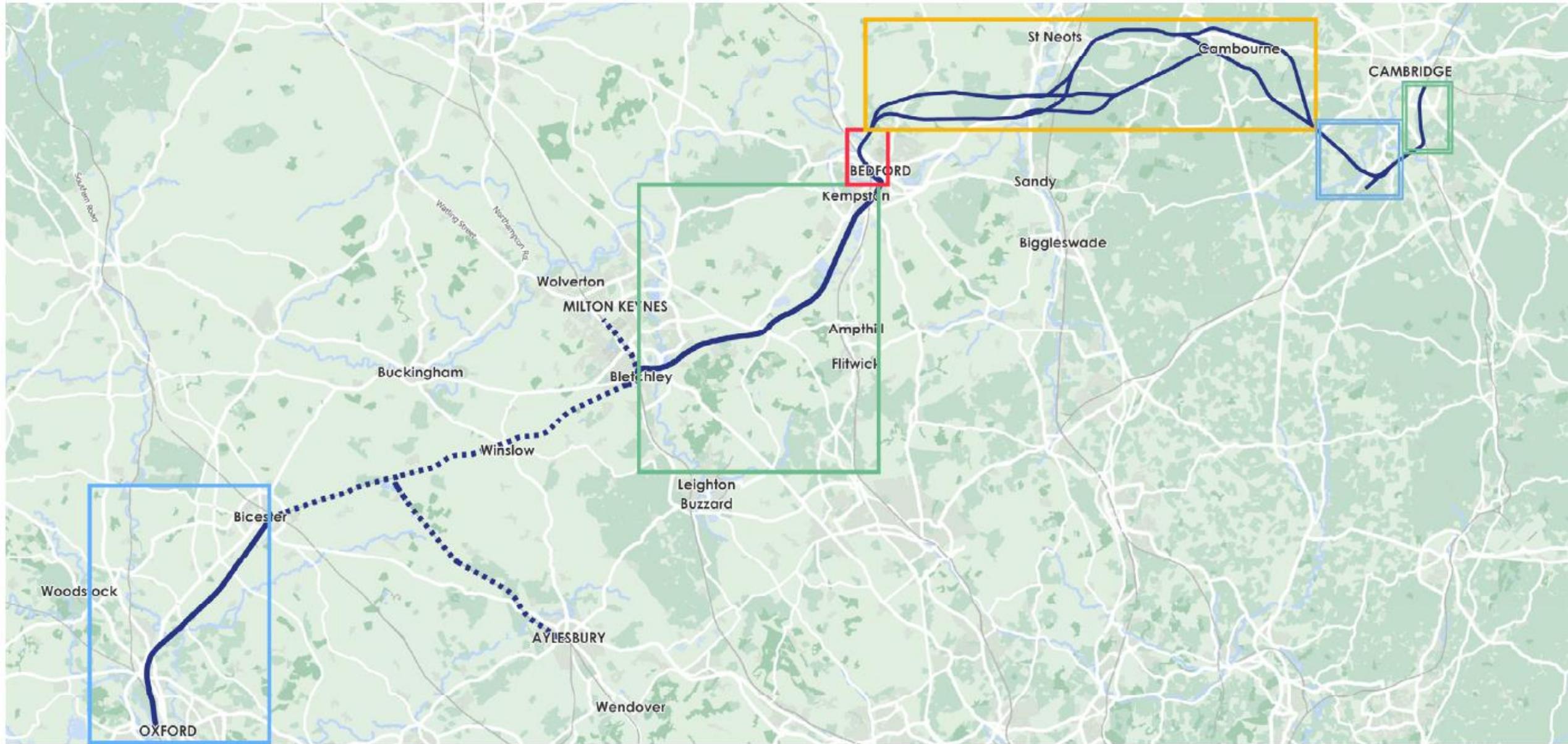
This 10-week consultation is an opportunity for you to share your thoughts on emerging proposals for East West Rail and your views on the broader scheme.

The consultation document covers the following key sections:

- Customer experience and railway operations
- Proposed infrastructure development
 - Oxford to Bicester
 - Bletchley and the Marston Vale Line
 - Bedford
 - Clapham Green to The Eversdens
 - Harlton to Hauxton
 - The Shelfords to Cambridge station







Project section A:
Oxford to Bicester

Project section B:
Bletchley & Marston Vale Line

Project section C:
Bedford

Project section D:
Clapham Green to The Eversdens

Project section E:
Harlington to Hauxton

Project section F:
The Shelfords to Cambridge



Shaping customer experience and railway operations

**This part of our consultation focuses
on what future customers want
from their railway experience.**

**We want to hear your views – from
individuals and organisations – on
the customer experience you would
like from East West Rail.**

What we're consulting on

Customer experience and railway operations

As part of developing the customer experience, we are keeping our minds completely open about what we might be able to offer.

We are looking for feedback on what our customers think would make positive differences to their customer travel experience.



The train service



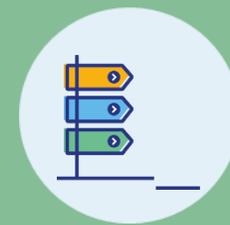
Station experience



On train experience



Interaction with colleagues



Customer information

Section B

Bletchley and the Marston Vale Line



Bletchley and the Marston Vale Line

- 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
- 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.

More information can be found in Section B of the consultation document



Why are we proposing this work?

- The signalling system is obsolete and has, at times, been unreliable. This has led to train services having to be suspended on 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 they can offer passengers
- 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.



Bletchley and the Marston Vale Line

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
- **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.



What could concept 1 mean for local communities?



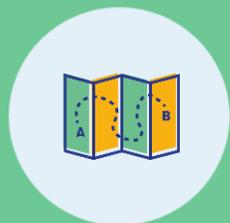
The existing hourly stopping service would be largely unchanged



Some shorter journeys on the route would take slightly longer – but end-to-end journeys would take roughly the same time as today



Woburn Sands and Ridgmont stations would benefit from an increase to five trains per hour



The four new EWR services would complete the journey between Bletchley and Bedford in around 22 minutes

Concept 1

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



What could concept 1 mean for local communities?

- Most communities excluding Woburn Sands and Ridgmont would not benefit from these increased fast services and direct services
- Existing communities could continue to access the train service as they do today – although passenger use at some stations is some of the lowest in the country
- Most station facilities would remain largely as they are today – many of the stations are on constrained sites so they cannot easily be expanded to improve accessibility
- There is the possibility that some villages would experience increased traffic and additional cars being parked in the vicinity of stations



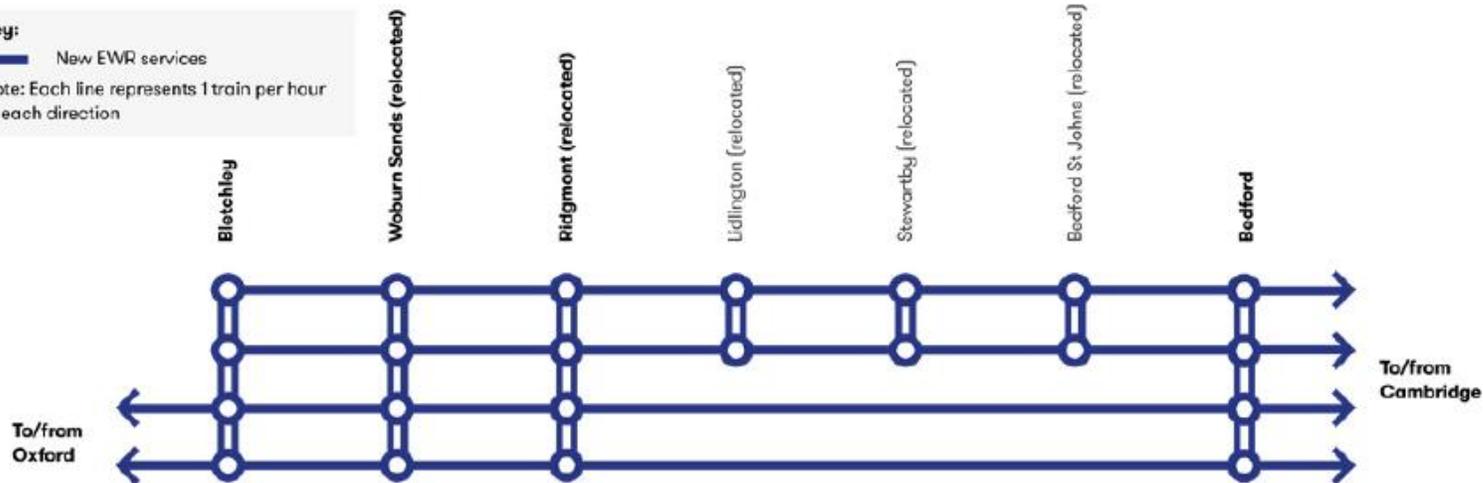
Concept 2

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

Key:

— New EWR services

Note: Each line represents 1 train per hour in each direction



What could concept 2 mean for local communities?



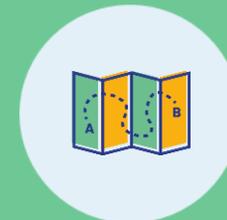
Local communities would benefit from having East West Rail services calling at all five new stations, rather than just two of the existing intermediate stations



More people would have access to more frequent services



The relocated Woburn Sands and Ridgmont stations would have four trains per hour in each direction



More people would have access to direct train services going further afield, including Cambridge.



What could concept 2 mean for local communities?

- More communities would have access to faster services - two trains each hour would complete the journey between Bedford and Bletchley in around 22 minutes, the other two trains – that stop at all 5 stations - each hour would take 27 minutes
- All journeys on the route would be quicker than they are today, without the need to change trains
- The services are likely to be more reliable in this concept than in concept 1, as there is no need for trains to overtake each other, which can cause delay
- Communities and users would benefit from new stations which would be purpose built with improved facilities
- Concept 2 would help avoid the risk of village roads being adversely affected by additional traffic and rail users' cars being parked in streets close to the existing stations.

Level crossings on the Marston Vale Line

- There are currently 31 level crossings on the Marston Vale Line
- These include public highways, private access roads, public footpaths, bridleways and agricultural access routes for farms divided by the railway
- We fully recognise the importance of maintaining vital connections for people whilst balancing the need to make the railway safer for everyone



Level crossings on the Marston Vale Line

- Network Rail gained permission to close 11 of the 31 Level Crossings on the Marston Vale Line as part of its previous proposal for the introduction of an hourly Oxford to Bedford service
- Network Rail has also recently closed three further crossings on the line
- East West Rail services would increase the number of trains beyond what was previously planned and we would need to close more level crossings to ensure a safe and reliable service.





Why are we proposing this work?

- Given safety concerns, it is a primary objective of the Office of Rail and Road to close level crossings permanently
- East West Rail would result in at least four times as many trains using the Marston Vale Line than is currently the case, with trains running faster than the current services
- This would make the existing level crossings on the Marston Vale Line unworkable in their current format.

Our proposals

We aim to close level crossings on the Marston Vale Line and replace them with alternative access.

We would provide between 16 and 19 new bridges over or under the railway together with new links to existing bridges. The aim of our proposals is to achieve:

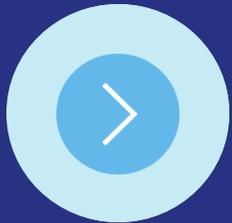
- Convenience for users of the local rights of way
- Improved safety for all, given the new more frequent, faster services
- Increased reliability for those services, minimising delays caused by incidents or equipment failures.



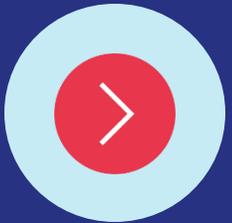
Information for landowners

To construct and operate the new East West Rail line, some of the proposals put forward for consultation will affect people's homes, businesses and farms.

- In developing our proposals, we aim to minimise the negative impact these 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, agricultural holding or small business.
- We are consulting on a discretionary purchase scheme, the Need to Sell Scheme, that, if introduced, would support owner occupiers once the announcement of the preferred route alignment for the railway has been made.
- We have a dedicated team in place who are focused on how the proposals will affect people's homes, businesses and farms. More information on how to contact them is available on our website at eastwestrail.co.uk.



Consultation document
and technical report



Consultation summary
document (sent to every
household in the
consultation zone)



Community hub and
resource centre



Virtual consultation
rooms and community
events

Public consultation

Working with you

Two meeting sessions during consultation:

- **Today** – A session to run you through all the elements we will be consulting on that are relevant to you
- **May** – A more discursive session – once you've had a chance to read through the documents designed to raise any questions you might have

How you can get involved

There are lots of different ways to get involved in the consultation, including:



Virtual consultation rooms – open from 12 April 2021 until 9 June 2021 which provide more information on each section of the consultation, including a full list of documents and maps available via the central table



Online public events – we are holding twelve online events for communities right the way from Oxford to Cambridge. There will be two lots of six events covering geographical areas along the route



Live chat events open to the public – a series of ten, two-hour live chat sessions held via the virtual consultation rooms, where participants will be able to discuss key topics directly with members of the project team



Dedicated phone line – the EWR Co telephone line will be available throughout the consultation period to enable those not wanting or able to engage online or in writing to speak to members of the Project team. The telephone number is **0330 134 0067**

Questions & Answers



How to respond to this consultation

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

Feedback forms can be submitted online by emailing us at consultation@eastwestrail.co.uk or sent by post to **Freepost EAST WEST RAIL**

For further information, or to request a paper copy of the 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**



What next?

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