

# **Bourn Parish Council EGM**

## **EWR Consultation**

5 May 2021

## Purpose of EGM

- Update on details of EWR proposals as they affect Bourn and the wider neighbourhood
- Listen to comments and questions from residents
- Agree the key points for the Parish Council response to the consultation
- Agree next steps, including advice to residents who wish to respond

## Agenda

- **Presentation:**
  - Brief background to EWR proposals
  - What are EWR consulting on?
  - Alignment options: pros and cons
- **Q&A with residents**
- **In session:**
  - Agreement on our consultation response
  - Next steps

## Design brief

- Four passenger trains per hour
- Operating times: 6/7am-11pm/midnight/1am
- Designed for up to 100mph
- 95 mins journey time from Oxford to Cambridge
- Designed to carry freight, but how much is yet to be determined
- Not initially electrified, but electrification will be considered for the final solution
- No new level crossings; all existing will be removed unless there is a good case for retaining
- Delivered in three phases:
  - Oxford-Milton Keynes, Bletchley-Bedford, Bedford-Cambridge

East-West Railway Co was formed by SoS for Transport to design and build a railway between Oxford and Cambridge. They will contract out the operational running of the railway to a third party.

Expected operating times (includes freight):

Monday-Thursday: 6am to midnight

Friday and Saturday; 6am to 1am

Sunday: 7am to 11pm

## What are EWR consulting on?

- Improvements to existing services between Oxford and Bedford and the new line between Bedford and Cambridge
- Passenger experience
- Infrastructure changes and alignment options
- Deadline: 9 June 2021

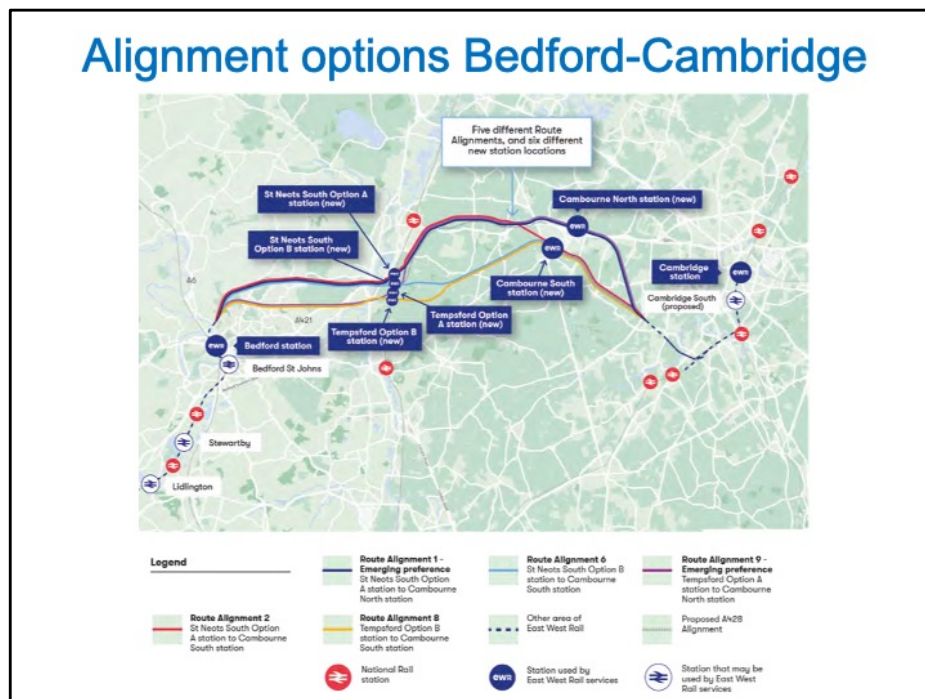
The Oxford to Bedford line is already running trains, but EWR want to:

- upgrade Oxford station and the line to enable it to carry four trains per hour
- relocate and merge some stations between Bletchley and Bedford
- remove level-crossings

This presentation focuses just on the Chapel Green to Eversdens section that affects Bourn

EWR would like feedback on passenger experience:

- Planning your journey and buying tickets
- How do you get to the station?
- “On-train experience”
- Stations
- Interacting with staff and getting information



A new section of railway will link Bedford to Clapham Green, north of Bedford. Nine alignment options between Clapham Green and Cambridge were evaluated and of these five were short-listed for consultation. Routes 8, 2 and 6 use a station south of Cambourne and cut across the Broadway; Routes 1 and 9 use a station north of Cambourne.

**Route 8 (yellow):** This is the reference route retained because it is the closest alignment to Option E and is used to compare the pros and cons of the other routes. It uses new stations at Tempsford and Cambourne south, cuts across the Broadway and heads past the Eversdens to the A603 at the Comberton Rd junction.

**Route 2 (red):** This uses a new station at St Neots south, follows the new dualled A428 then runs south to Cambourne south station. After that it follows the same route as Route 8.

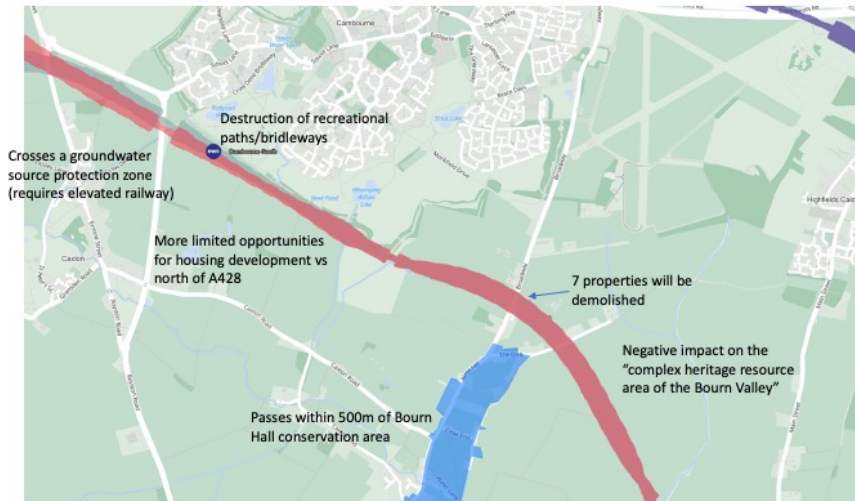
**Route 6 (light blue):** Similar to route 2 above, but runs from St Neots to Cambourne south via Abbotsley rather than following the A428.

**Route 1 (dark blue):** Uses St Neots south station, runs along the new A428 to Cambourne north station, crosses the A428 at Childerley Gate roundabout and heads south to the A603, crossing the B1046 near the meridian line.

**Route 9 (purple):** Same as Route 1, but uses a new station at Tempsford.

**By the time the routes cross the A1198, they all merge into just two alternatives that affect Bourn, differing by the location of the station at Cambourne.**

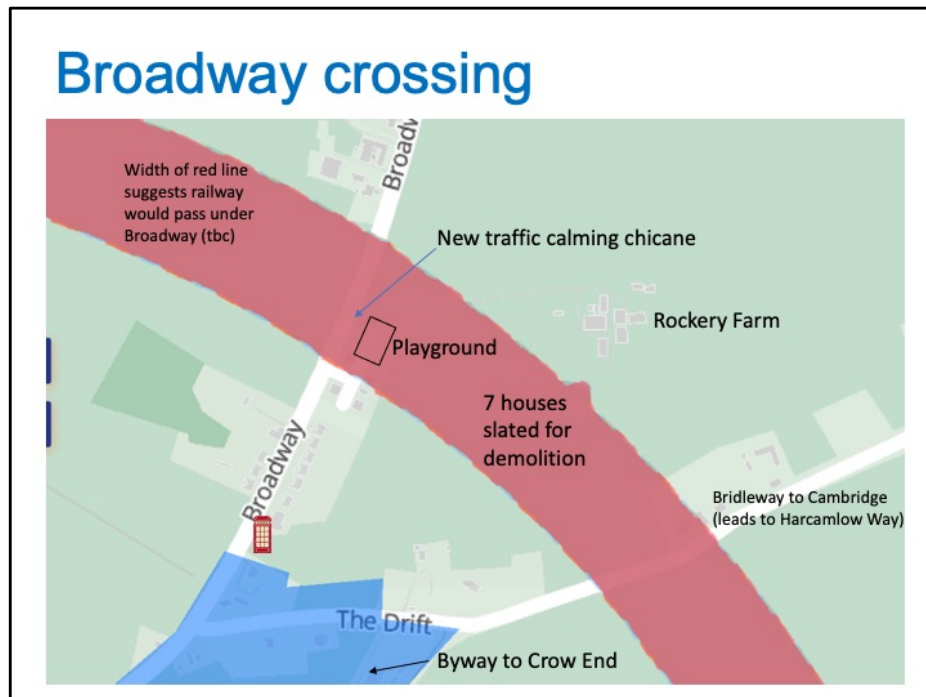
## South Cambourne routes (2,6,8)



Routes 8 (reference route), 2 and 6 all use a new station south of Cambourne and would cross the Broadway and the Drift.

The negative impacts are:

- More complex access for BAD residents than north Cambourne station
- The line crosses a water source protection zone south of Cambourne and the line would have to be elevated above this, which would be an eyesore and cause noise pollution.
- The station would destroy the recreational area of paths and bridleways which serve south Cambourne, Caxton and the Windmill, which are all popular with walkers, cyclists and horse-riders.
- There is less potential for housing development between Caxton and Cambourne than north of the A428
- The line runs within 500m of a conservation area (near Bourn Hall) and the noise/vibration would be felt by many residents of Bourn.
- 7 houses demolished around Broadway/Drift. We do not yet know which ones.
- Bourn has a rich archeological history dating back to the Roman age, much of which is still undiscovered. The railway line may destroy this forever.



This slide shows in detail where the south station routes would cross the Broadway.

The crossing is between the cluster of houses just north of the telephone box and those north of the Rockery Farm access road.

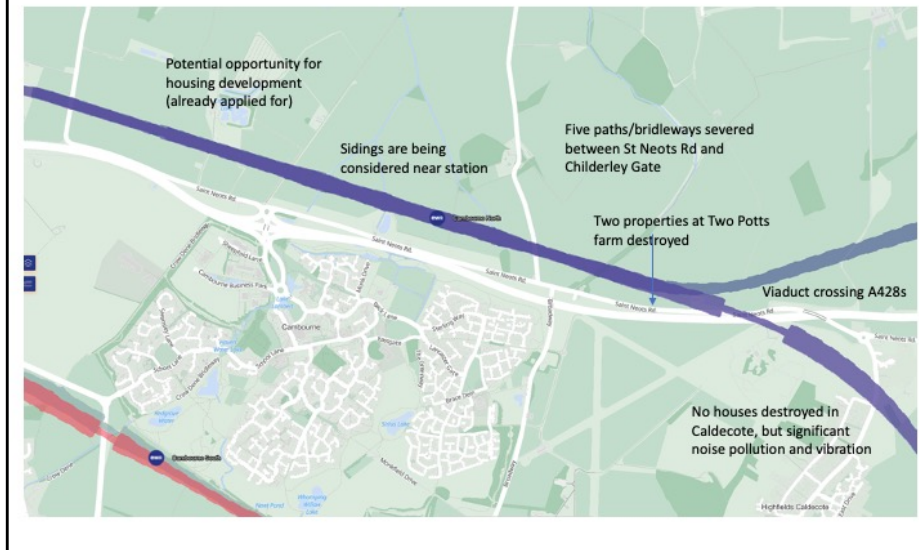
Seven houses have been identified for demolition, but it is not known yet which these are.

The railway line may pass under the Broadway and Drift, suggested by the lack of narrowing of the red stripe (which indicates a bridge or viaduct).

This option clearly has a major negative impact on Bourn and it is the top priority issue for us to oppose.



## North Cambourne routes (1,9)



Routes 1 and 9 both use a new station north of Cambourne and would cross the A428 at Childerley Gate roundabout

The impacts are:

- Convenient access to the station for BAD and Cambourne residents
- The line crosses several roads, farm tracks and paths and it is not clear how many of these will still be accessible
- It is likely EWR will site a stabling yard (sidings) near Cambourne station, which together with the station would completely change the area just north of St Neots Road
- There is more potential for housing development north of the A428 than around Caxton and south of Cambourne
- Two properties on the old A428 (Two Potts farm) would be destroyed
- The line runs very close to Caldecote Highfields and we should expect opposition from its residents
- Further on, the line crosses the B1046 near the meridian line and would impact several roads, bridleways and paths between Caldecote and the A603

## EWR options assessment

Emerging preference for routes 1 and 9  
(north Cambourne station)

- Better opportunities for housing development north of Cambourne vs south
- Shorter structures, easier geology, less floodplain
- Potential synergy with A428 construction
- Route 1 costs the least
- Longer journey times than the three routes via Cambourne south (less than 2 mins)
- EWR is open to feedback before choosing which station near to St Neots

EWR has published a detailed assessment of the five route options using six assessment factors:

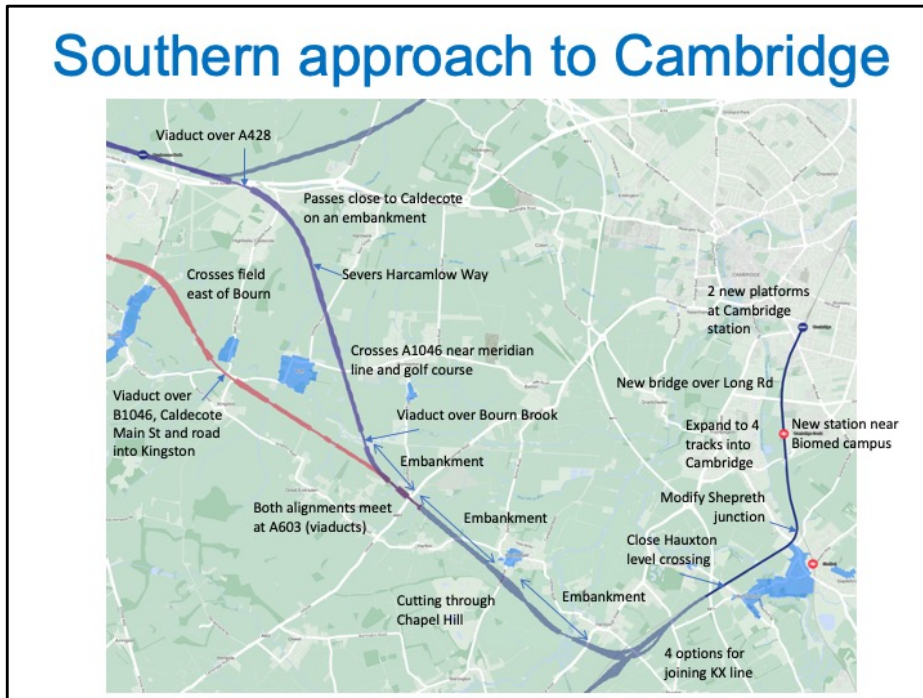
- Transport user benefits (e.g. journey time)
- Housing and growth
- Cost (capex)
- Performance
- Safety risk (during construction)
- Environmental impact

Of these assessment factors, it appears that EWR has prioritized potential for housing development and growth as the most important.

Consequently, EWR has concluded that the routes using a station north of Cambourne perform better than those using the south station.

Martin Grant Homes and Harcourt Development have already put forward a proposal for a new 6,000 home development north of Cambourne into the Local Plan

## Southern approach to Cambridge



The route passes close by and to the north of Caldecote Highfields then runs south of Hardwick, crossing the Hardwick Rd and B1046 near the meridian line. It is likely to destroy part of the Meridian golf course.

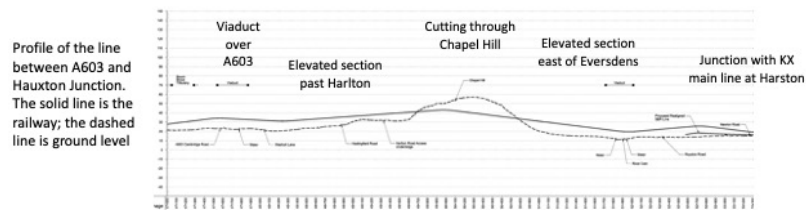
A viaduct is used to cross Bourn Brook, which begins an elevated section over the A603 past Harlton and through a cutting to pass Chapel Hill.

The line remains elevated until Harston, which it passes to the south and then joins the main Kings Cross line at a new junction near Hauxton. Four options have been proposed for this junction, which are being consulted on.

A level crossing at Hauxton will be removed with options proposed. The junction with the main line to Liverpool St will have to be modified at Shelford and the main line from there will be expanded to four tracks.

A new station (Cambridge South) will be built near the biomedical campus. The bridge over Long Rd will be demolished and rebuilt. Two new platforms and sidings will be added to Cambridge station.

## Southern approach to Cambridge



- 12km of the 17.4km line will be >4m above ground level on embankments. 6km will be >8m above ground level: the "Great Wall"
- Embankments will be 5-12m high and 30-70m wide and have tunnels/culverts for roads/paths
- A cutting through Chapel Hill to bypass Haslingfield
- Over 206 acres of farmland lost
- Barbastelle bats in Wimpole may also be affected
- Significant visual impacts, noise pollution and vibrations to at least seven villages



The train passes Little Eversden on the embankment

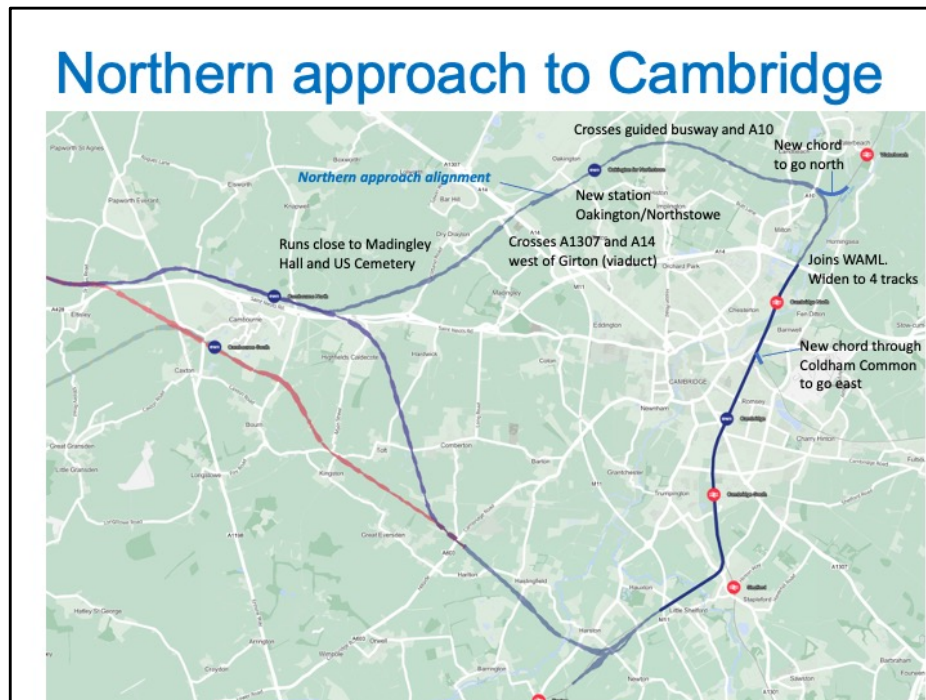
\* The term "Great Wall" has been coined by Cambridge Approaches

A key feature of the southern route is how EWR plan to cross Chapel Hill, near Haslingfield, a popular cycling route and area for walking.

The proposal is to make a cutting through it. To minimize the depth, the railway line will be elevated on an embankment either side of the cutting, spanning all the way from where the line crosses Bourn Brook and the A603 (viaduct) to the cutting and from the cutting to the junction with the main line from Kings Cross.

This is the so-called "Great Wall" and will be an eye-sore and source of noise to residents in Harlton, Haslingfield, Eversdens and Harston.

The line will also be elevated in the section from Caldecote to Comberton, though not as high.



Since EWR has included the Cambridge north station, which is outside the Option E zone, it is obliged to consider new alignments not available from a south Cambourne station. This includes the northern approach advocated by Cambed RailRoad and Cambridge Approaches.

The route leaves Routes 1 and 9 and Childerley Gate and runs between Dry Drayton and Maddingley and crosses the A1307/A14 between Bar Hill and Girton interchange (viaduct). It goes to Oakington, with a new station proposed and joins the West Anglian Main Line (WAML) between Waterbeach and Milton. Trains will stop at Cambridge North, before continuing through Cambridge to Cambridge South.

Although the track length is similar, journey times to Cambridge South will be longer due to the three additional stops.



Northern approach	
<p><b>Pros</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serves major new areas of development (e.g. Northstowe)</li> <li>• Convenient access to Milton science park</li> <li>• Fewer residents and villages close to line</li> <li>• Shorter journey times to Norwich and Ipswich</li> <li>• Less impact on the environment</li> <li>• Avoids destroying rural countryside west of Cambridge – the “Great Wall”</li> </ul>	<p><b>Cons*</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More complex to build (e.g. motorway crossings, flood zones etc.)</li> <li>• 40-85 properties affected (vs 5 in southern approach)</li> <li>• Complex engineering works into Cambridge</li> <li>• Cambridge North station will need upgrading</li> <li>• Longer journey time to the Biomedical campus</li> <li>• Eastbound trains would have to reverse out of Cambridge</li> <li>• More expensive? (not yet estimated)</li> </ul>

\* Appendix F, Technical Report, EWR Consultation documentation

For more details on pros, see CamBed RailRoad and Cambridge Approaches websites:

<http://www.cambedrailroad.org>

<https://cambridgeapproaches.org>

The major benefit to the northern approach is alignment to the major areas of new development and the avoiding the destruction of the countryside and noise pollution around the villages west of Cambridge.

The objections to the northerly approach are provided by EWR following a study of this option and detailed in a 60-page Appendix F to the Technical Report.

The complex engineering works into Cambridge include:

- Expanding the line to four tracks
- Building a new bridge over the river Cam
- Rebuilding bridges over four roads (one required in southerly approach)
- Removing some level crossings
- Extending Cambridge North station

Cambridge Approaches has published a rebuttal to all the points:

<https://cambridgeapproaches.org/category/route-alignments/>

## Summary

- Two main alignment options in our area
- One uses south Cambourne station and crosses the Broadway
- The other uses north Cambourne station and crosses at Childerley Gate – preferred by EWR
- Both these alignments meet at the A603 and join the London main line near Harston on raised embankments and viaducts and will cut through Chapel Hill in Haslingfield
- A northern approach to Cambridge, advocated by Cambridge Approaches and CamBed RailRoad would avoid the “Great Wall”, but is not favoured by EWR

## Key Issues

- The most important issue for Bourn is the choice of location for Cambourne station
- The second big issue (for all residents of South Cambs) is the choice of approach to Cambridge (north or south)
- In addition, residents may wish to comment on:
  - The customer experience using the railway
  - Access to Cambourne station for nearby villages
  - Impact of the railway line severing roads and public rights of way
  - The length of the railway line on embankments and viaducts
  - Freight
  - Environmental impact



Q&A