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East West Rail 2021 Public Consultation - Feedback Form

Survey starts

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All fields marked with an asterisk (*) are required.

Section B: Bletchley and the Marston Vale Line

10. What do you think is important to consider when developing our proposals for the Bletchley and the Marston Vale Line area? In particular, what do we need to take account of:

- a. In relation to the existing stations on the Marston Vale Line and whether they should be kept open or consolidated through closure and relocation
- b. When we provide alternatives to existing level crossings
- c. In delivering the improvements to the Marston Vale Line
- d. In delivering works to Bletchley station
- e. In relation to the impact of reinstating a second track between Bletchley and Fenny Stratford

- a. Data to be obtained to show future usage of each station under normal non-Covid conditions to make decision whether station remains open, and if closed, whether alternative(s) are reasonable.
- b. Acceptable pedestrian & vehicle alternatives to be discussed with residents in that particular area
- c. As in a. above and account taken of freight being moved by rail
- d. Modern station that fits with Bletchley being a major technology and transport hub, provision of sufficient and low cost parking for vehicles close to station, good access on eastern side to Bletchley town centre. Relocation of Cemex works to another suitable station such as Ridgmont.
- e. Current proposals are vague and firm proposals are required for consideration by the public and relevant parties, in particular, the impact on 4 bridges in the area, over Saxon Street and A5 dual carriageways, River Ouzel and Grand Union Canal.

11. Please rank your preference for the proposed options for the existing stations on the Marston Vale Line.

Please use a scale of 1 to 2 to indicate your preferences where 1 indicates your preferred option and 2 the option you favour least.

- | | | |
|---|-----|---|
| 1 | x ▼ | Option 1: retain existing service (in a modified form) and introduce limited-stop Oxford to Cambridge services alongside it, calling at Woburn Sands and Ridgmont |
| 2 | x ▼ | Option 2: provide a more frequent, faster service with some new and relocated stations and improved community access |

12. Please tell us why you have ranked the proposed options for the existing stations above and provide any other comments:

- In relation to option 1, please provide any comments on the search area for the relocation of Ridgmont station and the new passing loops
- In relation to option 2, please provide any comments on the search areas for the relocated stations: Woburn Sands (relocated), Ridgmont (relocated), Lidlington (relocated), Stewartby (relocated).

Option 1 is that preferred by residents who I represent. However, my personal view is more in favour of option 2 as option 1 could impact the effective running of inter-city trains. It is of concern that freight traffic is not taken into account in the consultation, only passenger travel.

13. Fenny Stratford: vehicular traffic – three options

Please share your views on these options.

Option 1 is not acceptable

a.. Businesses which operate HGV's and vans have sites on Simpson Road. The closure of the Fenny Stratford/Simpson Road level crossing would mean ALL traffic would be diverted down Staplehall Road, which is a quiet residential street. Traffic would leave Simpson Road at Bilton Avenue which is part of an industrial estate, with on-street parking and constantly congested. Turning left (westwards) towards Watling Street (busy main route) would increase congestion at this junction as traffic attempts to join Watling Street. Turning right (eastwards) onto Bilton Avenue would be hazardous for all vehicles due to volume of traffic already using this road.

b. However, at the eastern end of Bilton Avenue is a company known as Sensient which has a large carpark. If a road was built through this carpark, traffic would enter Simpson Road at the narrowest point and would avoid the single track, traffic-light controlled bridge, with its 7.5T weight restriction, which is clearly unsuitable for HGVs. Has EWR considered this option?

c. Lorries are currently excluded from using Staplehall Road which has on-street parking by residents and by those employed in businesses in Bilton Avenue where on-site parking is inadequate. This renders the road a single track highway, with only occasional pull-in places, and unsuitable for increased traffic and HGVs. It is already hazardous getting on and off driveways, given limited visibility and the speed of some vehicles.

d. For 3 days at the end of May, Watling Street was closed for road repairs and traffic was diverted down Staplehall Road. As this is indicative of what can be expected should the level crossing close and no other suitable route found, a resident monitored the traffic passing her house between 3.30-5.30pm on Wednesday 26th May. In those 2 hours - 241 Cars, 98 Vans, 16 HGVs, 3 minibuses and 3 bicycles. All had to stop/start, pull in/pull out to avoid the vehicles parked on either side of the road.

e. Residents are also concerned about reducing access of Emergency services to Staplehall Road, Simpson Road & Lock View Lane should the level crossing be closed and no new road built.

f If the industrial sites in Simpson Road are closed and replaced with residential development which has been discussed, then the volume of HGVs and vans would decrease whilst residential traffic would substantially increase.

Option 2 - new link road from new junction on the southern side of Bletcham Way and a new junction on Simpson Road is impractical as it would join Simpson Road at a point totally unsuitable for the industrial traffic due to the single track, traffic-light controlled bridge, with its 7.5T weight restriction.

Option 3 - a new link road from Fenny Lock roundabout to a new junction on Simpson Road is impractical as it would join Simpson Road at a point totally unsuitable for the industrial traffic due to the single track, traffic-light controlled bridge, with its 7.5T weight restriction. However, there is a small industrial estate under construction at Fenny Lock with access road to Simpson Road - is this the same route that EWR proposes or does EWR propose another route?

14. Fenny Stratford: pedestrians and other non-vehicular road users – three options

Please share your views on these options.

Option 1 is not acceptable - no new construction/works and pedestrians have to use existing pedestrian routes along Staplehall Road, Watling Street, or the Grand Union Canal towpath. This would mean disproportionately longer distance to walk to access local amenities.

Option 2 - the footbridge option is the only acceptable option as it would provide access across the railway at the location of the existing level crossing, with stairs and a ramp for access, north and south of the railway.

Option 3 is not acceptable as it re-routes a pedestrian route from Simpson Road along the south of the railway, underneath the railway bridge which goes over the Grand Union Canal using the canal towpath to connect to Lock View Lane and Simpson Road. The canal towpath and swing bridge are unsuitable for extensive use as a public footpath, is not accessible, so restricts the mobility and independence for the many differently abled people living in community housing within Fenny Stratford. Pedestrian users would impact those who live in cottages alongside the canal, and also canal boat users.

NB The lock at Fenny Stratford has a swing-bridge which is very heavy to manoeuvre. It is generally left across the canal for pedestrian access to/from Lock View Lane, the Lock Cottage and Pump House and the tow-path excepting when boats are using the lock or if a boater is using the CRT services point (water, rubbish and sanitary disposal area) by the railway bridge. It is not recommended for operation by the non-boating general public and is certainly not possible for those with mobility issues to operate it safely.

The swing-bridge usage can be very busy especially during the cruising season when a number of boats can be queueing to use the lock and this sometimes causes confrontation between boaters and pedestrians as to who has the right of way. Pedestrians have been witnessed carrying bikes, pushchairs, shopping and dogs across the lock gates as they are impatient for the boats to leave the lock. This is a health and safety nightmare which could result in drowning should anybody slip from the lock-beams while the lock paddles are open which causes strong currents.

In the future, this part of the Grand Union Canal might be developed to form a marina and EWR needs to factor this possibility into its plans for this area.

Please provide us with your view on the options for the level crossings on the Marston Vale Line

Please share your views on this.

Please add your comment here...

29. Please rank your preference for the proposed options for the Marston Vale Line upgrade.

Please use a scale of 1 to 3 to indicate your preferences where 1 indicates your preferred option and 3 the option you favour least.

3 x ▼ Option 1: series of short blockades

1 x ▼ Option 2: a prolonged blockade

2 x ▼ Option 3: a mix of short and long blockades

30. Please tell us why you have ranked the proposed Marston Vale Line upgrade options above as you have and provide any other comments.

It appears to be the most efficient and rail services have been discontinued during the pandemic.

31. Please rank your preference for the proposed options for the Fenny Stratford additional track.

Please use a scale of 1 to 2 to indicate your preferences where 1 indicates your preferred option and 2 the option you favour least.

- ▼ Option 1: building new bridges next to the existing bridges to carry the new track
- ▼ Option 2: replacing the existing bridges with wider bridges that would carry both tracks

32. Please tell us why you have ranked the proposed Fenny Stratford additional track options above as you have and provide any other comments.

Unfortunately, there is insufficient detail in the consultation information to make an informed decision. EWR have been requested on more than 1 occasion to hold workshops with stakeholders to discuss options for the additional track, closure of Fenny Stratford and Level Crossing. I have attended such workshops in respect of Bletchley Station which appears to have a higher profile, but the impact of additional track options and what happens in Fenny Stratford is of as much, if not more, interest as will be of greater impact on residents and other travelling in the area either on foot, road or canal.

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