

## East West Rail Company non-statutory consultation

To: Highways and Transport Committee

Meeting Date: 22 June 2021

From: Assistant Director, Growth and Infrastructure

Electoral division(s): St Neots East & Gransden, Cambourne, Hardwick, Papworth & Swavesey, Sawston & Shelford, Trumpington, Queen Edith's, Petersfield and Romsey divisions (the discounted northern approach to Cambridge additionally passes through Bar Hill, Histon and Impington, Waterbeach, Kings Hedges, Chesterton and Abbey)

Key decision: No

Forward Plan ref: N/A

Outcome: To agree the County Council's response to the non-statutory consultation by the East West Rail Company on various matters on the route between Oxford and Cambridge, including on route alignment options between Cambridge and Bedford.

Recommendation: Members are requested to:

- a) Approve the consultation response appended to this report
- b) Delegate to the Executive Director Place and Economy, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Highways and Transport Committee, the authority to agree any changes to the report following discussion at committee.

### Officer contact:

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### Member contacts:

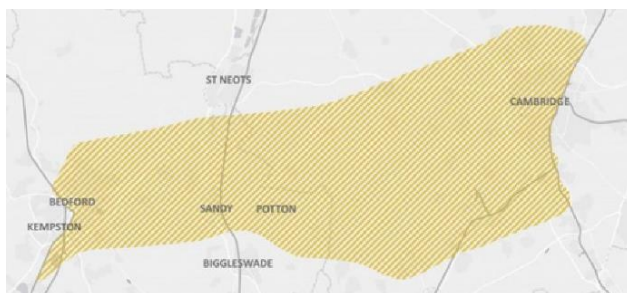
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# 1. Background

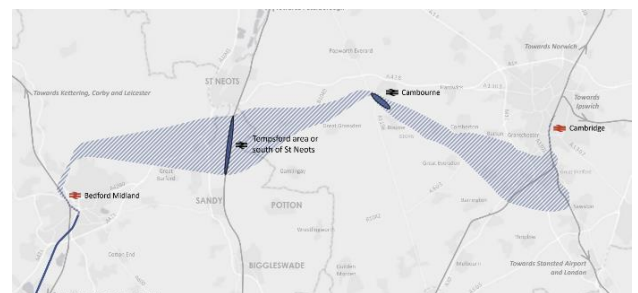
1.1 East West Rail (EWR) is a strategically important rail route connecting Norfolk and Suffolk (the Eastern Section), with Cambridge and Bedford (the Central Section) and beyond to Oxford and the South West (the Western Section). The East West Rail Consortium, of which the Council is a member, has been campaigning for EWR since 1995.



1.2 In the period to 2018, the consortium worked with Network Rail to develop proposals for the route, and in 2017 Network Rail identified a broad route corridor for the Central Section. In 2018, the Department for Transport created the East West Railway Company (the Company) to take forward works to implement the Western Section and to develop proposals for the Central Section between Bedford and Cambridge. Following a public consultation in early 2019, a narrower route option between Bedford, Cambourne and Cambridge was selected by the Company for further development.

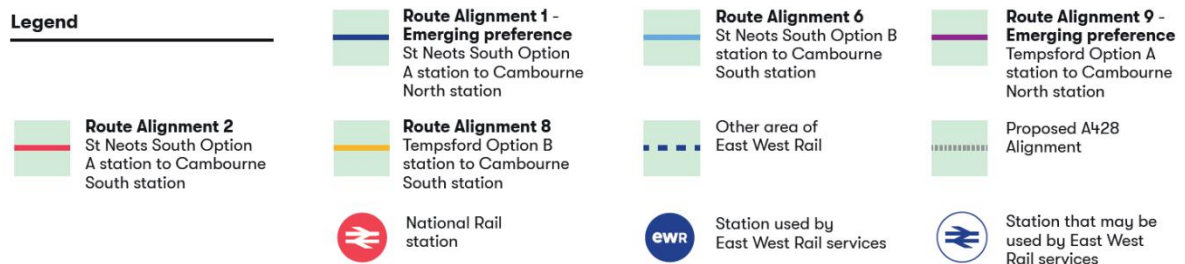
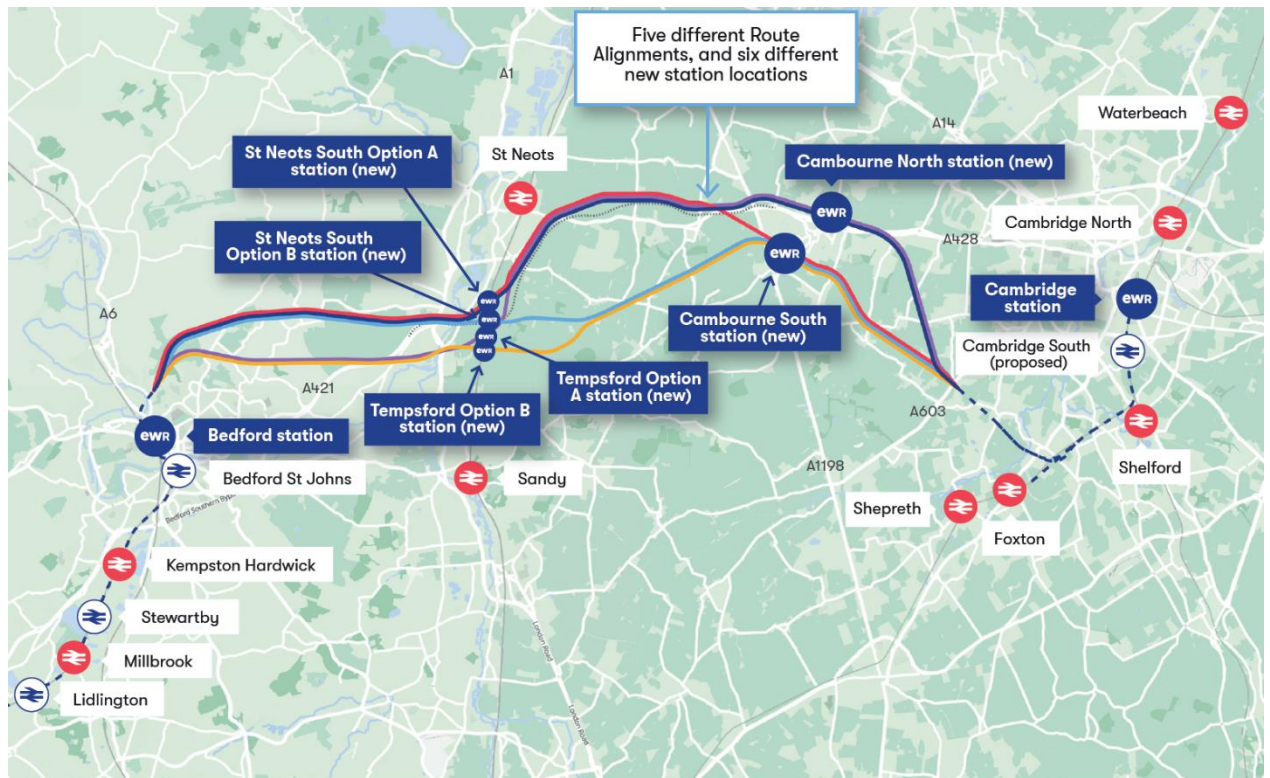


**2017: Route Corridor C selected**



**2019: Route Option E selected**

1.3 On 31st March 2021, the Company launched a ten-week consultation (see <https://eastwestrail.co.uk/consultation>) covering the overall customer experience and railway operations for EWR, as well as a range of infrastructure proposals, including potential route alignments for the Central Section between Bedford and Cambridge, as shown on the plan below.



### 2021: Consultation on Route Alignments

- 1.4 The consultation closed on 9 June 2021, but an extension to the deadline to allow for the County Council's response to be considered by the Highways and Transport Committee at this meeting has been agreed with the Company.
- 1.5 The current consultation also covers issues relating in detail to the Western Section of EWR between Oxford and Bedford. Separate work is being undertaken by the East West Rail Consortium to develop the case for the Eastern Section of EWR between Cambridge, Ipswich and Norwich; this work is not covered by this consultation.
- 1.6 This consultation is the second non-statutory consultation on the proposals for the Central Section and provides an opportunity for comments to inform the further development of proposals as they are worked up in more detail. Following the consultation, a route alignment will be chosen, and this will be presented to the public alongside other parts of the project, including the proposed design, in a statutory consultation. A summary of the development stages of the Central Section can be viewed at [Development Stages Central Section](#).

## 2 Main Issues

2.1 A draft response to the consultation is included in Appendix 1 to this report. The response to the consultation from England's Economic Heartland is included in Appendix 2. The following paragraphs discuss a number of the key points in the draft response.

### **The approach to Cambridge**

2.2 While the preferred Route Option selected in 2019 enters Cambridge from the south, the Company has undertaken additional work looking further at the option of entering Cambridge from the north (see Appendix F to the Consultation Technical Report at [Consultation Technical Report](#), pages 44 to 103). This work provides additional information on the practical, financial, operational and environmental factors associated with this.

2.3 In its response to the 2019 consultation the County Council supported the Central Section entering Cambridge from the south and provided commentary on the reasons for this:

- A route option entering Cambridge to the north would involve significant additional route miles, and significant additional cost over and above the route options presented in that consultation.
- Journey times on the EWR central section would be longer than for the route options presented in that consultation.
- The ability of EWR services to effectively serve the planned Cambridge South station and provide for the very significant planned economic and housing growth in the south of the city including at the Cambridge Biomedical Campus would be significantly reduced if the central section entered Cambridge from the north.
- The central section is a part of the longer EWR route linking East Anglia to Central, Southern and Western England. An option that required trains entering Cambridge from the north to reverse at Cambridge or Cambridge South to travel onwards to Ipswich or Norwich would add to journey times on EWR services.
- There would be additional costs to provide capacity through Cambridge over and above that required to cater for the five options presented in the (2019) consultation, as trains making onward trips onto the eastern section would need to make two movements through Cambridge rather than one.
- Public transport infrastructure provision is already in place or planned to address the needs of housing and economic growth north and northwest of Cambridge that could be served by a route that entered Cambridge from the north.

2.4 From the further assessment work undertaken by the Company, officers would note that:

- An approach to Cambridge from the north would have 4.7 km of route length in flood zones, compared to 0.8 km for an approach from the south, and would require 3.4km of viaduct, compared to 1.1km for an approach from the south.
- An approach to Cambridge from the north would require widening of the railway to four tracks between the junction east of Milton and Cambridge Station. This would require:
  - The demolition of at least forty residential and commercial properties (compared to five for the southern option).
  - Land on Stourbridge Common / Ditton Meadows and Coldhams Common. (The southern approach would require land from the Clay Farm Green Corridor).

- The replacement of the bridges taking the A14 trunk road, the A1303 Newmarket Road, Coldhams Lane and Mill Road over the railway (while the southern approach would require the replacement of the bridge taking Long Road over the railway).

2.5 On the basis of the additional work, the Company has confirmed its view that the northern approach does not provide the same level of benefits as a southern approach.

#### **Section D: Clapham Green to The Eversdens**

2.6 The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government is undertaking work to consider development over and above that included in current and emerging Local Plans in the Ox-Cam Arc. Officers do not consider that there is sufficient information available on the location and quantum of this growth to make any solid recommendation on alignment of EWR between Clapham Green and the Eversdens.

2.7 It is therefore suggested that the Council's consultation response sets out some principles that it believes should guide the selection of a preferred route alignment. These are detailed in paragraph 3 of the draft response in Appendix A.

2.8 In addition to the lack of detail on growth locations, officers would particularly draw attention to the need for further detail on how the alignments will address the impacts on local communities and on the environment, including noise and visual impacts, and to avoid severance between communities by all modes of transport and especially for pedestrians, cyclists, and equestrian users. More detail is needed on how Alignments 1 and 9 would cross the A428 and the Bourn Airfield site and pass through Highfields Caldecote.

#### **Section E: Harlton to Hauxton**

2.9 This section of the route will pass close to the villages of Harlton, Haslingfield and Harston, and increase use of the Shepreth Branch past Hauxton and Little Shelford. The route is likely to be in a deep cutting at Chapel Hill for most of the alignment past Haslingfield, which should help minimise noise impacts.

2.10 The consultation states that the next stage of work will involve further consideration of:

- Noise and visual impacts on Harston and surrounding communities.
- Impacts on the nearby ancient woodland.
- How to address severance issues on Station Road between Harston and Newton, including a replacement route between Newton Road and the A10 Royston Road.

2.11 The preferred option for the route alignment in the Harston area would realign the existing Shepreth Branch to the east, slightly further away from Harston, and provide a grade separated junction with EWR. This would minimise the impacts on properties and woodland and minimise disruption during construction. However, as the junction is likely to be grade separated, there is likely to be at least one track at a higher level.

#### **Section F: The Shelfords to Cambridge station**

2.12 The existing Hauxton Road level crossing on the line between Little Shelford and Hauxton may need to be closed; this will be assessed in detail at the next stage of design.

- 2.13 A decision has not yet been made on whether the junction of the Shepreth Branch with the West Anglia Main Line would be at grade or grade separated, but it is not currently envisaged that either option would require the acquisition of residential properties in Great Shelford.
- 2.14 EWR will necessitate the railway between the Shepreth Branch junction and Cambridge Station being widened to four tracks. The Cambridge South Station will widen the route at that station. The four tracking will require the bridge taking Long Road over the railway to be lengthened to accommodate the new tracks.
- 2.15 Two additional through platforms will be required at Cambridge Station, and it is possible that a third additional platform will be needed. These platforms are likely to be on the east side of the station. The opportunity should be taken to provide an eastern access to the station as part of the works to provide the new platforms. A second footbridge is likely to be needed.

### 3 Alignment with corporate priorities

#### 3.1 Communities at the heart of everything we do

The following bullet points set out details of implications identified by officers:

- The proposals will provide transport options for people travelling locally between stations in Cambridgeshire, for work and leisure trips.

#### 3.2 A good quality of life for everyone

The following bullet points set out details of implications identified by officers:

- Whichever route alignment is chosen will pass close to some communities in Huntingdonshire, South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge, and impacts on those communities will need to be minimised and mitigated.

#### 3.3 Helping our children learn, develop and live life to the full

There are no significant implications for this priority.

#### 3.4 Cambridgeshire: a well-connected, safe, clean, green environment

The following bullet points set out details of implications identified by officers:

- The proposals will improve connectivity within Cambridgeshire and to destinations in south, west and central England.
- Providing for trips by rail will have a lower carbon impact than providing for those trips on the road network.
- The Council is seeking a commitment from the East West Rail Company to double nature.

#### 3.5 Protecting and caring for those who need us

There are no significant implications for this priority.

## 4 Significant Implications

### 4.1 Resource Implications

The following bullet point sets out details of significant implications identified by officers:

- Staff resource and external support will be needed to engage with the East West Rail Company as the scheme is developed, and through the Development Consent Order Inquiry process. Agreements will be put in place with the East West Rail Company to cover pre-inquiry costs but there may be some costs through the Inquiry process.

### 4.2 Procurement/Contractual/Council Contract Procedure Rules Implications

The following bullet point sets out details of significant implications identified by officers:

- Any consultancy support required will be procured in a compliant process, there are no other procurements envisaged.

### 4.3 Statutory, Legal and Risk Implications

The following bullet point sets out details of significant implications identified by officers:

- The Council is a statutory consultee in the development consent order process.

### 4.4 Equality and Diversity Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

### 4.5 Engagement and Communications Implications

The following bullet point sets out details of significant implications identified by officers:

- This consultation is the second non-statutory consultation on the proposals. A third, statutory consultation will take place on the selected route proposal prior to the submission of the Development Consent Order application by the Company.

### 4.6 Localism and Local Member Involvement

The following bullet point sets out details of significant implications identified by officers:

- Officers will continue to engage with Local Members with wards impacted by the proposals as the development of the proposals continues.

### 4.7 Public Health Implications

The following bullet point sets out details of significant implications identified by officers:

- Increased connectivity increases productivity, employment etc. which in turn can lead to improved health outcomes at both individual and population levels.
- Needs to be part of a joined up sustainable transport network
- Support train rather than individual car journeys, and electric / non diesel traction to minimise health impacts due to poor air quality
- A full Health Impact Assessment will be needed as part of DCO application and detailed comments would be made then.

- 4.8 Environment and Climate Change Implications on Priority Areas:
- 4.8.1 Implication 1: Energy efficient, low carbon buildings.  
Positive/neutral/negative Status: Positive  
Explanation: Neutral / Positive. While details are to be confirmed, it is expected that the station buildings on the Central section of East West Rail will be low carbon.
- 4.8.2 Implication 2: Low carbon transport.  
Positive/neutral/negative Status: Neutral / Positive  
Explanation: This is a process paper. Any implications identified in scheme development work will be addressed in future reports to this Committee, and by the detailed environmental assessment work that will be undertaken to inform the DCO process. However, officers would note that CO2 emissions associated with rail transport per passenger mile, and by tonne of freight per mile are significantly less than those associated with the equivalent trips by road, and this holds true for both electric and diesel traction.
- 4.8.3 Implication 3: Green spaces, peatland, afforestation, habitats and land management.  
Positive/neutral/negative Status: Neutral  
Explanation: This is a process paper. Any implications arising from strategy or scheme development work will be addressed in future reports to this Committee, and by the detailed environmental assessment work that will be undertaken to inform the DCO process. There is an expectation that schemes of this nature should mitigate their impacts in these areas, and the Council is seeking a commitment from the Company to double nature.
- 4.8.4 Implication 4: Waste Management and Tackling Plastic Pollution.  
Positive/neutral/negative Status: Neutral  
Explanation: This scheme should not impact on waste management operations or generate plastic pollution.
- 4.8.5 Implication 5: Water use, availability and management:  
Positive/neutral/negative Status: Neutral  
Explanation: The Council will work the applicant to identify impacts of the scheme and agree appropriate mitigation.
- 4.8.6 Implication 6: Air Pollution.  
Positive/neutral/negative Status: Neutral  
Explanation: Neutral. Rail travel generates less pollutants per passenger mile or per tonne per mile of freight than the same journeys by road. Detailed assessment of air quality impacts will be undertaken as part of the Environmental Assessment of the scheme. The Council and partner councils are seeking a commitment to deliver electrification of the route from day one of operation.
- 4.8.7 Implication 7: Resilience of our services and infrastructure, and supporting vulnerable people to cope with climate change.  
Positive/neutral/negative Status: Neutral  
Explanation: There are not envisaged to be any impacts in this area.



Have the resource implications been cleared by Finance? Yes

Name of Financial Officer: Sarah Heywood

Have the procurement/contractual/ Council Contract Procedure Rules implications been cleared by the CCC Head of Procurement? Yes

Name of Officer: Henry Swan

Has the impact on statutory, legal and risk implications been cleared by the Council's Monitoring Officer or LGSS Law? Yes

Name of Legal Officer: Fiona McMillan

Have the equality and diversity implications been cleared by your Service Contact? Yes

Name of Officer: Jeremy Smith

Have any engagement and communication implications been cleared by Communications? Yes

Name of Officer: Sarah Silk

Have any localism and Local Member involvement issues been cleared by your Service Contact? Yes

Name of Officer: Jeremy Smith

Have any Public Health implications been cleared by Public Health? Yes

Name of Officer: Iain Green

If a Key decision, have any Environment and Climate Change implications been cleared by the Climate Change Officer? Yes

Name of Officer: Emily Bolton

### **Source documents**

Consultation webpage: <https://eastwestrail.co.uk/consultation>. Electronic copies of documents also available from Transport Strategy and Funding Team at Cambridgeshire County Council.

## Appendix 1      Draft Consultation Response

### **Making Meaningful Connections: East West Rail Company consultation, March – June 2021 Response of Cambridgeshire County Council 22 June 2021**



1. Cambridgeshire County Council welcomes and supports the ongoing work to develop and deliver the East West Rail route, providing a strategic rail corridor between the East of England and central, southern and western England for both passengers and freight. The route should be transformational, shortening many rail journeys, providing new travel choices for many trips, taking pressure off rail lines into London, and reducing carbon emissions from the transport sector.
2. The Council endorses the response of England's Economic Heartland to the consultation, and the overarching requirements set out in that response, which are:
  - a) Continued support in principle for the development and delivery of the proposals required to restore the rail link between Oxford and Cambridge
  - b) The importance of high quality and environmentally sensitive design
  - c) A commitment by Government to deliver East West Rail section must include a commitment to fund the delivery of complementary improvements in local connectivity
  - d) The section between Bletchley and Cambridge should be designed to enable delivery of the full of the East West Main Line proposal
  - e) The section between Bletchley and Cambridge should be delivered as electrified infrastructure
  - f) The section between Bletchley and Cambridge should be delivered as a digitally enabled infrastructure corridor
  - g) The design of the Bletchley and Cambridge section must incorporate lessons learnt during the delivery of the Bicester to Bletchley section
  - h) The design of the Bletchley to Cambridge section must be capable of accommodating rail freight services
3. Expanding on the EEH requirements noted above, the Council would request the following principles / requirements are taken account of as further work is undertaken to develop the proposals Central Section between Bedford and Cambridge.

#### ***A Strategic Railway***

- The East West Rail Central Section should be considered as part of the longer East of England to central, southern and western England route, and account for the need for services to continue to Ipswich and Norwich.
- Scheme design and service specification should allow for a flexible mix of fast inter-regional and local stopping passenger services, and for freight services.

#### ***Growth***

- The East West Rail Central Section should support growth and enable sustainable transport patterns to be realised from that growth. The detailed alignment of the Central Section should be considered alongside the consideration of appropriate locations for growth in the Ox-Cam Arc, and the appropriate scale of that growth.
- The strategy for station provision on the Central Section must be informed by the

consideration of appropriate locations for growth.

### ***Carbon***

- East West Rail should be electrified between Bletchley and Cambridge and contribute to the decarbonisation of the transport sector from day one of operation, contributing to the achieving of net zero carbon emissions by 2050.
- The East West Rail Central Section should have active provision for electrically powered freight services, including track capacity to enable freight operation without adversely impacting on passenger timetables.

### ***Environmental / Social impacts***

- East West Rail should double nature to offset adverse construction impacts.
- Scheme design and alignments should minimise and mitigate adverse impacts on existing communities, and avoid or mitigate the severance of links between those communities.

### ***Integration and connectivity***

- East West Rail stations should be designed to facilitate interchange with local public transport services and with the Cambourne To Cambridge Better Public Transport Project.
- High quality pedestrian and cycle links meeting the standards set out in LTN 1/20 should be provided between Central Section stations and existing settlements, or adequate funding for such provision made available to the Council.
- Station access should allow for the interception of trips on the Strategic Road Network, particularly for journeys to and from Cambridge.

4. The following paragraphs set out the council's detailed comments on the route options in Cambridgeshire.

### **The approach to Cambridge**

5. The Council notes the additional work undertaken on the option of entering Cambridge from the north, and the conclusions drawn by the East West Rail Company that it would result in higher costs and lower passenger benefits. The Council would ask that further details be made available by EWR to the public on the basis for its decision on the preferred access.

### **Section B: Bletchley and the Marston Vale Line and Section C: Bedford**

6. The Council agrees that very significant investment is needed in the Marston Vale Line to ensure that overall EWR service provision is reliable and that journey times are minimised on the longer route. We support the commentary in the consultation response from England's Economic Heartland on the Marston Vale Line and on the section of the route through Bedford.

### **Section D: Clapham Green to The Eversdens**

7. The Council considers that there is insufficient information available with regard to the location and quantum of future housing and economic growth for it to fully endorse a single Route Alignment for the Central Section between Clapham Green and the Eversdens at this time. The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) is undertaking work to consider further development over and above that included in current

and emerging Local Plans in the Ox-Cam Arc. The final choice of route alignment and station locations in the St Neots / Tempsford area and in the Cambourne area must be informed by and inform the consideration of the location and quantum of any future growth by MHCLG.

8. Based on our initial assessment of the consultation material and of environmental and heritage constraints, Route Alignments 1 and 9 are likely to have fewer negative implications for ecology, green infrastructure and heritage assets than Route Alignments 2, 6 and 8.
9. We would draw attention to the following areas where we need more information or have identified issues that will need to be addressed as the scheme is taken forward.

#### St Neots South / Tempsford area

10. The location and quantum of growth in this area is fundamental to the choice of route option between Bedford and the East Coast Main Line, and to the location of the proposed interchange station. It is not certain at this point in time that a station on the East Coast Main Line would be located optimally to serve new development to the south / south east of St Neots or in the Tempsford area, and consideration of options for an additional station should be kept open should the growth context support this.
11. Route Alignments 1, 2 and 9 are routed between the old A428 and the proposed alignment of the new A428 to the east of St Neots and pass close to the Wintringham Park development, which is delivering around 2,800 homes. A station on the East Coast Main Line to the south is relatively poorly located for access from this site, and the opportunity to provide a station in this area should be considered if these Route Alignments are taken forward.

#### Cambourne area

12. The County Council notes the initial view from South Cambridgeshire District Council that growth immediately to the south of a Cambourne South station would be likely to be less favourable than growth to the north of Cambourne, due to the nature of the landscape and the location relative to existing villages. However, as they note, more information is needed on the scale and nature of development to confirm this assessment.
13. A station at Cambourne South (Route Alignments 2, 6 and 8) would have good accessibility from the existing settlement of Cambourne. However, a station at Cambourne North (Route Alignments 1 and 9) would be separated from the existing settlement and from the consented Bourn Airfield settlement by the A428. Significant investment will be needed to allow for access from Cambourne to a Cambourne North station by pedestrians and cyclists. In a similar context, a station at Cambourne must be linked to surrounding villages.
14. Alignments 1 and 9 via a station at Cambourne North are shown cutting across the north east corner of the Bourn Airfield site, and through Highfields Caldecote on a viaduct and embankment. The Bourn Airfield site has resolution for planning consent (subject to completion of a S.106 agreement) for a settlement of 3,500 dwellings. At Highfields Caldecote, the alignment crosses a consented residential development site. Detail of how Route Alignments 1 and 9 would impact on the development of Bourn Airfield and Highfields Caldecote is needed.

15. If route alignments 1 or 9 are ultimately selected, consideration should be given to either tunnelling or putting the route in cutting under the A428 and across the Bourn Airfield site and under Highfields Caldecote. Consideration should also be given to a station serving Bourn Airfield directly, which might add value to the development rather than just add costs and take land.

### **Section E: Harlton to Hauxton**

16. Cambridgeshire County Council supports the emerging preferred option for the Hauxton junction, as it would minimise the impacts on properties and woodland, move the existing railway further from Harston and reduce noise impacts, and would minimise disruption of existing rail services during construction. The Council appreciates that a grade separated solution is highly desirable in operational terms, but wishes to highlight the need for detailed consideration of noise and visual impacts of such provision in the development of more detailed options.
17. The new rail junction at Hauxton would sever the Station Road / Newton Road between Harston and Newton. Pedestrian and cycle access between the villages must be maintained on the current alignment as a minimum. Options for maintaining vehicular access should be discussed with the County Council.
18. Paragraph 10.3.8 of the Consultation Technical Report notes as a key advantage in relation to the use of the Shepreth Branch, that *"This option should not require widening of the existing two track corridor beyond the junction resulting in a smaller footprint and acquisition of fewer properties."*
19. The County Council welcomes this assessment, as it will limit the impact of the EWR route through Great Shelford. However, we are aware that the Shepreth Branch currently caters for six trains an hour in each direction, and that timetabling of these different services into Cambridge can be challenging. There are no opportunities for faster trains to pass stopping services on the Shepreth Branch, and this constraint impacts on the timetabling of services on the East Coast Main Line and the West Anglia Main Line. While we note and agree with the advantages detailed in paragraph 10.3.8, it must be ensured that the addition of East West Rail services onto this busy section of railway does not lead to increased journey times or timetabling problems for existing services on the Shepreth Branch.

### **Section F: The Shelfords to Cambridge station**

20. The consultation states that the existing Hauxton Road level crossing on the line the between Little Shelford and Hauxton may need to be closed and that this will be assessed in detail at the next stage of design. If the crossing was not closed it would be likely to see significantly more barrier down time than is the case today, as the number of trains on the route would increase from six to eleven an hour in each direction with East West Rail. The Council considers that it is highly likely that a replacement bridge or bridges over the railway for vehicular traffic and pedestrians and cyclists will be needed.
21. East West Rail will necessitate the railway between the Shepreth Branch junction and Cambridge Station being widened to four tracks. Cambridge South Station will widen the route at the station. The four tracking will require the bridge taking Long Road over the railway to be lengthened to accommodate the new tracks. Long Road is part of the

Cambridge Ring Road, and the East West Rail Company will need to ensure that the works to replace the bridge are managed to minimise disruption on the local transport network.

22. Two additional through platforms will be required at Cambridge Station, and it is possible that a third additional platform will be needed. These platforms are likely to be on the east side of the station. The opportunity should be taken to provide an eastern access to the station as part of the works to provide the new platforms. It must be ensured that sufficient space for passenger circulation and platform access is provided, and a second station footbridge is likely to be needed.

### **Vertical alignments**

23. In several areas, but particularly between Cambourne and Harston, the Route Alignments are shown with very significant lengths of high embankment and viaduct. In some cases, this is to cross water courses and in others it appears to be to pass over roads.
24. The Council appreciates the engineering challenges associated with a railway and the shallow gradients required compared to a road. However, the visual impacts of the embankments and structures is likely to be considerable and there are likely to be greater noise impacts compared to alignments that are at-grade or in cuttings. As proposals are refined, opportunities to reduce these impacts should be considered in detail and discussed with the County Council where it affects our infrastructure.

### **Interaction with infrastructure being developed by the Greater Cambridge Partnership.**

25. Comments from the Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP) are appended to this response, focussing on the interaction of the East West Rail Central Section with their programme, particularly with the Cambourne to Cambridge and Cambridge South East Transport projects. Cambridgeshire County Council supports these comments and would emphasise the need for effective co-ordination between the East West Rail Company and the GCP to ensure that the interfaces between the projects in their design and delivery phases are managed effectively.
26. We would also emphasise the opportunity for a multi-modal interchange at the Cambourne station allowing passengers on East West Rail direct, fast access to parts of west Cambridge and the city centre that are not directly served by rail.

### **Interaction with Local Roads and Public Rights of Way (PROW)**

27. It is vital for rail scheme promoters to consult with the County Council's Highways Service early and extensively to agree workable solutions and help minimise objections. For the EWR central section the number of roads and PROW affected is large and will require a great deal of work to assess the impact and potential solutions.
28. The EWR Company is therefore strongly advised to consult the County Council as early as possible in the next stages of work to develop the scheme to discuss the impacts of the Route Alignments in detail, and what mitigation or form of compensation is needed as the scheme is developed further, and certainly prior to the formalisation of any proposals. The EWR Company will need to agree with the County Council a plan for approval of changes to the highway network, including the handover of all relevant asset information in order to

enable the Council to update its legal records and undertake ongoing maintenance. Commuted sums for the future maintenance of new highway infrastructure will be sought by the Council.

### Local Roads

29. Early discussion of the proposed changes to the local transport network with Cambridgeshire County Council as Highway Authority and the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority as Transport Authority will be needed.
30. Any changes proposed to the road network as a result of the central section of East West Rail will need to consider the potential future use of the network in the affected areas, as well as immediate short term impacts. The County Council's Highway Asset Management Strategy and Highway Operational Standards can be viewed at <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/travel-roads-and-parking/transport-plans-and-policies/highway-policies-and-capital-maintenance-programme/>.

### Public Rights of Way

31. The five Route Alignments Central Section intersect with numerous routes of the Public Rights of Way (PROW) network. As the Highway Authority, Cambridgeshire County Council is the statutory body with responsibility for maintaining these PROW and the legal records related to them, in the form of the Definitive Map and Statement. The proposed works will severely impact upon the PROW network in the specified development corridor.
32. In accordance with the County Council's Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) (see <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/travel-roads-and-parking/transport-plans-and-policies/local-transport-plan/>) and the Cambridgeshire Health & Well-Being Strategy (see <https://cambridgeshireinsight.org.uk/jsna/health-and-wellbeing-strategy/>), the Council's approach is that:
  - It will seek to ensure that countryside access provision is not damaged by new development, and that, where possible, it is enhanced for the physical and mental well-being of communities.
  - In principle, public rights of way should remain open on their existing alignment, and diversion or extinguishment will only be considered where it can be demonstrated that there is no alternative.
  - Any routes that are proposed for diversion or extinguishment will require appropriate mitigation proposals (including consideration of convenience of users and enjoyment).
  - In addition, enhancements to the PROW network should be provided where possible both to help mitigate any losses, and to make use of the development as an opportunity to bring benefit to local communities, e.g. through upgrading the status of a right of way to bridleway for more inclusive access by equestrians and cyclists.
33. Guiding Principle 3 from the ROWIP states that:
34. *"New development should not damage countryside provision, either directly or indirectly. New settlements should be integrated into the rights of way network, and improved provision made for the increased population. Where appropriate, development should contribute to the provision of new links and/or improvement of the existing rights of way network."*

## **Climate Change**

35. The County Council agrees with the following commentary on climate change made by South Cambridgeshire District Council and considers that the Central Section should be delivered with electrification from the outset.

### *Climate Change Targets*

36. Whilst the consultation material makes a number of high-level commitments to reducing the climate impacts of the scheme, on the whole it is considered that the proposals are currently lacking in clear and measurable targets related to climate change and carbon reduction, and there are a number of inconsistencies throughout the consultation materials.
37. The Government has just accepted the Committee on Climate Change's recommendations for the Sixth Carbon budget, which sets an extremely ambitious carbon reduction target for a 78% reduction in emissions by 2035 in order for the UK to be on target to achieve net zero carbon by 2050. This new target will become enshrined in law by the end of June 2021. It will be vital that the proposals that come forward for East West Rail are in line with this carbon budget, including the assessment of the significance of effects as part of the EIA process.

### *Electrification of the Rail Network*

38. The consultation documents make a number of high-level commitments including that the scheme 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. Paragraph 3.9.2 of the technical document goes on to state that 'the use of diesel-powered trains is not a project objective'. This is incompatible with the Programme Wide Output Specification (PWOS) contained within the appendices to the technical document, which states (at Section 5.1.9.1) that 'the railway shall not at this point in time be electrified'.
39. In making their recommendations to Government on the Sixth Carbon Budget, the Committee on Climate Change included recommendations that continued electrification of the rail network, together with hydrogen, battery-electric and hybrid trains, will play a significant role in meeting the sixth carbon budget. To meet the ambition set out in the Committee's carbon reduction scenarios, rail will need to be decarbonised further, with gradual electrification up to 55-60% of the network by 2050. Their recommendation was that 'Government should set out a clear vision to deliver Net Zero in rail and support Network Rail in delivering the target to remove all diesel trains by 2040. This is expected to cover a mix of zero emission technologies (e.g. battery-electric, hydrogen and track electrification). The strategy should be published by 2021 as recommended by the National Infrastructure Commission'. The Council considers it imperative that the proposals for East West Rail are compatible with this recommendation.
40. The sixth carbon budget cannot be met unless all new railway infrastructure is electrified at the point of construction. The statement in Section 5.9.13 of the PWOS that 'all new or renewed infrastructure shall be made compatible with positive passive provision of future electrification' is not considered to go far enough to meet this commitment.



41. We are also disappointed that the scheme does not make a clear target to rule out diesel powered EWR services or freight services and recommend that the PWOS be updated to commit to electrification from the outset. To fail to do so would not be compatible with the UK's legally binding carbon reduction commitments and could open up the project to legal challenge on climate change grounds.
42. While it is outside the scope of the current Central Section scheme, for electric traction freight services to use East West Rail there is a need for the earliest possible electrification of the route between Cambridge, Ipswich and Felixstowe / Harwich.

### **Ecology and Green Infrastructure**

43. In the 2019 consultation the county council provided the following commentary on Ecology and Green Infrastructure:

*"It is essential that proposals protect and enhance sites, habitats and species of biodiversity value, including those of local importance (e.g. priority species / habitats, County Wildlife Sites and Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Additional Species of Interest). Best practice mitigation hierarchy should be followed, with the route avoiding the greatest impacts on biodiversity selected, with any residual impacts minimised and adequately mitigated.*

*This scheme, along with other infrastructure and housing development within Cambridgeshire, will cause significant fragmentation of the landscape and result in isolation of biodiversity assets. It is critical, in line with the National Planning Policy Framework, that the scheme seeks to establish coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to such pressure – including protect and buffer existing wildlife sites, extending existing networks of natural habitats and enhancements for species / habitats of local interest.*

*It is essential, in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework, that the scheme seeks to deliver biodiversity net gain which contributes to county-wide strategies / projects, including:*

- *Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure Strategy; (<https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/media/2557/green-infrastructure-strategy.pdf>)*
- *Wildlife Trust's Living Landscape Project (e), including West Cambridgeshire Hundreds and Cambridgeshire Chalk (<https://www.wildlifebcn.org/living-landscapes>); and*
- *Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Habitat Opportunities map (<http://www.cpbiodiversity.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Cambridgeshire-habitat-mapping-final-report-FINAL.pdf>)"*

44. We would further note that Cambridgeshire is one of the most biodiversity deprived counties in the country, with many of Cambridgeshire's wildlife sites, habitats, and species in decline as a result of pressure from development, intensive agriculture and climate change. Transport schemes can have significant impact on wildlife as a result of carving-up the landscape, leaving small isolated pockets of wildlife, which are vulnerable to change. It is therefore important to consider opportunities to best protect and enhance the fragments of wildlife that remains.

45. In this context, in Cambridgeshire, route Alignments 1 and 9 provide the best opportunity to protect the county's biodiversity assets, as they follow the route of existing infrastructure (e.g. alignment of the old / proposed new A428) so that only a single transport corridor is created across the landscape. Route Alignments 1 and 9 are also further away from the rare Barbastelle Bat maternity colony at the Wimpole and Eversden Woods Site of Special Scientific Interest, which is of international importance for its bat population.

### **Flood Risk Management**

46. The route options to the north via Cambourne and south via Bassingbourn pass through areas with significant flood risk. It is essential that the scheme considers the risk from all sources of flooding (i.e. including risk from surface water runoff, ordinary watercourses and groundwater as well as main rivers) and avoids or manages the risks appropriately.
47. Where possible, in line with the National Planning Policy Framework, the scheme should explore opportunities to provide a reduction in flood risk to existing communities as well as ensuring that the route itself is sustainability designed. This could include exploring the use of natural flood risk management solutions on a catchment scale, providing betterment along the corridor. This would also enable a more holistic approach to managing the corridor environment integrating green infrastructure, biodiversity and flood risk management measures. Taking this kind of approach might also enable external funding and contributions to be drawn in from partners to support the delivery of high quality infrastructure.
48. All of the proposed routes would require the crossing of a number of watercourses. These watercourses form an essential part of water level management across Cambridgeshire and the wider catchment. Therefore consultation with Cambridgeshire County Council should be undertaken to ensure any crossings are designed appropriately and sustainably. The consent of the Council is required before changes can be made to the watercourses.

## **Annex 1: CCC Historic Environment Team commentary on route options**

The comments below relate to the Route Alignments as they impact on Cambridgeshire.

### **Map Review: Clapham Green to The Eversdens**

**Route 1** (dark blue) and **Route 9** (purple) follow the corridor of the new A428 road line, restricting further impacts to the historic environment resource and to Huntingdonshire and South Cambridgeshire's rural landscape. This corridor has already been subject to archaeological evaluation so a broad understanding of the archaeological character of the area has begun to be established. These routes avoid most statutory historic environment designations, areas of Scheduled Monuments and Conservation Areas. Non-designated heritage assets are present according to the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record (CHER), for which mitigation solutions, including route realignments to avoid large known archaeological sites, might be possible. They avoid affecting the landscape between Kingston and Toft and avoids areas of extensive archaeological sites (mapped from cropmarks on aerial photographs) – particularly around the Bourn Brook. These route alignments have a relatively lighter impact on historic environment resources in Cambridgeshire and are preferred by the Historic Environment Team.

**Route 2** (red) heads to the Bourn valley (Bourn Brook) and would despoil a historic intersection of parishes at a sensitive area of the river valley. It would also affect Conservation Areas in the Kingston, Caldecote, Toft triangle. This is an area of considerable landscape value and natural environment around Bourn Brook, which should not be affected by a transport route. It is not supported by the Historic Environment Team.

**Route 6** (light blue) and **Route 8** (yellow) would in addition to the impacts noted for Route 2, pass by a high number of designated heritage assets (e.g. Scheduled Monuments, Conservation Areas). The Conservation Area of Abbotsley would be significantly affected. They are not supported by the Historic Environment Team.

**Route 9** (Purple); Route 9, as with Route 1, is preferred in historic environment terms in its Cambridgeshire section. It stays to the north of the A428, closely aligned with its route, importantly avoids affecting the landscape between Kingston and Toft and avoids areas of extensive archaeological sites (mapped from cropmarks on aerial photographs) – particularly around the Bourn Brook.

### **Map Review: Harlton to Hauxton section**

All routes will converge to the south of the Mullard Radio Astronomy Observatory that was built on the former Oxford-Cambridge Varsity Railway Line and the site of a former WW2 airfield and ammunitions dump (CHER ref MCB15138). The EWR route will take a course immediately north of Harlton and will affect the setting of the scheduled monument and non-designated components at Fryer's Cottage alongside the Roman Road Arrington to Cambridge (CHER ref MCB28262), which would need appropriate mitigation commensurate with nationally important archaeological sites.

The intensity of non-designated historic environment assets on the CHER increases and expands around Harston and the alley of the River Cam or Rhee. Scheduled Monuments are numerous in the Hauxton to Great Shelford area where additional track beds will create impacts and affect their settings. Careful mitigation will be needed.

## **Document Review:**

- **Our approach to the environment 2021 Update**
- **Technical Document**

We welcome and encourage the stated intention to protect the historic environment through preserving and enhancing heritage assets but there is still a long way to go before these have been fully identified and new archaeological sites discovered via appropriate evaluation works.

We consider that Routes 1 and 9 have demonstrated route planning that avoids most of the statutorily designated sites and monuments, but the documents lack detail as to how non-designated assets will be found, understood and used to make localised route changes, where necessary. In line with NPPF paragraph 189, we recommend that a robust programme of evaluation is required in advance of the submission of any application for a DCO in order to provide information that can be used in decision making for mitigation schemes and for promotion and display of the archaeology of the EWR route.

The additional works in support of the route (chapter 4 Technical document) include reference to impacts on the historic environment

**Section E: Harlton to Hauxton.** The consultation document shows options for an online or offline junction with the West Anglia Main Line. Care and attention is required with the planning of this section to prevent spoiling or damaging the settings of a series of heritage assets designated as Scheduled Monuments in this area (Settlement sites at Manor Farm NHLE 1006809). It is evident on the Historic Environment Record maps alone that there are very few opportunities for the routing and expansion works for the line junctions in this area that would fully avoid heritage assets.

**Section F: The Shelfords to Cambridge.** We have been in discussions with Network Rail about this section and are working with them and Historic England to design the least harmful route reducing impacts to a large Scheduled Monument west of White Hill Farm (NHLE 1006891 – shown on a maplet on p.256 of the consultation document) with non-designated portions on the west side of the existing railway line. Constraints here include the existing railway line and the proposed route of the Cambridge South East Transport travel route in design by the Greater Cambridge Partnership as well as Nine Wells LNR, which is the source spring of Hobson's Conduit.

## **Consultation Technical Report: Appendices**

This language may need greater explanation to Member and members of the public:

**Appendix B, Page 26, para 5.30.9.** states "*Historic environment. EWR Co shall protect the historic environment through preserving and enhancing heritage assets.*" It would be better for EWR Co. to indicate that their intention is to find and excavate archaeological remains that can't be avoided by construction and other impacts connected with the railway, and seek to analyse and publish the results of ensuing excavations in a variety of formats, to conduct public engagement for archaeology during the construction programme and to display and interpret the evidence in galleries, museums, railway stations and websites as part of the mitigation strategy.

## **Appendix E. Project Section D Assessment Factor Tables: Environmental Considerations.**

Designated heritage assets are solely used to quantify impacts. This is 'very high level' (see above) assessment data and does not include reference to far higher levels of non-designated assets –

some denoting extensive settlement sites or funerary remains. Some may class as being of equivalent status just have not been put forward for scheduling.

**Appendix E, Factor ID 3 Capital Costs.** Once the archaeological evaluation exercises produce physical evidence, the cost risk and programme risk can be more securely calculated. Underestimation of the costs of an Archaeological Mitigation Strategy risks jeopardising the scheme and can lead to unwanted corner-cutting and budget rearrangement (including with Govt departments, DfT). The Council will be happy to work with the EWR Company to minimise such risks.

**Appendix E, Factor ID 14 Environment and Society.** Environmental impacts and opportunities. The scores given for Route 9 do not tally if the historic environment is included in this row. If historic environment is not included in this row, how is it accounted for in this table?

## **Conclusion**

An appraisal of the Route Alignments 1, 2, 6, 8 and 9 has taken place. We consider the Cambridgeshire sections of Route 1 and Route 9 to be least harmful in historic environment terms.

## **Annex 2: Greater Cambridge Partnership response**

(also submitted under separate cover)

### **East West Rail “Making Meaningful Connections” Public Consultation – comments on interaction with Greater Cambridge Partnership schemes**

The GCP’s partners – including Cambridgeshire County Council, Cambridge City Council, South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridge University – will be submitting comprehensive responses to the consultation. This document provides comments on the interface between the consultation proposals and several of the GCP’s transport schemes.

#### **General comments**

The GCP has several schemes which interface with East West Rail both as the line approaches Cambridge from the west, and in terms of providing onward connectivity to the east. As proposals develop, it is important that the dialogue to ensure schemes are complementary and aligned continues.

As set out above, the GCP partners will submit comprehensive responses to the consultation. The GCP echoes the position set out in our partners’ responses that East West Rail should be electrified from the start in order meet the area’s ambitions for a sustainable transport network and to support the achievement of local and national goals with regards to carbon emissions and air quality.

#### **Cambridge South East Transport (CSET)**

There is an interface between the CSET and East West Rail (EWR) projects within the area identified in the consultation materials as Section F: The Shelfords to Cambridge station. Improvements to the existing railway and Cambridge station are proposed by EWR within this area. This section of our response focuses on Section F and the interface between the projects within this area.

The GCP welcomes the recognition within the consultation documents (Technical Report, para 11.7.8) that the CSET scheme is planning to build a section of a new off-road public transport and active travel route in the same area, with a part of that route proposed to run close to the existing West Anglia Main Line. We appreciate that coordination meetings have been taking place and the commitment made in the consultation documents that these will continue going forward so that integration risks can be minimised, and opportunities maximised.

#### **Shepreth Branch Junction**

Two options are proposed for Shepreth Branch Junction, both of which require removal of the existing junction and building two new tracks next to the existing tracks. We note (Technical Report, para 11.6.7) that further design is required to understand the design of the grade-separating structure that would be needed for one of these options, identify the relevant land boundaries, and confirm the most appropriate solution.

In advance of this design being progressed by EWR, CSET has sought to mitigate the integration risk in this location by developing an assumption regarding the land required to construct a grade separated junction at Shepreth Junction and developing the current design for the CSET scheme to avoid this land. However, there is now an opportunity for EWR to act to further mitigate this risk

by identifying the land boundaries required for the construction and permanent operation each option in advance of the CSET route alignment being fixed under a Transport and Works Act Order. GCP ask that EWR act to realise this opportunity in programming and expediting the further design work required for Shepreth Junction.

#### *The existing railway from Shepreth Junction to Addenbrooke's Road bridge*

It is proposed to increase this area of railway to four tracks, with Addenbrooke's Road bridge being the point where the two new EWR tracks will join the new four tracks that the Cambridge South station project will have already built.

We note (Technical Report, para 11.7.4) that further design is required in the next stage to determine the location of the two new tracks and how they tie in with the Cambridge South four tracking, with this design to be developed closely with Network Rail.

GCP ask EWR to take full account of the following matters at the next stage of design:

- Potential impacts on Nine Wells Local Nature Reserve and Hobson's Brook including cumulative impacts of the CSET, Cambridge South Station and EWR schemes.
- The current design for the CSET off-road public transport and active travel route within the same area, particularly the part of that route proposed to run close to the existing West Anglia Main Line and crossing Hobson's Brook.
- Actively contributing to planning an integrated solution to maintain the Addenbrooke's to Great Shelford "DNA Path" cycleway link during and following construction of Cambridge South Station, CSET and EWR, with the aim of avoiding multiple realignments of this link involving abortive works and minimising disruption.

GCP would be unlikely to support any proposal by EWR that would require the CSET public transport route to be moved to run closer to Nine Wells Local Nature Reserve.

In advance of the design for the two new tracks between Shepreth Junction and Addenbrooke's Road bridge being progressed by EWR, CSET has sought to mitigate the integration risk in this area by developing an assumption regarding the land required to construct the new tracks and developing the current design for the CSET scheme to avoid this land. However, there is now an opportunity for EWR to act to further mitigate this risk by identifying the land boundaries required for the construction and permanent operation of the new tracks in advance of the CSET route alignment being fixed under a Transport and Works Act Order. GCP ask that EWR act to realise this opportunity in programming and expediting the further design work required for the existing railway from Shepreth Junction to Addenbrooke's Road bridge.

With the construction of the two new tracks between Shepreth Junction and Addenbrooke's Road bridge likely to follow the opening of the CSET scheme, there is a risk of disruption to the operation of services using the CSET public transport route. This risk should be fully considered during design and construction planning, with all possible measures taken to avoid or minimise this.

#### **Cambourne to Cambridge (C2C)**

The Cambourne to Cambridge scheme and East West Rail have been recognised as complementary to one another, with C2C serving intermediate developments, including the West Cambridge site, which the strategic railway is unable to serve. A new station at Cambourne could

be used to create a multimodal interchange location which could support an increase in use of public transport. The C2C scheme is likely to be completed before EWR, enabling growth in the current South Cambridgeshire Local Plan.

Two options are proposed for the station location at Cambourne, either of which could be served by C2C. The GCP is committed to the development of a travel hub at the Cambourne station linking together the two schemes to help people to access rail and bus services, including by active travel modes.

The GCP asks that appropriate coordination meetings continue as the proposals for EWR and C2C progress. As part of this, the GCP asks that EWR works with local partners to provide certainty on project timescales, routing and station locations at the earliest opportunity so that these can be taken into account in scheme design and delivery.

The C2C scheme will provide the high quality public transport link required to enable the development of 3,500 homes at Bourn Airfield. The response from South Cambridgeshire District Council seeks further information on what assessment has been made of the implications of route alignments 1 and 9 on the Bourn Airfield development, with particular regard to site access and delivery.

### **Cambridge Eastern Access (CEA)**

The consultation reiterates EWR's ambition to provide improved onward connectivity east from Cambridge towards Ipswich. The CEA project is looking at access to and from the city from the east to enable people to get around more easily by public transport, cycle or on foot. The dualling of the Cambridge to Newmarket Line, alongside the provision of at least one interim station, would support the achievement of the project's objectives.