



**Anthony Browne MP**  
Member of Parliament for South Cambridgeshire  
House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA  
Tel: 0207 219 8089

Mr Simon Blanchflower  
Chief Executive Officer  
East-West Rail Ltd

By email only

28<sup>th</sup> October 2020

Dear Mr Blanchflower,

### **Bedford to Cambridge East West Rail route alignment options**

Thank you for your letter confirming that East West Rail (EWR) will publish its property blight policy as part of the second non-statutory consultation early next year. This is welcome news and will provide some reassurance for those residents who may be directly affected by the EWR project.

I do have some further questions, following discussions with constituents and the recent online forum I hosted for Parish Council leaders from across South Cambridgeshire to discuss EWR. I am grateful to Will Gallagher and Ian Parker from your senior management team, who attended the forum and answered questions from local representatives. Feedback on the event was positive and I hope that similar events can be organised over the coming months. It is especially important during the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure that engagement and consultation with local communities continues to take place, even if physical events cannot.

As you may know, I have been pushing for the new station at Cambourne to be located north of the town, where it will provide better access for existing residents, as well as any future development north of the town, and will not impact upon the much-loved nature reserve to the south. The northern location enjoys a good level of public support and offers greater connectivity with other transport corridors, including the A428. I therefore very much welcomed the confirmation from Ian Parker at our Parish Council Forum that this option is under active consideration.

A number of local residents, representatives and transport groups have asked me why it appears that full consideration is not being given to a route alignment that would see EWR take a northern approach to Cambridge, joining the existing line at Cambridge North station. The arguments in support of this option are that it would align with existing transport corridors and better serve the future development of the north side of Cambridge, including the new town at Northstowe and the large new development proposed at North East Cambridge.

Finally, concerns have been raised with me about the lack of available information concerning the volume of freight movements, which will cause noise and vibration (often at night), and the use of diesel trains on EWR.

I would be grateful if you could please address the above concerns by responding to the following questions:

### **Constituency Office:**

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1. Can you confirm that EWR will include the station north of Cambourne as one of the options that will go out for public consultation next year?
2. Has the option of bringing EWR into the city via Cambridge North been fully considered and if so, what are the opportunities and constraints of this alignment? If EWR has ruled this option out, can you provide details of how and why this decision has been reached?
3. What is the anticipated frequency and volume of freight trains that will use EWR? Will the issue of freight movements be addressed as part of the public consultation exercise next year?
4. Can you confirm that diesel trains will not be used on the Bedford to Cambridge section of EWR and that electric or other non-polluting technologies will be used from the outset?

I look forward to receiving your response on these matters. Should you have any queries in the meantime, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Kind regards,

**Anthony Browne MP**