



Initial Comments

We are in principle in favour of East West Rail, and do not have in-principle objections to Route E. However, the cancellation of electrification and EWRs behaviour in since the announcement of its preference for Route E have both eroded our support for this project.

If the line is built it should be with overhead line electrification from the start. Electricity to supply it must be purchased from producers who supply 100% renewable electricity (not what is in reality dirty energy accompanied with so-called “Renewable Energy Guarantees of Origin”).

In view of the climate emergency, bridges, viaducts and other structures including stations should be made of recycled steel wherever possible. With viaducts it is important that sufficient sound insulation and damping is in place to ensure any viaduct has very low noise impacts on surrounding areas, and in no circumstances higher than if the viaduct was of concrete construction. More generally, noise mitigation is needed throughout.

Great care is needed for the protection of wildlife. An independent expert should be employed to identify solutions to the impacts on wildlife.

Prevention of Blight / Compensation for Residents

One of the most pressing and immediate issues concerns the residents of the properties which are now blighted by the possibilities of demolition and compulsory purchase.

We are disgusted by EWRs continued failure to write direct to residents of rental properties threatened with demolition despite repeated urging by Green Party councillors. This betrays an abysmal attitude to all residents on the part of EWR and erodes support for the scheme. It makes clear that thus far EWRs only interest has been in the financial/legal aspects, rather than impacts on people’s lives.

It is essential that residents of affected rental properties are provided with suitable alternative rental property on no less favourable terms and EWR covers their relocation costs.

The ‘Need to Sell Scheme’ should be made immediately available to all homeowners where some or all of their property is potentially to be compulsorily purchased. There should be no requirement for them to demonstrate that they need to move imminently (for work, for example) or that they have been unable to sell. It should also be available to any other homeowner affected by blight without having to demonstrate that they need to move imminently.

The level of compensation payable under this scheme should be at least match the level of payments offered by HS2, which are understood to be above the market value plus the reimbursement of moving costs.

Answers to EWR Consultation Questions

1. The approach to Cambridge

Attempting to answer when the assessment of the southern route is more detailed than the assessment of the northern route is particularly difficult. EWR should carry out a more detailed assessment of the northern route and carry out a separate consultation focussed entirely on northern vs southern.

As with Bedford, there is insufficient information with respect to the northern route to justify demolitions. EWR should NOT be asking respondents to give views on issues related to under-justified demolitions, but rather do further work to give a more realistic assessment of the situation.

If the northern route is built, it must be accompanied with chords from it towards Ely and a chord south of Ely between the Cambridge–Ely line and the Ely–Suffolk line to keep freight out of Cambridge. A northern route that includes a chord to the Newmarket line would not be acceptable to us. If it was a choice between a northern route including such a chord and a southern route, we would prefer a southern route.

The southern route does not bring transport or other benefits to local communities and would prevent a future re-opening of the disused line at Harston. EWR shows that there may be a desire in future to re-open disused lines, and that discounting such future developments is short-sighted.

The southern route has particular environmental disadvantages (eg on wildlife sites).

Extensive noise mitigation is needed.

2. Train Service

- Based on your experience of rail travel in the UK what do you think are the main areas that could be improved?

There should be less emphasis on getting people to/from London as quickly as possible and more emphasis on connectivity that will promote modal shift (rather than longer commutes). In that respect, EWR might help, but there is some danger that it will promote longer commutes to Oxford and Cambridge, especially if, as planned, there will be extensive housebuilding.

There should be lower fares, and especially lower flexible fares. The UK has some of the most expensive “travel–today” train fares; and ticket prices have risen faster than the cost of living whilst motoring costs have declined for most of the last decade. Tickets should automatically include as part of the fare use of all public transport within the city/town/district of the destination station, and tickets should be available that includes such use of public transport within the departure city/town/district.

There needs to be much better integration with bus, cycling and walking networks.

There should be more stations where interchanges are practical, with intercity trains stopping at stations where more local services call (eg Bletchley and Bedford). Requiring an additional change (eg to Milton Keynes Central/Kettering) makes potential passengers much less likely to be willing to make the journey by rail. Many potential passengers are willing to do a journey with one change but not two, or with two but not three. Requiring an additional change results in potential passengers deciding to drive.

There should be better provision for disabled people, with all new/modified stations having a tactile map for visually impaired people. There should be no expectation for disabled passengers to book in advance, with trains and stations designed in conjunction with each other to mean level access is possible without assistance (perhaps with London bus–style retractable ramps). There should be far less reliance on inadequately specified/poorly maintained lifts, and all trains with more than one toilet should be designed to have two accessible toilets close to each other (ending the problems caused by the currently common situation where the only out–of–order toilet on the train is the only accessible toilet).

- How could we support our net zero carbon ambitions through the delivery of services to customers?

Build the line with overhead line electrification from the start. Purchase electricity from producers who supply 100% renewable electricity (not dirty energy and “Renewable Energy Guarantees of Origin”).

Provide for full–size cycles on all trains at all times.

Build all stations designed for integration with bus, cycling and walking networks.

3 Station experience

In all cases interchange with buses should be an integral part of the design, with easy access both for buses from existing routes and for passengers transferring between buses and trains. Routes between bus stops and station entrances should be covered walkways throughout.

Walking routes should have zebra crossings of all traffic flows on direct pedestrian routes: traffic should be made to go round pedestrian routes, not vice–versa.

Toilets should be provided at all stations.

Relevant stations should be designed to promote interchanges by designs that maximise the chances of existing lines on other routes having trains stop at the station (for example Bletchley, Bedford and St Neots/Tempsford should all have provision for, and the ambition of, intercity trains stopping).

Stations should be designed to include cycle shops equipped to make repairs, so that a traveller can book their cycle in at the start of a journey and collect it on their return. Such cycle shops offering such service should be charged no more than 67% of the rent that other shops at the station are charged.

- Are there specific factors that you would like us to consider that may improve safety and security at stations?

Stations and their environs should be designed to reduce crime opportunities and to make people feel safe. There should be adequate lighting and visibility in all areas including outside public toilets. All stations should be staffed during all hours when the station is open.

- How can stations be better designed to manage customer flows around the station environment?

Busier stations should be planned with multiple entrances and multiple flows around the station (eg more than one set of stairs/bridges).

Main passenger flows and flows of disabled people/lift users should be planned so those flows do not need to cross and re–cross each other.

- How can customers be guided through the station experience (particularly during busy periods)?

Additional entrances/exits for use without using the main station building/entrance, with more than one staircase and footbridge for busier stations.

- How should we ensure inclusivity, for example in terms of accessibility and the broader station experience?

There should be no use of 'security only' staff. All station staff should be trained willing and able to offer assistance, and have duties that include providing assistance whenever there are no other members of station staff better positioned to provide assistance.

No unstaffed ticket barrier lines: calls from unstaffed barrier lines to 'help' facilities are often answered very slowly.

Use of coloured on-floor markings to guide people through facilities/to their platform.

Accessibility always incorporated to be immediately visible on approach.

No stations where the only access to some/all platforms for people who cannot use stairs is via a *sequence* of lifts whereby failure of any single lift in the sequence will make the route unusable (at some busier stations this might be avoided by extra lifts, at others by ramps).

All stations with lifts should have lifts that are large enough for a full-sized cycle with both wheels on the floor and for a double pram/buggy (including doors wide enough). None of the existing lifts at Bedford are large enough in either of these dimensions.

4 On train experience

- How can we create an engaging environment that suits the unique needs of our customers, for example, working effectively, relaxing or being entertained?

Seats with tables, power sockets, reliable free wifi. Seats with adequate padding (more than Thameslink class 700s).

- What types of areas/spaces would you like to see on EWR trains beyond seating and standing space?

Space for full size cycles, including at peak hours.

- What on-train experience(s) might encourage customers to switch to rail from other modes of transport?

Seats with tables, power sockets, reliable wifi. Seats with adequate padding. Clean toilets. On train staff to ensure security and safety. Space for full size cycles, including at peak hours.

- Are there any examples, either from the UK or from abroad, of good seating layouts or on-train facilities?

Step-free accessibility for wheelchair / mobility scooter and buggy users without the use of ramps (compare Tyneside metro, Thameslink through the London 'core').

German Railways have good seating layouts and on-train facilities for equivalent journeys.

- How might we consider sustainability in the on-train environment?

The overwhelming issue is to provide electric traction from overhead wires, with contracts for electricity supply from producers who supply 100% renewable electricity (not dirty energy)

and “Renewable Energy Guarantees of Origin”). By comparison, everything else about the service in operation is of minor importance. One such minor issue would be by serving only plant-based foods and snacks, which are also suitable for the largest proportion of rail users. Another would be to have drinking fountains for water.

- How can the on-train environment support customers’ wellbeing throughout their journey?

Clean and working toilets. There should be measures to ensure accessible toilets are no more likely to out-of-order than other toilets.

5 Interaction with colleagues

- What types of attitudes and behaviours would you like to see our staff displaying to make your experience with EWR a positive one? This may relate to contact you have online, over the phone, at the station or on the train.

All staff, including those employed primarily as security staff to receive equality and diversity training and pass a related test.

All staff, including those employed primarily as security staff, trained and equipped to provide passenger assistance, including assisting disabled passengers and others needing assistance, and have duties that include providing assistance whenever there are no other members of station staff better positioned to provide assistance.

- How and where would you like to have access to staff members on your journey and why? Again, this may relate to virtual support or face to face contact.

Physical presence within the passenger compartments at all times of staff trained and equipped to provide passenger assistance, including assisting disabled passengers and others needing assistance, and have duties that include providing assistance.

6) Customer information

Information for passengers on platforms should include which carriages have the most space.

On train information should include information about connecting trains (including their times and platforms), and including information about how this is changed by any delays.

7 Oxford–Bicester

We support the expansion of Oxford station with more through platforms and more approach tracks. The line south of Oxford station should be quadrupled as far as Didcot North jn. As everywhere, lines paired by direction would be preferable. Some EWR services should be extended towards Swindon or Reading.

Stations at Oxford Parkway and Bicester Village should have longer platform canopies and larger waiting areas. Integration with bus, cycling and walking networks should be the priority. All buses that serve Oxford Parkway station should use the same bus stops.

10 Bletchley and the Marston Vale Line area

EWR trains shown as terminating at Bletchley should, rather, continue to Milton Keynes Central. Only with a direct service will Bedford Residents contemplate a modal shift.

Extending the Bletchley terminating services to Milton Keynes Central will also maximise the use of the EWR for those continuing on, on the West Coast Main line.

This could be achieved either by reversing at Bletchley (high level or low level) or better with a new east to north chord.

Step-free access to platform 6 is long overdue.
Extensive noise mitigation is needed.

11/12 Marston Vale

We support option 2. Option 2 provides a better train service to more stations, while option 1 makes the existing Marston Vale service even slower. Closing the least used stations makes sense if new stations are designed for integration with bus and cycle networks and make adequate provision for such use.

However, we have detailed comments.

Extensive noise mitigation is needed.

Fenny Stratford

If Fenny Stratford station is closed an eastern entrance to Bletchley station should be built and a bus service provided between Fenny Stratford and Bletchley with a frequency of at least one bus per hour between 7am and 10pm.

Bow Brickhill

There are strong reasons to keep this station. Nearby are houses at Browns Wood and Caldecotte, and there are proposed developments south of the station. In addition there are employment areas at Tilbrook and Caldecotte that already attract rail passengers from Bedford travelling to work.

Ridgmont

We do not support the relocation of this station to the Bedford Rd area. That site is not near residential or employment areas, nor any area planned for residential or employment development in the future. At its present location it is near the large warehouses, and provides good access for their employees. It is also close to the A507 which is a bus route.

We accept that it would be difficult to make the required changes on the current site. A location immediately to the east of Station Rd would be suitable. The station entrance would still be on Station Rd, but on the east side instead of the west, and the Heritage Centre could be retained.

Stewartby

If Stewartby station is to be relocated it should be no further north than Broadmead Rd and should have direct foot/cycle access to Kimberly College, no longer than 1km in length.

Kempston Hardwick/Kempston

A new station should be opened at Kempston in place of the existing Kempston Hardwick. This would be where Kempston Halt was previously located, just west of the MML overbridge on Ampthill Rd. It would serve Kempston housing, the Interchange Retail Park and nearby parts of Bedford. The existing Park and Ride site would provide station car parking.

There is currently a massive imbalance proposed between the service levels proposed for Woburn Sands and Ridgmont (on the one hand) and Lidlington, Stewartby and Bedford St Johns (on the other). Bedford St Johns and Stewartby are the two most used stations, and should not in any circumstances have a lower service level proposed than the level for Woburn Sands and Ridgmont

We advocate a variation of the proposed train service proposing the following stopping pattern. It would mean an increase of one stop for each train, while increasing the number of stations with trains to Oxford in this stretch between Bletchley and Bedford from two to five, and the overall number of stations by two. Each station would have at least two trains per hour, while the most important stations all have three. Provided trains go on to Milton Keynes Central, it is not necessary for Bedford St Johns or Stewartby to have two of the three proposed services going to Oxford.

Approximate hourly stopping pattern proposed.

| On to Oxford | Milton Keynes Central | Bletchley | Bow Brickhill | Woburn Sands | Ridgemoat | Lidlington | Stewartby | Kempston | Bedford St Johns | Bedford | On to Cambridge |
|--------------|-----------------------|-----------|---------------|--------------|-----------|------------|-----------|----------|------------------|---------|-----------------|
| | ● | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| ● | | ● | | ● | ● | | ● | | | ● | ● |
| | ● | ● | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| ● | | ● | | ● | ● | | | | ● | ● | ● |

(unbalanced services, with 2+tph direct and a gap of more than 30 minutes would be restricted to services between either of Ridgemoat/Woburn Sands and Stewartby/BSJ – services restricted to 1 tph direct would be restricted to services between MKC and each of Woburn Sands and Ridgemoat, and each of Stewartby/BSJ to stations to Oxford, in which cases additional services are available changing at Bletchley or possibly other stations).

Without trains going on to MKC, we would propose this alternative.

Approximate hourly stopping pattern proposed.

| On to Oxford | Milton Keynes Central | Bletchley | Bow Brickhill | Woburn Sands | Ridgemoat | Lidlington | Stewartby | Kempston | Bedford St Johns | Bedford | On to Cambridge |
|--------------|-----------------------|-----------|---------------|--------------|-----------|------------|-----------|----------|------------------|---------|-----------------|
| | | ● | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| ● | | ● | | | ● | | ● | | ● | ● | ● |
| | | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | | ● | | ● | ● |
| ● | | ● | | ● | ● | | ● | | ● | ● | ● |

We are wary of developments that disturb wildlife and their current travel routes. An independent expert should be employed to identify solutions including these to the impacts on wildlife. Where level crossings are closed, access routes are needed for wildlife as well as humans. These may be in the form of tunnels under embankments or green bridges over cuttings. Wherever necessary, drainage should be provided by Sustainable Drainage Systems. There should be extensive planting of native trees.

23 Green Lane

We oppose the replacement of this crossing with a bridge.

24 Wootton Broadmead (Broadmead Road)

We oppose the replacement of this crossing with a bridge.

26 Kempston Hardwick

Option 1 has the advantage of taking less land

27 Woburn Road

Option 2 will be better for users of the footpath.

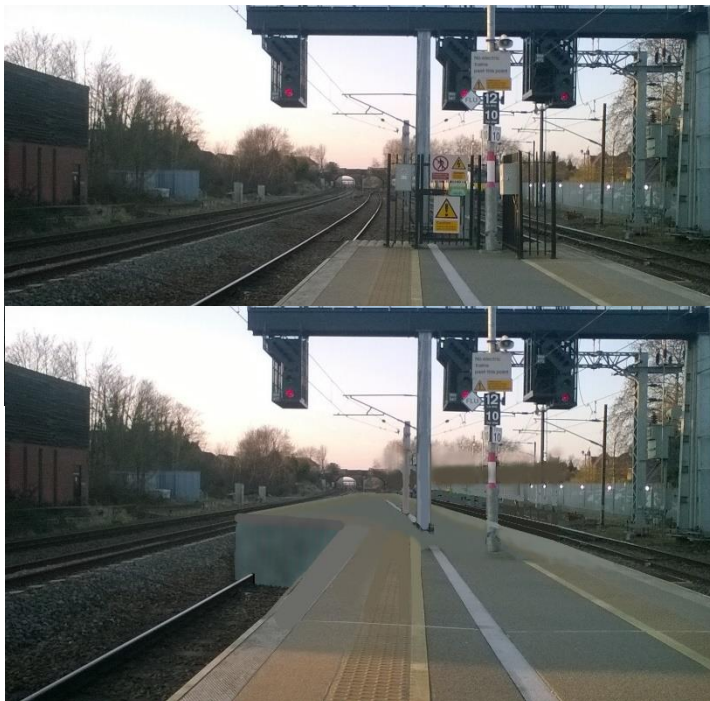
33 Bedford Area

There has not been anything like adequate justification for demolitions either at Ashburnham Road or north of Bromham Road. It is our belief that such threatened demolitions are not justified at either location. We accept that building a project like this might sometimes require demolitions, but whenever possible they should be restricted to commercial rather than residential property, and in all circumstances require extensive justification that has not been given.

The broad approach of East–West Rail of adding extra platforms to the east of the existing platforms implies moving the main station building. Moving it to the south, much closer to Midland Road, will enable the closer links between the town centre and the station that the Council has, rightly, long desired.



Providing a fast line up platform reduces the need for extra tracks and land—take north of Bromham Road and the need for a rebuild (or such an extensive rebuild) of Bromham Road bridge. It does this by enabling East Midlands Railway trains to stay on the fast line, so there is no danger of passenger delays on one route being transmitted to cause delays on another. This can be done most cheaply by



extending the existing platforms 2/3 northwards, covering over the north end of the current (platform 3) “platform loop”, making the existing platform 3 a bay platform. Extending platform 2 should mean that the extended version of the current platform 2 would have capacity for two Thameslink Class 700 units – certainly one 12 car and one 8 car, but possibly two 12 car, depending on the position of the junction for EWR trains, and whether the platform can be extended sufficiently at the southern end. The most northerly part of the extended platform would have a platform face to the new up fast platform only, to keep clear of the junction for EWR trains. In what follows I will call the current

platform 3 “3a”, the northern extension of it to form a fast line platform “3b”. I will similarly call the north end of platform 2 “2b” and the south end “2a” – however, in that case, it is expected that some of the current platform 2 would become “2b”, while a southern extension (if built) would be part of “2a”, and the demarcation between them would be likely to be south of the (more radical) demarcation between 3a and 3b. To achieve sufficient width between the platform faces 2b and 3b, it might be that the slow lines would need to be moved slightly to the east. Given that these lines would not be routinely used by through passenger services except an occasional EWR service when both of the new EWR platforms were occupied, a relatively sharp (and thus speed limited) curve should be acceptable.

Additional capacity for Thameslink services could also be provided by a terminating (bay) platform at the back of the current platform 4, which I will call platform 5. Platform 4 was built to enable use of that western face. Such use is more difficult to achieve than might be imagined at first because the curvature of the (fast) lines means that tracks are at a cant, making points difficult to site to enable leaving the fast line by trains headed to platform 5, and points for a crossover to enable them to join the southbound line will similarly be difficult, when ideally the crossover would be very close to the divergence of the new platform 5 line to minimise the amount of time a southbound train from this new platform was in the way of other trains. It might be that the crossover would have to be just south of the river on the first stretch of uncanted track, and the points for the platform 5 line to be just north of it. This would require trains leaving the fast line to platform 5 to dip down a little as they leave the fast line, and then rise up again as they approach the platform. Alternatively a new river bridge could be provided for access to platform 5.

New EWR platforms are to be built to the east of the existing platforms, passing in the space between the existing lift/footbridge/stairs and the electrical switchgear – calculations from satellite photos indicate there is sufficient space for platforms on each side of the tracks even at that constraining point. The junction between EWR and the existing slow lines should be as close to the Bromham Road bridge as possible consistent with enabling suitable linespeed through the junction.

There should continue to be a junction to enable trains using the current platform 1 to access it to/from Bedford St Johns and the Bletchley/Oxford line (since Figure 8.7 of the Technical Report indicates three platforms for EWR trains). However, it might need to be moved north to increase linespeed on that link line between platform 1 and the Bletchley/Oxford line.

It may be that access to sidings at the current location of Thameslink’s main sidings at Bedford (nos 1–14) would need to be from platform 1 only, or possibly additionally to the north end of an extended platform 2 (2b) via a crossover part way along the platform. However, it is not anticipated that it would be possible to use such a crossover to release a train at platform 2b while a train was stationary at platform 2a.

The extra capacity derived from taking London–bound East Mids trains to a separate platform and extending the length of the current platform 2 to take two trains should mean that even with some, limited, use of the current platform 1 by EWR trains, there should be a significant net increase in platform capacity for Thameslink services. With, in addition, a platform 5 for terminating trains we can be confident of achieving sufficient capacity. This would be sufficient even allowing for capacity for freight trains to run through platform 1, since outside the peak and times trains are entering/leaving the sidings, Thameslink can prefer platforms 5, 3a, 2a and 2b, with more capacity than they currently have between 1,2 and 3.

The current platform 1 may need to be extended at the north end to make up for any length lost at the southern end due to moving the junction for access to EWR, and to provide space for 12 coach sidings at the current location of Thameslink’s main sidings at Bedford.

To enable these new platforms, the existing station building will need to be demolished. The main new station building should be located further south, to the south of 8 Ashburnham Road.

Bedford Borough's 'masterplan' anticipates the retention of nos 8–20 Ashburnham Road, even with a new station building and changes on the current railway and council carparks south of the station.

The extra use of the station will mean that the existing footbridge and stairs will no longer be sufficient. Pre-covid they were barely coping. Platform widths at platforms 2/3 and 4 preclude wider stairs. The extension of the current platforms 2&3 northwards would also put particular strains on those platforms, stairs and the associated bridge. The best solution is to build a new footbridge close to the north end of the existing platforms (with lift access to all platforms). Ideally this would be connected to the existing footbridge and station building by a walkway at the level of the footbridges and the upper storey of the new station building. Given the increased size of the station and the movement of the station building to the south (while the balance of carparking will move northwards†), a secondary entrance to the station should be provided, primarily for peak-time use, slightly to the north of the current entrance, and an extra entrance on the Queens Park side to enable resident of the west of town to save about 15 minutes walk to access the station.



Access to the new main station building should be possible at all hours from the north, in addition to the main entrance from the new forecourt to the south of it.

With the main route from the station building to most platforms (via footbridges) being the raised walkway, facilities within the station building can be split over two floors.

† Much will be in the same place as at present, but with the closure of the existing premier carpark and council-owned Ashburnham Road carpark to the south, the balance will inevitably move north.

34/35 Bedford St Johns station

We have a strong preference for keeping the station as close a possible to the Hospital, Borough Hall and the businesses around Kingsway. However, we believe the search area for the station should include the possibility of platforms extending well under Cauldwell Street. By doing so, a suitably close-to-straight stretch of track can be found that will also allow the faster linespeeds of Alignment 2. The current Alignment 2 station search area is too far from the existing site. In addition, the need to provide width for the platforms within the existing rail corridor means it would be impossible to have the track as close as otherwise possible to the southeastern edge of the railway lands at the rear of Haynes Rd. This restriction on how close to the edge of railway lands the track can be placed would itself impose a tighter curve and thus restrict linespeed. We believe that rather than aiming for perfectly straight platforms, a slight curve, similar to that of platform 4 at Bedford's main station would enable the speed advantages of alignment 2 to be maximised and combined with the location advantages of alignment 1. If we were forced, however, the geographical advantages of a station closer to Cauldwell St/Ampthill Road would trump linespeed considerations, given that all passenger trains will, in any case stop at Bedford's main station.

Among these geographical advantages would be much better linkages to the bus network. A station location close to Cauldwell St/Britannia Road should enable easy interchange with buses to Kempston and the south of Bedford, while a site such as the proposed alignment 2 search area is not convenient for buses (let alone car parking).

36 developing Bedford station

We prefer the Bedford North Concept for station location, but there should be no demolitions of housing to build this new station building and forecourt. A sufficient-sized station building can be built south of 8 Ashburnham Road without any demolitions, with sufficient space for a forecourt.

The station should be designed to promote interchanges by having intercity trains stop at the station, which will require a platform on the up fast.

As with other places, interchange with buses should be an integral part of the design, with easy access both for buses from existing routes and for passengers transferring between buses and trains.

This is particularly difficult at Bedford because of the separate bus station, poor routes between the two and congestion on Ashburnham Road. It might be that bus stops on Ford End Road bridge, and Crowe Road would help. Routes between bus stops and station entrances should be covered walkways throughout.

In addition, it is important that use of Ashburnham Road by cars is minimised: the current car park is not a suitable site for a multi-story car park. A more general comprehensive station travel plan to reduce driving to the station is an absolute requirement.

Walking routes should have zebra crossings of all traffic flows on direct pedestrian routes: traffic should be made to go round pedestrian routes, not vice-versa.

There should be plans to integrate with the cycle network including off-road cycle paths to cross the railway at both Bromham Road and Ford End Road and an off-road cycle route between the two using railway land (through the existing car park, with a slope to/from each bridge). Woburn Road/Alexandra Place should be converted to provide a through route for cyclists without through road traffic. Local councillors for the ward have already consulted local residents' groups who are enthusiastic about this becoming a low traffic neighbourhood.

The station should include a cycle shop equipped to make repairs, so that a traveller can book their cycle in at the start of a journey and collect it on their return, charged no more than 67% of the rent that other shops at the station are charged.

37 North Bedford

You should not plan to demolish people's homes north of Bromham Road (or anywhere else) just to make it convenient to build and run the railway. Four tracks under Bromham Road have been shown to be enough if there is a fast line platform. Moreover, 11.5m width would be enough for two extra tracks anyway, when there are about 12 railway land to the east of existing tracks, and even if extra tracks were built, a fifth track would be more than adequate, provided East Midlands southbound trains no longer use the up slow line.

Extensive noise mitigation is needed, whether at the side of railway property or between tracks. Provision of adequate noise mitigation should be a much higher priority than the planned convenience of maintenance considerations.

Residents of Bedford have already suffered a very lengthy closure of Bromham Road to rebuild the bridge. It is not acceptable for it to be closed again for another rebuild when Network Rail were warned that building it as two spans would be excessively restrictive, and continued regardless.

The line should be designed to go under the Clapham bypass. We do not believe Bedford Borough council's proposal for such will achieve suitable linespeeds, and thus believe it would need to be a new bridge under Paula Ratcliffe Way at an angle, enabling a similar radius curve to that proposed in the consultation document.

The route should be built with a cycle route alongside and laying fibre optic broadband.

In line with the views of Bedford Borough council, we believe a fund should be created to allow Parish Councils and communities to bid for funding for appropriate mitigation schemes such as:

- Improved pedestrian, equestrian, or cycle access not provided under statutory services and beyond that provided by the cycle routes alongside the railway;
- Landscape and nature conservation enhancement projects which increase biodiversity and beyond that provided by the railway's commitment to biodiversity net gain;
- Enhancement or replacement of sports and recreational facilities;
- Improved access and enhancements to public open space;
- Provision of enhanced or new community facilities; and
- Refurbishment / re-use of historic buildings and monuments.

The requirement for mitigation should, nevertheless be minimised. The works for the western section take up too much land temporarily which then requires excessive avoidable environmental destruction. Roads and footpaths have been closed for much longer than necessary.

38/39 Clapham Green to The Eversdens

Using the existing St Neots station for EWR was not considered in the previous consultation. It would not have been feasible with the southern route via Bassingbourn. However now that the northern route via Cambourne has been selected using the existing St Neots station for EWR becomes feasible. Going via St Neots station does not add any significant length to the line. Running alongside an existing rail corridor also reduces the land take required and avoids leaving isolated inaccessible islands of land between EWR and the proposed A428 dual carriageway on that section. The EWR station for interchange with the existing London–Edinburgh line would best be located in a centre that already has a large number of houses within walking distance and a bus network. The building of new stations at St Neots/Tempsford would be accompanied with building of housing on greenfield sites that should be avoided.

There should be a tunnel as the line curves east, passing under Carriage Drive and the area close to the ancient woodland.

More generally wildlife corridors (tunnels under embankments and green bridges over cuttings) should be built. An independent expert should be employed to identify solutions including these to the impacts on wildlife. Wherever necessary, drainage should be provided by Sustainable Drainage Systems. There should be extensive planting of native trees. The route should avoid disturbing field margins, because they are more biodiverse than other parts of the fields.

Where businesses are disturbed (eg building the line over horse paddock), land should be purchased to enable the business to continue in its desired location in the immediate vicinity.

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The requirement for mitigation should, nevertheless be minimised. The works for the western section take up too much land temporarily which then requires excessive avoidable environmental destruction. Roads and footpaths have been closed for much longer than necessary.

40 Harlton to Hauxton area

The new railway line should avoid precluding Harston station re-opening. The EWR could route the line further south between Harston and Foxton.

Wildlife corridors (tunnels under embankments and green bridges over cuttings) should be built. An independent expert should be employed to identify solutions including these to the impacts on wildlife. Wherever necessary, drainage should be provided by Sustainable Drainage Systems. There should be extensive planting of native trees. The route should avoid disturbing field margins, because they are more biodiverse than other parts of the fields.

Where businesses are disturbed, land should be purchased to enable the business to continue in its desired location in the immediate vicinity.

Consistent with our views about other places, we believe a fund should be created to allow Parish Councils and communities to bid for funding for appropriate mitigation schemes such as:

- Improved pedestrian, equestrian, or cycle access not provided under statutory services and beyond that provided by the cycle routes alongside the railway;
- Landscape and nature conservation enhancement projects which increase biodiversity and beyond that provided by the railway's commitment to biodiversity net gain;
- Enhancement or replacement of sports and recreational facilities;
- Improved access and enhancements to public open space;
- Provision of enhanced or new community facilities; and
- Refurbishment / re-use of historic buildings and monuments.

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41 Great Shelford to Cambridge

At Cambridge station, as with other stations, prioritise increasing the capacity of the station to handle increased use by people arriving and departing on foot, bike or bus. There should be an aim throughout the line to avoid any increase in people arriving at the station by car, and this is particularly important at existing town and city centre stations.

If Shepreth Junction remains a flat junction then we suggest interlacing the Royston and Main tracks. Looking north they would be down Royston, down Main, up Royston, up Main. This minimises the number of conflicting moves at Shepreth. The proposed Cambridge South station should then have two island platforms, one to serve the Up tracks and one to serve the Down tracks.

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