Housekeeping

Thank you for joining

This hour-long event on Zoom will include information about this public consultation before a Q&A session.

We’d be grateful if you could display your full name on your username – this can be done through the ‘Participants’ section.

Please turn your camera on but be on mute unless you’re asking a question during the Q&A.

If you have questions during the presentations, please put these in the chat bar and address to ‘Questions’.

Please use the ‘Raise Hand’ function in Zoom to ask a question during the Q&A, found in the bottom ribbon (sometimes found under the ‘Reactions’ option).

Display full name in username

Please use the mute function

Questions can be submitted via the chat (address to ‘Questions’)

Use the ‘Raise Hand’ function to ask a question during the Q&A

Please do put your camera on if possible
Who have we invited today?

Parishes
• Addington Parish Council
• Calvert Green Parish Council
• Charndon Parish Council
• East Claydon Parish Council
• East Claydon Parish Council
• Great Horwood Parish Council
• Little Horwood Parish Council
• Marsh Gibbon Parish Council
• Middle Claydon Parish Council
• Mursley Parish Council
• Newton Longville Parish Council
• Poundon Parish Council
• Steeple Claydon Parish Council
• Swanbourne Parish Council
• Twyford Parish Council
• Whaddon Parish Council
• Winslow Town Council
Who have we invited today?

Aylesbury Vale District Council
- Great Brickhill and Newton Longville
- Great Horwood
- Marsh Gibbon
- Steeple Claydon
- Stewkley
- Winslow
Who have we invited today?

Buckinghamshire Council
- Great Brickhill
- Grendon Underwood
- Winslow
What we’ll cover today

- Introduction to the consultation
- What we’re consulting on
- How to get involved
- Next steps
Government commitment

- Government showed a big commitment to the East West Rail project and the Ox Cam Arc in the National Infrastructure Strategy and the spending review

- Government’s £760m funding announcement to support the next phase of the project – construction from Bicester to Bletchley
Three connection stages

1. Oxford Parkway → Bicester Village → Winslow → Milton Keynes Central → Bletchley
2. Oxford Parkway → Bicester Village → Winslow → Milton Keynes Central → Woburn Sands → Ridgmont → Bedford
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
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.
Section A

Oxford to Bicester
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.

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.

More information is provided in Section A of the consultation document.
What are our developing plans?

- 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.
We are considering upgrades Bicester Village station may require to increase capacity and improve the customer experience. This includes:

- Options to expand parking facilities at the station
- Options to encourage access to the station via sustainable modes, such as walking and cycling
- Improvements to the local highway networks
- Station upgrades to improve the customer experience.
• East West Rail would increase train services for people in Bicester providing more connections to more destinations

• The frequency of trains passing through the level crossing at London Road near Bicester Village station would increase

• The existing level crossing could be closed for up to 50 minutes in every hour

• We are investigating a number of options to improve access across the railway.
Our potential solutions

- **Concept 1:** accessible bridge for non-motorised users
- **Concept 2:** road underpass at London Road
- **Concept 3:** road bridge at London Road
- **Concept 4:** road underpass alongside London Road
- **Concept 5:** road bridge alongside London Road
- **Concept 6:** alternative road crossing locations.
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.
Retain the existing hourly service that stops at all current intermediate stations, and introduce fast limited-stop Oxford – Cambridge services alongside it.

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.

What could concept 1 mean for local communities?
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.

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.
Bletchley station

Bletchley station is expected to see increased use from local people and by those accessing Bletchley from locations newly connected to the town via East West Rail.

It is expected that the station will provide an important interchange between different East West Rail services, and with trains to London Euston, the West Midlands, and the north west of England.

We are considering a range of improvements to ensure the station is fit for the future.
Our proposals

To accommodate the East West Rail train service, we may need to carry out the following works:

• Altering or replacing the current station footbridge
• Providing step-free access to platform 6
• Improving or replacing the current station building on Sherwood Drive
• Improving and enlarging the station car park
• Altering the proposed design of the new platforms for trains to and from Oxford
• Providing a further additional platform, next to the current platform 6
• Creating a new station entrance on the east side of the station near the Saxon Street / Buckingham Road roundabout.
• 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.
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.
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](http://eastwestrail.co.uk).
Public consultation

Working with you

Two meeting sessions with your neighbouring councillors during consultation:

• **Today** – A session to run you through all the elements we will be consulting on that are relevant to you

• **Late May** – A more discursive session – once you’ve had a chance to read through the documents and liaise with your constituents and residents - designed to raise any questions you might have.
How your communities 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
Promoting the consultation

We’re promoting the consultation in different ways and are always grateful for your support in generating interest and engagement.

We encourage you to help us spread the word through your networks.

If you think there’s an organisation or individual we should speak to, tell us and we will contact them directly.
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?
Stay in touch

For further information, speak to the team by emailing us at contact@eastwestrail.co.uk or by calling us on 0330 134 0067.