# Comments on East West Rail 2024 consultation from Milton Keynes Green Party

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All references are to the EWR 2024 Technical Report unless stated otherwise. (Equivalent Chapter numbers in the Main consultation document are 2 higher than in the Technical Report) <u>eastwestrail.co.uk/consultation2024</u>

# Introduction

This is a project thirty years in the making and the Green Parties in the impacted areas welcome that East West Rail, a rail network that is wholly owned by the government, is now going ahead. We hope that the installation of this new rail network will mean that many more people decide to take the train rather than drive a car for their habitual journeys across the region for work or leisure.

The current rail provision connecting the towns and cities along the route is insufficient or non-existent which is not helping people get about easily and cheaply, or make the switch to sustainable travel. For example, there is a current urgent need in Cambridge especially for decent public transport at the Cambridge Biomedical Campus so staff can access the site. There are also no direct routes between Bedford and Cambridge via rail or Aylesbury and other places.

If going by rail (which one has to if one doesn't have a car), one has to go to London first to get to many of the places in this region which means excessively expensive train tickets and overly long journeys. There are some bus services but they are slow and often delayed by traffic congestion. The current sustainable travel situation for those living along this proposed route is wanting.

We see that the challenge now is to mitigate adverse effects to the environment and the communities living along this route as far as possible. The natural world affected by this route encompass Oxford, Bicester, Aylesbury Vale, Winslow, Milton Keynes, Bletchley, Woburn Sands, Ridgmont, Bedford, St Neots, Sandy, Cambourne and Cambridge.

# General

We have concerns that EWR is still being seen in isolation from the rest of the rail network in England, owned and operated by Network Rail. With the government's commitment to set up Great British Railways EWR will become part of GBR, as will NR. Thus EWR will be part of the same organisation as the rest of the rail network. In terms of both travel opportunities and operations EWR will be part of the rail network and must be considered as such, not as an isolated railway.

The case for EWR should include the sustainability benefits and carbon reduction delivered by modal shift from road to rail for travel within the EWR corridor, especially with electrification, even if it is discontinuous in the first instance.

There should be good links by public transport to EWR stations from their hinterland. There is very little consideration of access to stations by bus in the Technical Report. Lots about access by cars, walking and cycling (NMUs) although cars seem to get priority over active travel. There should be more priority for access by bus and active travel modes. For example, there should be cycle garages as are commonly found at main stations in the Netherlands.

Closure of level crossings would, in some cases, make it almost impossible to serve stations with bus services, eg Bicester Village. Cambourne would also be difficult because the station is on the opposite side of A428 to the town.

This needs to be taken into account and changes made so that stations can be served by buses and buses can still link housing on one side of the line with town centre on the other side of the line. New EWR stations will be trip-generators for bus services. Bus access to EWR station should be considered along with access by cars, walking and cycling and should be a factor in station location and access.

While there is some assessment of bus services in the Transport Update Report this seems to have had little impact on the recommendations. Doubling or trebling of bus journey times in Bicester, by diverting via the bypass, would not be acceptable because it would discourage travel by a sustainable mode and it is government and council policy to encourage travel by a sustainable modes.

# Services

Services at Oxford end unchanged. At Cambridge end two options are presented:

Concept 1 retain all Marston Vale (MV) stations. 2 trains per hour (tph) Ox-Camb, 2tph Stewartby-Camb, 1 tph Bletchley-Bedford all stations.

Concept 2. Only retain half of MV stations. 2 tph Ox-Camb, 1 tph Stewartby-Camb, 1 tph Bletchley-Cambridge all retained stations.

In either case the Camb-Stewartby/Bletchley services should be extended to MK Central with reversal at Bletchley to give 2tph Camb-Bedford-Bletchley-MKC. N-E chord could be built later to omit reversal at Bletchley.

#### Concept 3

Instead of Concept 1 and Concept 2 consider Concept 3, a hybrid between Concept 1a and Concept 2, with some little used stations closed but other small stations retained with 1tph at each. Services would be 2tph Camb-Bedford-Bletchley-MKC and 2tph Camb-Oxford. This retains connectivity for most local stations and improves connectivity to MK Central without imposing too much delay to longer distance passengers. (more detail below under Fenny Stratford to Kempston)

Network Rail has recommended that EWR services from both Oxford and Cambridge should go to MK Central. We support that. It would only require a small number of extra points and signals in the Bletchley-Fenny Stratford area. The doubling of tracks through Fenny Stratford will require alterations to tracks and signals in that area anyway so the cost and disruption of further changes to allow services to reverse to/from the east would be minimal. See Appendix on NR's West Coast South Strategic Advice (WCSSA).

The Stewartby terminators are to reduce pressure on platform occupation at Bedford and so eliminate need for a 3rd platform for EWR there. Extending services to MK Central has same effect. We support not having a 3rd platform for EWR at Bedford because it avoids demolition of properties on Ashburton Rd and enables more frequent services to some MV stations.

At Oxford end should extend to Didcot or Cowley. Didcot much more useful to EWR passengers. Provides connection to GWR services to Swindon, Bristol, Cardiff, etc. As at Cambridge, extending beyond core EWR reduces demand for platform capacity at Oxford.

At Cambridge end proposed to extend to a turn back siding at Cherry Hinton on the Newmarket line. We support this and there should be a station at Cherry Hinton, Cambridge East, served by EWR and Camb-Ipswich services.

These are to reduce pressure on platform occupation at Oxford and Cambridge and so to reduce need for a extra platforms for EWR.

In CS2 Bedford-Oxford and Bedford-MKC services should be introduced well before 2030. They do not require major infrastructure changes and so do not have to wait for the DCO to be approved. Lesser infrastructure changes can be done with either Permitted Development Rights, rights under the earlier 2020 TWAO or by planning application to relevant LPA. Thus Bedford-Oxford and Bedford-MKC services should be introduced by the end of 2027. Bedford St John station may not have been re-located by that time, in which case the existing station can be used until the new one is completed.

#### Kempston Hardwick - Universal Studios theme park

While we appreciate that most of the report was written more than a year ago and its publication has been held up by political instability and the general election we think the proposal for a Universal Studios theme park at Kempston Hardwick should have been considered in the report. It is so significant that if it goes ahead the number of passengers likely to use Kempston Hardwick station would exceed the number of passengers at all other MV intermediate stations put together. It would affect the required service provision as well as the station location and capacity. It should have been presented as a 3rd option for MV.

#### Aylesbury-MKC EWR service.

This should be part of CS2, by which time HS2 Ltd will have re-instated the line between Quainton and Calvert. Only the short chord between Calvert and EWR at Claydon will need to be built by EWR. The trackbed has already been built so installing a short section of track on it will be straightforward and low cost. The service should go on to Old Oak Common via Princes Risborough and High Wycombe using existing lines, as proposed by EEH.

# Infrastructure

# 6 Oxford to Bletchley

#### 6.1 Oxford

Oxford platform 3, re-instate mid-platform crossover to allow 2 short (5/6 cars or less) trains to occupy platform simultaneously, with either being able to depart south first. This increases capacity for southbound and terminating trains at Oxford and reduces timetable conflicts. Should be 4 tracks south of Oxford station, at least as far as Kennington jn but preferably to Didcot North jn.

#### 6.5 London Road level crossing, Bicester

Bicester level crossing is proposed to be close to traffic and be replaced with bridge or underpass for pedestrians and cyclists. Road traffic, including buses, is proposed to be diverted via the bypass. This route is much further and is already heavily congested so is quite unsuitable for bus services.

If the level crossing is closed there will be no connection between the two halves of Bicester, especially for buses. People living south of EWR need to be able to get buses to station and to town centre, which is north of EWR. Essential to have a bridge for buses to cross EWR at or near existing London Rd level crossing. Whether the bridge also allows other motor vehicles is a secondary issue. If a bridge requires a 20mph speed limit on it this should be seen as a positive not a negative, because it will discourage through traffic, reduce emissions and improve safety.

Support Option 2a or 2b. At about £10-20m an overbridge may well cost more than diverting road traffic via the bypass but it is essential to maintain public transport access to the station and between the two halves of Bicester.

Consider a station at Steeple Claydon, near new Addison Rd overbridge. To serve several nearby villages, including Steeple Claydon and Calvert Green, and HS2 Infrastructure Depot. Would be served by Oxford-MKC service and Aylesbury-MKC service when that starts.

#### Bletchley

Eastern entrance at Bletchley station should be included in EWR, partly funded via Bletchley Town Deal.

Trains should be able to operate between MK Central and Bedford/Cambridge by reversing in any of platforms 5, 6, 7 or 8 in either direction. Platform 5 already has this capability but is also used for other purposes, including being the only southern access to the carriage sidings and Bletchley Relief line 2. Consequently it may not always be available.

There should be a trailing crossover at the north end of platform 6 to enable trains to reverse there and use the Bletchley Relief 2 line to reach MK Central. There may also be

need for another crossover between Bletchley Relief 2 line and line Bletchley Relief 1 line at their southern ends so that EWR services could use either Bletchley Relief 1 line or Bletchley Relief 2 line.

The new high level platforms 7 and 8 should also be reversible to/from the east, as well as the west, to increase flexibility. While the small number of extra or altered signals required would increase the cost slightly they would significantly increase the flexibility and thus the capacity and resilience of the layout.

#### Saxon St viaduct.

It is proposed to demolish the single track bridge and replace it with double track. We are told informally, although it is not mentioned in any of the reports, that the single track bridge is in poor condition and would need to be replaced anyway. If that is the case then replacing it with a double track bridge is sensible. However such bridge replacement will incur significant cost and disruption to both rail and road traffic.

If the single track bridge is still serviceable then instead of demolition consider constructing a ramp down from Down EWR at Flyover Jn to Up MV just before its bridge over Saxon St and use both tracks over that bridge for Down MV and Up MV with trailing crossover from Up MV to Down MV. Double track MV from Saxon St bridge to Fenny Stratford junction. Down EWR Oxford-Cambridge trains would use this new ramp. Up EWR Cambridge-Oxford trains would use the existing Cambridge Flyover Single line. This would avoid the significant cost and disruption to both rail and road traffic of demolition and replacement of the single track bridge.

#### Denbigh Hall South Jn

The speed limit for the diverging route at Denbigh Hall South Jn, where the flyover lines join the slow lines, should be increased from 25mph to at least 40mph, preferably 50mph, in both directions. This both reduces journey time for EWR services to MKC and increases capacity of the WCML Slow lines. As well as increasing the speed the layout of the junction should also be changed from a switched diamond to a ladder type junction to provide more flexibility. These changes can be made by lengthening the junction southwards, where the slow lines and the flyover lines run parallel and at the same level. This does not require any land acquisition or planning permission so could be done within a couple of years.

### 7 Fenny Stratford to Kempston

Support upgrade to 75mph line speed.

Marston vale 2 options. Concept 1a retain all MV stations. Concept 2. Only retain half of MV stations W Sands, Ridgmont, Lidlington, Stewartby, Bedford St Johns.

Some stations could be relocated in either option (see below).

Consider Concept 3, a hybrid between Concept 1a and Concept 2, with some little used stations closed but other small stations retained with 1tph at each, with 2tph Camb-

Bedford-Bletchley-MKC and 2tph Camb-Oxford. This retains connectivity for most local stations without imposing too much delay to longer distance passengers.

Concept 3

Major stations: Bletchley, Bedford

Medium stations: Woburn Sands, Ridgmont, Lidlington, Stewartby, Bedford St Johns Minor stations: Bow Brickhill, Millbrook, Kempston Hardwick, Kempston

Close: Fenny Stratford, Aspley Guise, Millbrook

If Universal theme park goes ahead then Kempston Hardwick moves into medium classification.

Major and Medium stations served by all EWR services, 4tph

Minor stations served by at least 1tph on Camb-MKC service. 2 of the stations served by one of the 2tph, other 2 stations served by other train each hour.

# **Marston Vale Stations**

Fenny Stratford. Close subject to eastern entrance at Bletchley station being built and bus service between Fenny Stratford and Bletchley, hourly or better frequency. If retained then needs second platform.

Bow Brickhill. Retain

Woburn Sands. Relocate or retain

Aspley Guise. Close station but create a footpath/cycleway along south side of railway to Woburn Sands.

Ridgmont. upgrade on same site, option 2, with altered bus provision if LC closed Lidlington. Relocate

Millbrook. close but create a footpath/cycleway along Marston Rd to Lidlington station and bus service between Marston Moretaine and Lidlington station.

Stewartby. Relocate option 1

Kempston Hardwick. Retain if Universal theme park goes ahead, but on new site Kempston. Build a new station at location of previous Kempston halt, just west of bridge

under MML. If Concept 1a then have the 1tph all-stations service call there. If Concept 2 then have 2tph Cambridge-MKC service call there. P&R site on east side

of MML can be used for car park with pedestrian link to new station.

Bedford St Johns. Relocate

Platforms would need lengthening at all of the retained and relocated stations to accommodate 4 car trains.

Bow Brickhill

This station should be retained. It currently serves housing in Caldecotte and Browns Wood and employment areas in Caldecotte and Tilbrook. Further developments are planned near the station on the south side of the line with employment area in South Caldecotte and housing in SEMK and possibly more housing east of Brickhill Rd.

We support the proposal for new overbridge east of existing level crossing, option 7, with option 6 as a second choice. If new overbridge is built at Bow Brickhill station with pedestrians crossing the rail line via that bridge then the Up platform should be moved to the east side of the existing level crossing so that it would be opposite the Down platform and both platforms are close to the new overbridge. (If level crossing is closed there is no

need for platforms to be staggered.) The alternative would be to provide a footbridge at the existing level crossing site.

Re-instate former informal footpath on north side of line between Bow Brickhill station and Browns Wood, through tree belt, possibly partly via Bradbourne Dr.

#### Woburn Sands

Support relocation to new site and a new bridge over the railway near to Woodleys crossing, to be provided by developers as part of SEMK development. This new bridge should be built as soon as possible, rather than waiting for SEMK development to be completed.

If the station remains at its current location the platforms should be staggered, as at Bow Brickhill. This requires the eastbound platform to be relocated to the east side of the level crossing. Instead of lengthening the existing eastbound platform by 73m to the west a new 100m long platform would be built on the east side of the level crossing. The cost would not be much more. The barrier can then be raised as soon as the train has arrived, rather than having to wait for it to depart. This should save more than 1 minute of barrier down time for each closure for east bound services.

A footbridge should also be provided so that pedestrians can cross the line when the barriers are down.

#### Transport Update Report

"9.1.14 Approximately 2.5km (1.5 miles) to the north of the station is national cycle network route 51. The carriageway through Station Road level crossing includes footways for pedestrians on both sides, however the footway is only continuous on one side (eastern) beyond the immediate vicinity of the level crossing."

This is incorrect. The footway is continuous on both sides of the road beyond the immediate vicinity of the level crossing. However on both sides of the road the width of the footway on the crossing is sub-standard, only about 1m.

#### Ridgmont

We oppose relocation of Ridgmont station to west of M1. That site is in the middle of nowhere and is not near (within walking distance) any residential or employment areas, nor any area planned for residential or employment development in the future with any certainty. Its existing location is close to the major employment warehouses.

"The station footbridge could provide a crossing point for non-motorised users (subject to station arrangements)." This should not be subject to station arrangements. It should be guaranteed as a publicly accessible crossing point (PROW), not one that might be removed at some point in the future by the installation of ticket barriers.

If the level crossing is to be closed there should be a bus turning circle with a bus stop on the north side of the station so that buses that serve the warehouses, Amazon, et al, can also serve the station.

There should be bus links to Cranfield and to Ampthill/Flitwick from either Ridgmont or Lidlington station.

#### Stewartby

Turn back platform not necessary if all trains go on to either Oxford or MKC. Relocation option 1 acceptable, if direct footpath link to Kimberly 6th form college also provided.

Option 2 not acceptable, too far from Kimberly 6th form college and housing in Stewartby village.

### **Level Crossings**

#### Bow Brickhill LC

We support the proposal for new overbridge east of existing level crossing, option 7, with option 6 as a second choice. This bridge should have a Redway along both sides of the road. If new overbridge is built at Bow Brickhill station with pedestrians crossing the rail line via that bridge then the Up platform should be moved to the east side of the existing level crossing so that it would be opposite the Down platform and both platforms are close to the new overbridge. (If level crossing is closed there is no need for platforms to be staggered.) The alternative would be to provide a footbridge at the existing level crossing site.

#### Pony LC

This should be an underpass for cyclists, pedestrians and horse riders. Where underpasses are provided pedestrians and cyclists approaching should be able to see through the underpass, no right angle bends at the entrance or exit from the underpass. This is to assist with personal security and its perception.

#### Woburn Sands LC

Whether the station is relocated or not the level crossing should be retained and altered so that it can accommodate 3 lanes of traffic and a 2m wide footpath on both sides. The 3rd lane is required so that traffic waiting to turn right into Cranfield Rd does not hold up traffic heading towards Kingston roundabout. With the closure of the school crossing more pedestrians, especially children, will be using the crossing and the narrow footpaths are not safe and do not have the required capacity.

A footbridge should also be provided so that pedestrians can cross the line when the barriers are down.

#### Husborne Crawley FP10 LC

Instead of the FP being closed it should be diverted to run along the south side of MV line. It currently crosses MV line near M1 over bridge and runs along north side of MV line. To avoid having to cross the MV line the FP should be diverted to run along the south side of MV line between just west of the M1 over bridge and Ridgmont station.

### 8 Bedford

Bedford St Johns station. We support move to Britannia Rd car park and build MSCP on Hospital land because it provides better access to the Hospital. Although we don't support MSCP being 8 floors high.

#### **Bedford Midland**

There should be more Bus stops on station forecourt or Ashburton Rd adjacent to the station.

EMR InterCity trains on the fast tracks should be able to call at Bedford in both directions. This could be by the provision of a platform on the Up Fast line as recommended in NR Bedford Area Strategic Advice, July 2022. A fast line platform for InterCity Trains towards London would enable all EMR trains to use the fast lines, thus meaning that concerns with four track options of delays being transferred between EWR and EMR services could be removed without needing more than four tracks

Support only 2 extra platforms for EWR instead of 3 because it means no demolition on Ashburnham Rd. Extend all services from Cambridge to either Oxford or MKC rather than terminating some at Bedford, Stewartby or Bletchley.

Poets estate, north of Bedford station.

EWR Still proposing 6 tracks requiring demolition of 37 houses and impact on garden of another 37 and rebuild of Bromham Rd bridge. We oppose this.

Instead EWR trains should use the MML slow tracks, and possibly a 5th track which could be accommodated within the existing railway boundary, to avoid demolition of any houses. Despite EWR Ltd claims that 6 tracks are necessary to operate the services Bedford Borough Council studies have shown that six tracks are not necessary. Adding a Platform on Up Fast makes this more feasible because there is no longer any need for southbound EMR services on the fast tracks to cross over to the slow tracks to call at Bedford station. The slow tracks would only have to handle 4tph EWR and 1tph or 2tph freight trains on MML each way. With careful timetabling this should be well within the capacity of a 2 track railway.

Unnecessarily large gap between MML and EWR tracks, proposed to be about 8m, causes more houses to need to be demolished. Reduce gap to normal track separation, demolish fewer houses.

Any changes should avoid demolitions of people's homes. The plans appear to be designed to be convenient to rail operation and construction rather than to be convenient for passengers and local residents. The long term needs of passengers and local residents should be prioritised over the convenience for rail operators and the short term issues of construction.

#### Jowett sidings

Alternative proposal: retain Jowett sidings, add a reversing siding between Up MV and Down MV near and through Bedford St Johns station. The issue with re-aligned MV and

Jowett sidings appears to be the length of sidings being reduced and access to the sidings. The sidings should be retained and used for shorter trains, possibly including EWR trains. Currently TL trains going in or out of Jowett sidings reverse on the run-round track on the bridge over the Gt Ouse. This line would become the Up MV and so could not be used for reversing trains.

With a Reversing siding at Bedford St Johns, Trains leaving the Jowett sidings would join Up MV, cross Gt Ouse, enter reversing siding at Bedford St Johns station, driver changes ends, joins Down MV, cross Gt Ouse, just before Ford End Rd bridge crosses to one of new EWR platforms or Platforms 1A, 1, 2 or 3 at Bedford station. Trains entering Jowett sidings do same journey in reverse. Up MV and Down MV need to be bi-directional between Bedford station and Bedford St Johns station.

# 9 Clapham Green to Colesden

The railway should be in a tunnel instead of the proposed 14m deep cutting between Clapham Green and Clapham Park Wood.

### 10 Roxton to east of St Neots

ECML

Prefer ECML interchange at St Neots.

Tempsford new town is purely speculative, not committed. We note that EWR Ltd is not taking into account the speculative development of Universal Theme Park at Kempston Hardwick but yet is relying heavily on the speculative development of a new town at Tempsford in its preference for the location of a station to interchange with ECML. These speculative developments should be treated similarly, with both either given serious weight or both ignored for now, to be considered later if they take place. If the new town happens a station could still be built at Tempsford later.

But if the EWR/ECML interchange station is to be at Tempsford we favour option 1c with minor modification.

#### St Neots

Consideration should be given to EWR serving the existing St Neots station, not a new station at Tempsford. The EWR station for interchange with ECML should be where there are already a large number of houses within walking distance, not in the middle of nowhere. That excludes Tempsford site. The Tempsford area may be developed for housing in the future but this is far from certain.

St Neots is the third largest settlement in Cambridgeshire, after Cambridge and Peterborough (according to Wikipedia), and is planned to expand considerably, particularly on the east side near the station. This provides an EWR station that is useful for interchange with Thameslink services on the ECML and for tens of thousands of local residents. There is some local support for an EWR station at St Neots. Another station at Tempsford would slow down Thameslink services because they would have to make an extra stop and would not serve much local housing St Neots and Sandy stations are only 12 km apart. A new station between them at St Tempsford would have 3 stations on a 12km stretch of line. Thameslink is unlikely to want to serve all of those with all of its services. An ECML long distance operator LNER, Grand Central or Hull Trains could choose to serve St Neots for interchange with EWR.

Obviously just adding two platforms for EWR to an existing station would cost a lot less than building a new station at St Neots South or Tempsford which would require platforms for both ECML and EWR and a station building. Similarly building a new line alongside an existing rail corridor would cost less and be less disruptive to the local environment than building across green fields.

#### Tempsford

If the EWR/ECML interchange station is to be at Tempsford we favour option 1c with minor modification. We favour a variant of option 1c (or as a second choice 1b). Those route alignments pass close to new housing estates on the east side of St Neots on tall viaducts. Instead another alignment alongside the ECML should be considered. Whichever Route Alignment from Bedford to Cambridge is chosen, after crossing over the ECML, in the vicinity of Little Barford, EWR should turn north and descend to run alongside the ECML on its eastern side. A new island platform would be built at St Neots station for EWR services. To the north of St Neots station after passing under Priory Hill Rd bridge the new line for EWR would curve to the east and rejoin the proposed Route Alignment about 2 km east of St Neots.

The nearest housing on the east side of the ECML is about 25m away. EWR would need a strip of land 6-10m in width. Consequently no housing would need to be demolished for the new EWR tracks. Some mobile homes on the St Neots Caravan site adjacent to the ECML might need to be moved to another part of the site.

There could be crossovers between ECML and EWR where they run parallel but we would not expect any passenger services to make use of them, only occasional freight or engineering trains.

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.

Support logistics hub with a link to ECML. If EWR is to run alongside ECML then option A is preferred location.

#### Option 1c

If the EWR/ECML interchange station is to be at Tempsford we favour option 1c with minor modification. It has lower viaducts and embankments and doesn't have to cross over both existing A421 and new A421, avoiding the construction of two expensive bridges. If is station at Tempsford means fewer steps between ECML and EWR platforms.

East of ECML EWR should run adjacent to new A421, not leave gap of about 200 metres which would become sterilised unaccessible unusable land. (except near A421 road junctions) This would be similar to the M1 and WCML which are adjacent just south of Watford Gap services. A tree belt could be created on the west of the railway rather than

between the railway and the A421. This would help to reduce noise impact on any future housing built in the area between the ECML and EWR/A421.

#### Logistics hub

Support logistics hub with a link to ECML, either option B or F. If, as suggested above, EWR is adjacent to new A421 then there is no space for option B as proposed. However option B could be adjusted to be on the west side of the relocated EWR.

## **11 Croxton to Toft**

Cambourne. Station north of A428 Consider relocate to south side of A428.

Cambourne-Shepreth branch line. Support much lower alignment now proposed with some parts in tunnel and in cutting rather than being on embankment.

#### Cambourne

Proposed station location has poor access for sustainable modes, bus/cycle/pedestrian from existing housing in Cambourne. There may be some housing development north of A428 in future but the town centre will remain on the south side.

Consider EWR in cutting along south side of A428, rather than north side, with station just east of Cambourne Rd. Much better access, especially for pedestrians and cyclists, from housing and town centre because passengers don't have to cross over A428 to reach station. EWR would cross A428 west of Cambourne, bridge or tunnel, and would not need a tunnel east of Cambourne to cross A428. Avoids need to construct a long tunnel under A428 near Bourn Airfield and for temporary diversion of A428 during construction but still needs a shorter tunnel under Bourn Airfield.

Passes under Cambourne Rd at roundabout on south side of A428 junction. Station could either be between Cambourne Rd and Monk Dr or between Monk Dr and Anson Rd. If the former then could have bus/cycle/pedestrian access to station off Cambourne Rd via Crowdene and car/taxi/cycle/pedestrian access from Back Lane via Monk Dr or a dedicated road parallel to that road. If the latter then could have bus/cycle/pedestrian access to station via a new road parallel to Monk Dr and also a new road from Back Lane along the east side of the sports pitches (currently a footpath).

Or relocate about 1 mile of A428 (new A421) on or closer to alignment of St Neots Rd (possibly on alignment proposed for EWR) and use existing A428 alignment at Cambourne for EWR.

# 12 Comberton to Shelford

Support grade separated junction where EWR joins Shepreth branch line.

#### South of Comberton Fig 100

Why are maintenance access tracks so far from EWR alignment, 50-100m? Re-align maintenance access tracks to be adjacent to EWR fence line to reduce amount of land taken or affected by EWR.

#### North of Harlton Fig 101

Why are access track and re-aligned Comberton Road and Washpit Lane so far from EWR alignment, 50-100m? Re-align access track and Comberton Road and Washpit Lane to be adjacent to EWR fence line to reduce amount of land taken or affected by EWR.

#### Connectivity between Newton and Harston

Prefer option 3 fig 122 or option 1 Fig 117 but with old SBR alignment used to provide a cycle/pedestrian route between Station Rd and re-aligned Newton Rd passing over or under EWR tracks.

Figure 119 Potential new accessible footbridge between Newton and Harston This adds over 800m to travel distance for pedestrians and cyclists and so is not acceptable. Foot/cycle bridge should be on the alignment of Station/Newton Rd, crossing over both EWR tracks and re-aligned SBR.

#### 12.3.7.1 Hauxton Road level crossing

The proposed road meanders thought the middle of the large field south of the SBR, reducing its usefulness. New road should run along one edge of that field to minimise impact on field and retain its usefulness. Either along east side of M11 or west side of tree belt on other side of field.

Support Figure 124 Option of providing an additional footbridge at Hauxton level crossing

12.4.6 Four-tracking between Shepreth Junction and Cambridge station Consider interlacing SBR and WAML tracks. Looking north tracks would be Down SBR, Down WAML, Up SBR, Up WAML, with centre tracks, Down WAML and 13 Up SBR, bidirectional signalled for maximum flexibility, eg during maintenance of one pair of tracks. If EWR trains continue on to Cherry Hinton to terminate this would reduce conflicting moves north of Cambridge station.

# 13 Cambridge

Should be 4 track Shepreth Jn to Cambridge station through Cambridge S station and 4 tracks from Cambridge station to Coldhams Lane Jn.

12.4.6 Four-tracking between Shepreth Junction and Cambridge station Consider interlacing SBR and WAML tracks. Looking north tracks would be Down SBR, Down WAML, Up SBR, Up WAML, with centre tracks, Down WAML and Up SBR, bidirectional signalled for maximum flexibility, eg during maintenance of one pair of tracks. If EWR trains continue on to Cherry Hinton to terminate this would reduce conflicting moves north of Cambridge station.

Long Rd bridge to be demolished and rebuilt wider. Isn't it already wide enough for 4 tracks?

Proposed to extend to a turn back siding at Cherry Hinton on the Newmarket line. This could become a station. It should be a station, Cambridge East?, served by EWR and Camb-Ipswich.

Option G+ Proposed to Lengthen Platforms 7/8. Support. Consider adding Mid-platform scissors crossover between Platform 7 and Through line, similar to the one between Platforms 1/4 and Through line but just to the north.

Support second accessible footbridge to the south of station entrance. We question whether a third Evacuation bridge at the north end of the station is necessary. Could there not be something similar to an old-fashioned barrow crossing at the north end of the platforms, that would only be used in an emergency when all trains were stationary? But if it is necessary it should be funded by NR, not by EWR.

At Cambridge end it is proposed to extend to a turn back siding at Cherry Hinton on the Newmarket line. This should become a station, Cambridge East, with one through platform for services to/from Newmarket and one bay platform for terminating EWR services. This would serve the east side of Cambridge and the new developments proposed on the site of Cambridge Airport. There should also be provision for some EWR services to be extended further east to Newmarket and beyond.

Cambridge East would be served by EWR and Cambridge-Ipswich services. This would also reduce dwell time, and hence platform occupation, at Cambridge station for EWR services because they would be through services rather than terminating there and so would only need to be at platform for about 1 minute, rather than several minutes while staff check to see that terminating trains are empty before proceeding to Cherry Hinton to turn back.

These are to reduce pressure on platform occupation at Oxford and Cambridge and so to reduce need for a extra platforms for EWR.

In the longer term some EWR services could continue to Bury St Edmunds and Ipswich rather than terminating at Cambridge East.

There is some confusion in the Tech Report about where the turn back siding would be.

#### On p374 it states:

"This section would extend from Addenbrooke's Road bridge over the existing West Anglia Main Line (WAML), north of Great Shelford, to the A14 bridge north of Cambridge North station, and to **Yarrow Road** in Cherry Hinton to the East of Cambridge, on the Newmarket line."

But on p382 it states:

"Creation of a turnback to the west of Cherry Hinton High Street level crossing."

Whether it extends to Cherry Hinton High Street level crossing or Yarrow Rd level crossing there should be a station as well as a turnback siding. Having EWR trains terminate at this new Cambridge East would be similar to having Greater Anglia trains from Liverpool St terminating at Cambridge North.

If the new station is at Yarrow Rd then part of the TESCO car park could also be used by rail passengers with some mechanism to charge rail passengers but not charge supermarket customers - probably a time limit of 2 or 3 hours for free parking.

# 14 Route-wide matters

#### 14.1 Proposal for powering the trains

#### Electrification.

Discontinuous electrification is proposed. This is much better than diesel operation but still not as good as full electrification. With discontinuous electrification the battery-electric trains are heavier, because of the weight of the batteries, and so consume more energy to move the trains, than with full electrification and electric-only trains.

We want the electrified sections to be as long as possible and the un-electrified sections to be as short as possible, say, just in the vicinity of structures that have insufficient clearance for electrification. This is in order to minimise the amount, and hence weight, of the batteries required on board the trains. Full electrification is needed for electric-powered freight trains.

We support discontinuous electrification, with battery-electric trains, as a first stage with full electrification some time later. We are pleased to see that Provision for full electrification has been made in the draft Order Limits.

Several HV line pylons near EWR to be moved. Why?

#### 14.2 Rolling stock requirements

Train length – "Demand modelling informed by expected number of passengers required to move along the railway over future years has determined that all new stations on EWR would have provision for 150m platform operational lengths." This is a somewhat odd length. It would only be able to accommodate trains up to 7 cars in length. EMUs are most commonly 4 car trains, so a two unit train would be 8 cars. The first phase Oxford-Bletchley was originally designed for up to 8 car trains (although only built to 4 car length with passive provision for 8 car). The provision should be for 170m platform operational lengths, so that 8 car trains can be accommodated.

#### 14.3 EWR Co's approach to freight

Support routes for freight trains from Felixstowe to South Midlands and S Wales using EWR and Southampton to North West using EWR. This releases capacity elsewhere, eg North London Line, Coventry and Ely Jn, for more passenger services.

Lots of passing loops, which appear to be only for freight. They are not at stations so presumably are not for one pax train to overtake another. This seems like overprovision for a line that isn't expected to carry many freight trains? While we do not object to these we are concerned that they may incur unnecessary extra cost and disruption.

23.01.24