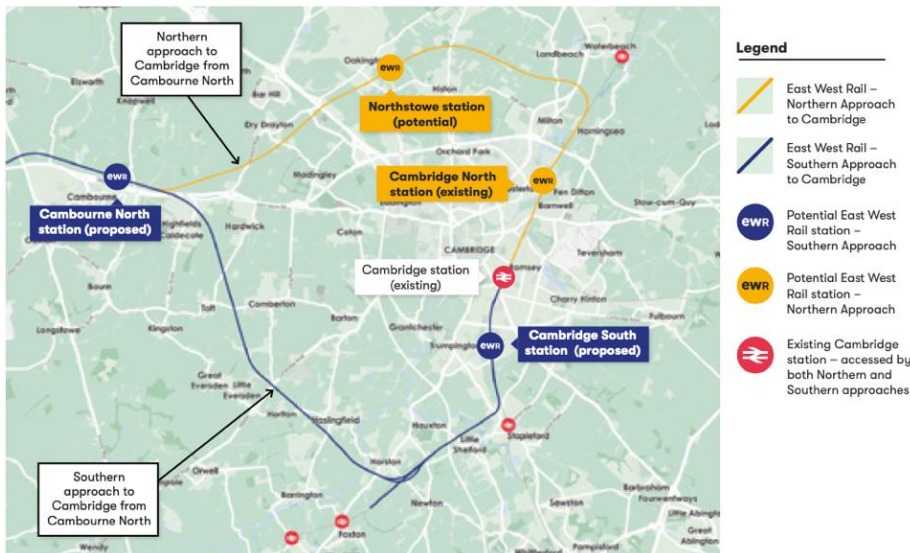


East West Rail: Your Guide to the Consultation Response



East West Rail (EWR)'s second non-statutory consultation closes on 9 June.

We ask that each person within the household responds with their views. This can be done online by visiting their website and the link is below.

Deadline 9th June!

https://communityhub.eastwestrail.co.uk/consultation-feedback/survey_tools/feedback

If you are unable to access the online form, please contact your local parish council for a paper version. Please note, on the paper version you are not limited to the text boxes given, you can add additional pages.

Background information on local concerns:

- Environmental: disturbance to internationally important rare bat species, damage to rare chalk streams, agricultural farmland, protected woodlands and hedgerow wildlife. CPRE, BCN Wildlife Trust, Woodland Trust and even Natural England all indicate that a northern approach to Cambridge is better. EWR so far refuse to carry out a Strategic Environmental Assessment.
- The track will be freight capable and Network Rail forecast 50 freight trains by 2043, day and night. This will cause noise and air pollution close to housing, exacerbated by high embankments. The southern route forces freight into the City of Cambridge. Whereas 7x less residents would be affected with a northern approach.
- The Southern route from Cambourne to Hauxton Junction (17.4km) is very rarely at ground level. The track varies up to 12m in height and includes a 1km stretch that cuts through Chapel Hill. There are huge grade separated junctions near Harston and Great Shelford. This Great Wall is a desecration of the Cambridge Green belt, which EWR CEO Simon Blanchflower is quoted as saying he would not want in his own village.
- The last projected benefit vs cost ratio analysis (Source: EWR Preferred Option Report for Option E 31/01/20) for the central section was very low (0.64). In future, more people will work from home, which will reduce the benefits further in addition to rising project costs.
- The EWR is part of the OxCam Arc which proposes 1 million houses along the route by 2050.
- There are many more employment sites north of Cambridge than south, including the Science Park. The southern route will require a change of train at Cambridge Central to reach them – so people will continue to go by car.
- The Southern route does not serve what will be 10,000 or more homes in Northstowe which currently has no rail connection.
- If they remain open, minor roads and public rights of way (ie footpaths and bridleways) will become dank culverts through 70m wide embankments.
- Although the consultation is proposing a detailed route, important aspects are not presented or consulted on. These include: electrification; any housing plan; integration with local transport and plans east of Cambridge. This makes it difficult to respond to the consultation in a meaningful way.
- Unlike the CBRR northern approach, which has the railway going under roads and running in a trench, the proposals from EWR are set high in the landscape via embankments and viaducts. Low impact design techniques (eg trenches going under roads) are appropriate for the Cambridge green belt and are used in rural areas in the Netherlands.
- EWR's northern route does not use low impact railway designs. Their rejection of a northern route hinges on an unjustified and incorrect assumption that 4-tracking to the north is necessary. If so, the southern approach will also require 4-tracking to connect all the major employment sites around Cambridge North station.

Your Guide to the Consultation response as you work through the form

https://communityhub.eastwestrail.co.uk/consultation-feedback/survey_tools/feedback

Not all questions are relevant to our area. **Please complete Q1, 38-41.** Q2–36 do not need to be completed.

Question 1: This is the most important question in the whole survey and will take the most time. This question invites comments on EWR Co's assessment that it is better for the route to approach Cambridge from the south. You might consider saying something along the following lines, but it is really important that you use your own form of words, ie: "I am unable to agree with your assessment. I support a fair consultation on a northern approach. The northern route been presented in a biased manner and hasn't been fairly consulted on. Like the 2019 consultation, this consultation contains a leading question and does not provide sufficient information to make a properly-informed decision on the advantages and disadvantages of northern and southern approaches. Further, some of the information you have provided in Appendix F is materially inaccurate or incomplete [*please see the Cambridge Approaches blog for evidence: <https://cambridgeapproaches.org/rebuttal-of-appendix-f/>*] We continue to believe that you should consider a northern approach fully and with an open mind and consult on it accordingly."

When you are answering question 1 further, think about how the current proposal will affect you and your surroundings, for example you could add:

- This proposal affects your village school(s), church, sports clubs, local businesses, particularly impacted households and potentially the efficiency of the emergency services
- There will be an increase in noise and air pollution for many households and businesses along the route.
- There will be extensive environmental damage, including trees, plant species, protected animal species and more.
- There will be extensive damage to waterways - rivers (e.g Bourn Brook), watercourses, and in particular, vital chalk streams
- There are buildings/areas on the alignment of historical/archaeological importance i.e. Chapel Hill has a pilgrimage route
- The culture of the area is rural, with huge focus on habitats and food production which this proposal will destroy. There will be severance of farm land and EWR have not considered how fields would be split.
- There are concerns about flooding to houses in the local area as a result of the track.
- You may not be able to still use the footpaths and local roads as you do now.
- You may not be able to use the current road, paths and bridleways for recreation as you currently do.
- EWR have added new information on the fact sheets inside the consultation period and they should therefore extend the consultation period to ten weeks from the date the most recent information was published.

Question 38: We don't think there is enough consultation information to respond, so we advise that you reject all routes.

Question: 39: People between Cambourne and Cambridge generally have little idea about other local areas and concerns. The location of Cambourne station depends on the housing plan and local transport connections which EWR have not presented. This question is premature without a fair consultation on a northern approach.

Question 40: The track should not pass through these villages. EWR must respect the green belt and set any track low in the landscape, use trenches, go under roads, brooks, rivers and tunnel through Chapel Hill. Low CO₂ concrete or lime-based technology must be used. There should be no severing of roads and PROWs and agricultural crossings every 500m. It is imperative that Newton stays connected to Harston. EWR should also provide a King's Cross line station for Harston to their specification. No freight trains should be coming past residential areas. Guarantee noise levels lower than 45dBA or baseline levels, whichever is lower. We need demonstration there will be no impact to Wimpole's Special Area of Conservation to the satisfaction of the Bat Conservation Trust.

Question 41: EWR must maintain a road link between the two sides of Little Shelford on either side of the railway line to avoid severing the community. A grade-separated junction at Shepreth Junction would be intolerable for nearby residents and extremely damaging to the narrow and important section of Green Belt between the southern edge of Cambridge and the Shelfords. This includes Nine Wells, Hobson's Park and the valuable Green Corridor leading from this part of the Green Belt into the centre of Cambridge which makes an important contribution to the character of the city. Long Road is a very busy and important thoroughfare with key education centres, and closing it for any length of time with diversions onto existing roads is likely to cause transport chaos.

Every response counts: do your bit to get the railway that Cambridge deserves.