

QUESTION
Would an alignment slightly further north, permit the option of Bedford Parkway Station between Clapham and Milton Ernest. This would reduce inbound commuter traffic to the existing Bedford Midland, and do away with the need to rebuild and extend the existing station, The EW line would then stop at Bedford St Johns and Bedford North
What gains will there be for rural residents who will have to put up with the disruption being caused by the new route construction. Will it cause disruption to existing power to Great Barford as this is currently carried on overhead cables which will be bisected by the route. Will there be new stations and railheads that will cut down road traffic and will the railway be electrified from the start.
How is East West Rail going to help people who are now unable to sell their properties because of these plans? I do NOT mean the Need to Sell Scheme which I am very familiar with, as that is not going to be available for at least a year. I mean homeowners who need to sell their properties in the next 1-6 months. As soon as the plans were made public at the end of March, my property became unsellable, and I am now likely to be in limbo for a very long time, unable to sell my house, until the Need to Sell Scheme is eventually made available, possibly some time next year. In my case, if a potential buyer was to google "East West Rail" and "Palgrave Road" (which any savvy buyer would do), the first search result that comes up is the Technical Report which states that demolition of some properties on Palgrave Road may be required. This will instantly deter any prospective buyer.
What are the plans for Thameslink (Jowett) sidings? I understand that these will need to be relocated. Where?
How many tracks will there be between Bedford station and the new St John's station – specifically around Cauldwell Street Bridge area, i.e. between Prebend Street car park and Palgrave Road? I am aware that the consultation documentation states "a minimum of 2 tracks". What is the exact number? Or when will the exact number be known if not known yet?
How much of the traffic using the new East West line is expected to be freight? And specifically, is waste to and from the Covanta incinerator in Stewartby going to be transported using this line? Covanta's documentation states that the reason why they chose Stewartby for their location is because it has the potential to use trains to transport waste, instead of the road network.
My question is around the proposal to demolish and rebuild the recently erected bridge on Bromham Road. The previous (and recent) bridge closure caused many long months of disruption and delays for commuters and businesses alike. What reassurances can you give around minimising the disruption if all of this has to be redone? Will we have to endure yet another 12 months of traffic chaos?
Can you please tell me how much Bedford Borough Council is going to have to pay towards the re-building of Bedford Midland Station and the multi-storey car park that will surely be required if Route E goes ahead. Or is the bill for this going to be picked up 100% by East West Rail ??

Please tell me why the possible route via the original St John's Station and out of Bedford along the old Varsity Line (before quite probably turning along the A421 towards Tempsford) as suggested in the 12/2/19 initial report from Kilborn Consulting was never put to East West Rail. Kilborn explained how connectivity for passengers to Bedford Midland could quite easily be provided.

How does EWR and Bedford Borough Council intend to compensate for the displaced flood water when building any kind of structure on the floodplane between Bedford and Clapham. The Nationally reported floods that occurred over Christmas may have been exceptional but the area regularly floods with the fields taking the brunt of the excess water, surely Bedford flood defence needs to be protected not hampered.

1) When will it be made clear to residents of North and North-West Beds the high-levels of lengthy traffic disruption that will undoubtedly result by the massive civil engineering works required by of the (currently) favoured Route E proposal? (i.e. a second rebuilding of Bromham Road Bridge , a rebuild of the bypass bridge by BrewPoint, The immense viaduct over A6 and the Ouse into Clapham, the cutting through Clapham park etc.. etc.. These works and their effects upon Bedford commuters (among many others south and to the west) have been largely 'glossed over' it appears and I'm convinced large swathes of the public remain ignorant of these effects due to the scant detail in the proposals revealed to date.

2) What research has been undertaken to support the claim that travellers will use this route to access the Science park at Cambridge? From what I gather after a 40min journey by train visitors will still require a further 30 minute bus ride (or an hours walk) according to Google maps

Will the council be publishing a copy of all the questions submitted to them regarding the proposed meetings on 12th and 13th May?

I was most surprised / perturbed to read the document "Making Meaningful Connection" posted through Bedford letter boxes last week.

Although it is good that this project appears to be marching on at pace, I am not sure it will take the locals of Bedford with it, as it appears to be driven solely on a Railways point of view that we want to deliver an East West link, using the current rail infrastructure with little thought for the impact that the proposals would have upon the residents of Bedford and in particular those that would be impacted by the proposed changes.

Bedford road and public transport infrastructure is of a very poor quality. There does not appear to be a planned integrated public transport system within the town with little linkage between important locations i.e. Train Station / Bus Station / hospitals etc. As a result the majority of personal travel is made by private car when available, or even taxi.

The main road artery from the South of the town is by Ampthill Road, the A6. This road carries large volumes of traffic, whilst serving the town at one end and the Retail Park at the other it also has two large Supermarkets in between. Unsurprisingly the road resembles the M25 at certain points of the day with little hope for side roads to gain access to the route. According to this draft document, it is into this environment that the East West Rail link is planning to place a new (replacement for St Johns Station) station! As I have already said bus services are poor within the town, so it would follow to use this station we would be increasing the level of car journeys if the public are to use this station, if that is possible. The station would also require substantial supporting car parking facilities, not evident on the plans.

So far I have been unable to discover why Bedford needs a second station, particularly in this location – What / who would it serve. I understand the current St Johns Station vaguely supports the hospital, but the replacement would appear to be further away from the hospital and have no other strong “market”. Do we really need another Station, within the Town?

The construction of a replacement St Johns station, would have a significant impact on local housing, requiring much compulsorily purchase and demolition of property to provide suitable station infrastructure / roads / parking. Housing in the town is currently at a premium with properties being snapped up as they come onto the market. Has this been factored in?

Bedford as a town has in recent years, grown experientially with new housing estates being developed in all corners, one such development is that of Wixams on the south side of the town, Stradling the A6. Purchasers of properties to this development in this area were attracted to the area (village / town) by the promise of a new railway station serving the Bedford / London line. I am not sure where this is on the towns plans going forward as all appears to have gone quite on the issue. I believe the developers of the area were asked to provide a budget to provide a station as part of the development plans.

Wixams not only sits on the A6, but is close to a number of stations on the existing Bletchley / Bedford line, between Stewartby and Kempston Hardwick. Surely the development of a new station serving these communities and linking to the London / Nottingham railway service would be of great attraction, whilst at the same time easing congestion within Bedford and on its mainline station as commuters living on the South of the town would be able access such a station for their trips whether it be to London / Nottingham / Oxford or Cambridge, Rather than having enter Bedford. The

Can i please ask would it not have made sence to have a link direct into stansted airport. Luton and Gatwick have a service into the airports?

Which houses are going to be demolished to make way for this in Bedford?

<p>1) Could you please advise whether the proposed new track alignment in Cauldwell means that some nearby properties could be at risk of being demolished? These include the Arts & Crafts Centre, Cauldwell Community Centre and residential properties on Althorpe Street and Ossory Way.</p>
<p>2) If Bedford St John's Station is relocated to Britannia Road, where the current hospital car park is, and a multi storey car park is built, as suggested, to make up for the lost parking spaces, who would be paying for this, Bedford Borough Council or East West Rail?</p>
<p>3) Are there plans that the Blakemore distribution centre being built at Manton Lane could use the East West Rail line for transport in the future, as it is right behind them?</p>
<p>1. Is there any indication as to the frequency of the proposed East West service?</p>
<p>2. Will the high speed rail service going North to South and visa versa stop more frequently at Bedford Station (like it used to), thereby making the town potentially more attractive for people?</p>
<p>Please explain, using a simple annotated plan, why a southern route direct into Bedford Midland cannot be achieved, whether it be geometry; land constraints; environmental impact or other factors</p>
<p>Excerpt from Clapham Parish Council minutes 19th March 2019 https://clapham-pc.gov.uk/.../Minu.../2019_03_19_minutes.pdf '7. REPORTS:- a) East West Rail briefing 05.03.19. Chair had attended and tabled booklets detailing the 5 route options from Bedford to Cambridge. Two of the options would pass between Clapham & Bedford via Bedford Midland, three would go to the south of Bedford via Wixams or a new station. CPRE favoured route (b) to the south and Bedford BC preferred a northern route. If one of the northern options were chosen a large viaduct would be needed to carry the line past Clapham and Chair had expressed concerns about the impact on the community especially as green space was already being lost to housing. Parking and congestion would be more easily resolved at a new southern station but <u>Cllr. Walker noted that improvements to Bedford Midland, including a multi storey car park and extended platforms, would be funded by Bedford BC thus reducing the cost of the northern routes</u> . '</p> <p>Please firstly confirm that this is true and then answer the following.</p>
<p>a) What is the cost of the improvements to the station and the car park</p>
<p>b) How are BBC going to fund this</p>
<p>c) Are BBC paying for the compulsory purchase of the properties required to facilitate the above</p>
<p>There are a lot of level crossings on the Bletchley to Bedford railway link. With the advent of the "new line" and more regular / faster trains is anything going to happen to improve safety of these crossings?</p>
<p>With regard to the present proposals, wouldn't it be worth considering the addition of a railway station close to Addenbrookes/Papworth Hospital, as many persons would then have a greater access to these facilities.</p>
<p>Please outline the quantitative research conducted by the council to ascertain likely visitors to Bedford from Oxford and Cambridge as a result of the train line running into Bedford town centre. I work extensively in both Cambridge and Oxford and am yet to meet anyone with an interest in visiting Bedford by train.</p>

<p>Please confirm the anticipated cost of repossessing property in Bedford Town as a result of the current intended route and please state if and how much of local funds will be required to finance this.</p>
<p>1. Will the Council publish all questions submitted highlighting the ones they have chosen to respond to in the public meetings so the selection of questions can be viewed in an open and transparent manner and residents can be assured that the Council has not cherry picked the easiest questions and those least critical of their preferred position?</p>
<p>2. How much funding has the Council promised to EWR for the building of route E and has this been factored into the 12% extra economic benefits of this route which the Mayor has quoted? Can the Council publish the full assessments of these economic benefits and the assumptions they rest on as the EWR line would seem to take spending away from Bedford to Oxford and Cambridge?</p>
<p>3. Will the Mayor prominently publish all his links and appointments with transport committees, groups and organisations, their position on and interests in the proposed routes through Bedford, and itemised remuneration from all such appointments?</p>
<p>If the Northern route goes ahead has anybody really assessed the disruption caused to the traffic through and around Bedford? As far as I understand the following bridges will have to be rebuilt/modified:-a. Ampthill Road; b. Kempston Road; c. Bromham Road; d. Possibly Ford End Road; e. There would also be major disruption at the points where the railway crosses the A6, Paula Radcliffe Way and Clapham Road. If the recent disruption caused by the rebuilding of Bromham Road bridge is taken as an example, the disruption will be totally unacceptable! My belief is that the major factor in the decision must be the unacceptable disruption to Bedford.</p>
<p>If the requirement is for the railway line to go through the main station, why is it not going through Milton Keynes Central? Not many West Coast Mainline trains stop at Bletchley which EWR will be passing through.</p>
<p>How many people is it expected will interchange between EWR and MML? Not enough to justify the disruption!</p>
<p>Parking at Bedford Midland station is already at a premium. The loss of parking caused by the redevelopment of the station and the possible extra requirement created by EWR makes the situation worse. The parking at Wixams could also be used as a Park & Ride for Bedford.</p>
<p>Whichever route is finally taken by EWR the effects on nature, wildlife, views etc could be argued forevermore.</p>
<p>I believe an earlier consultation was carried out by EWR in 2019, however, it seems that one of the worst impacted areas, i.e. Cauldwell Ward was not included in that consultation. Many homes in this area are only 10-20 metres of the existing Marston Vale Line so will be seriously impacted by these plans, yet none of us were included in the 2019 consultation. Looking at the map of the consultation area (attached), there is a strange gap / wedge omitting this area from the consultation - why is that?</p>
<p>1. Have any "conflicts of interest" been declared for those who are involved in the planning, or may benefit from the construction of the trainline? Where is this published?</p>
<p>2. Has an environmental impact as a consequence of destroying natural countryside been conducted? Where is this published?</p>

3. What routes for heavy goods traffic will be predicted necessary to construct the section of train line within Bedford? Where is this published?
4. What impact analysis for traffic flow has been completed for the increase in heavy goods traffic construction for the train line in Bedford? Where is this published?
5. Given heavy goods traffic will increase during the construction, what arrangements have been made to ensure the safety of children attending and leaving school along affected routes? Where is such information published?
6. What is the projected time schedule trains will be running after 8pm and before 6am every day if the week? Where is such information published?
7. For trains running between 8pm and 6am, what is the expected noise volume and potential public nighttime quiet/peace disturbance for a. light passenger trains and b. heavy freight trains. Where is such information published?
8. Will any new stations be built in the area between Bedford Station and Brickhill, up to the town boundary for Bedford
1. Why in 2019 did the council back a Southern Route and then change their minds in 2020? What's the reason behind this flip?
2. In the recommended Clapham BP Meeting you attended, Both Mayor Dave and Cll Headley avoided the question asked "Are the Council funding the new Midland station, if Route E is picked?"
3. Bedford Borough Council had an undemocratically large influence on the decision and cited a tiny incremental economic gain (0.05% - 0.13% p.a.) of using a route through Bedford. However, they have so far failed to perform a traffic, congestion, air quality or noise pollution study for Bedford Midland station.
4. The subject of Freight was not consulted on. Using a longer, steeper, more circuitous route is not consistent with the government's decarbonisation ambitions - this represents new information and should trigger a reconsideration. Yet Cllr Headley as part of the EWR consortium attend a meeting in December 2020 to discuss freight from Folkstone. So, you do know about this.
5. An Oxford – Cambridge rail link makes sense to many for both freight and passenger services. Although, the latter will undoubtedly be far less in demand by 2030 with the fall out from Covid-19 and the move to remote working by possibly millions of people. Any plans should make allowances for this. Having been vaguely aware of a consultation process in 2019 I was unable to attend the single consultation session in an obscure Community Hall on the south side of Bedford. There was no likelihood of a northern route being chosen at the time due to the excessive costs and environmental impacts. Enter (stage left) Bedford Borough Council and Mayor Dave Hodgson. Without any consultation with Bedford Borough residents the Mayor decides to spend £75k of Council Taxpayers money on an engineering report that will give him the answer he wants (after two attempts) proving that Route E is actually affordable. (to hell with the environmental impact) Why would he do this?

6. EWR have no local knowledge?

One comment in the Technical report published recently suggested that Ford End Road bridge may not be viable to be rebuilt and that alternative routes may have to be found for traffic?? Anyone from Bedford would know that what they have just said is the most ridiculous suggestion. It would cause traffic carnage forever. However, Councillor Headley of BBC confirmed that no traffic survey/impact study has been carried out of either short term disruption from construction OR longer term if it does indeed attract more passengers. All of these "new" passengers who drive into the town centre could of course circumvent the town centre and jump on a train from an edge of town location with ample space for parking. (Did I mention parking is a nightmare at Bedford Station? After 7.15am there are zero parking spaces available)

7. Have EWR visited Clapham / Woodlands / Ravensden / Brickhill the North Route to look at the environmental impact? Our environment – do they really not care?

All Route E options will leave a scar on the landscape unlike anything the town has ever witnessed. I'm afraid that most residents will live in blissful ignorance until the bulldozers move in.

The area to the north of Bedford through which Route E would run is some of the most picturesque, unspoilt countryside our county has. We should be protecting it with all our might to pass it on to future generations intact.

The south side of Bedford already has the A421 transport corridor. It is flatter, a shorter route, no doubt providing quicker journey times.

Hello, I would like to submit this question to the EWR public meeting: Has a safeguarded area (i.e. distance from the proposed line) already been set for EWR? (for example, I believe that with HS2, anyone within 60 metres of the proposed line could apply for compensation under Statutory Blight). And how do these rules apply if you already live near the existing Marston Vale Line and the new EWR will use the same alignment so it is not necessarily any closer to your house, but clearly having faster / more frequent / freight trains clearly completely changes the impact the train line has.

Option 2 for the relocation of St John's Station sees it located into a purely residential area with access via congested residential streets. Currently there is no space to add the infrastructure for such a project without the loss of homes and causing continued disruption to the residents of the area. How can the council allow this to even be considered?

Can the BBC explain why no routes south of Bedford are part of this consultation? There has been a huge investment already in the development of the A421, a major east west road link, surely this will provide better access to a station and have less impact on the local environment? We need to avoid even more traffic congestion, to and from the Midland Road site. Wasn't there a promise of a Wixam train near the A421?

There needs to be sound justification from BBC for bulldozing more of our local countryside. We have lost enough to new roads and houses. If there must be a train link then run it alongside the A421 and don't destroy any more of our countryside.

1. Is there any plan to build a train station in Brickhill?

2. What measures are being taken to ensure greenery and woodlands are protected and remain unharmed?

3. What restrictions would be put on night train service to ensure residents get peaceful nights?

4. Would this route serve passenger trains and goods freight both?

5. Timeline to complete the build and to get first train running on this route

6. What's the approx. number of trains expected to run daily?

I fervently hope this project fails! There are local elections. I usually vote for Conservatives but this time I am going to vote for anyone, absolutely any party who opposes this abomination. I live 150 metres from the railway line in question, Belfry Close. I bought this house as a quiet corner within the town but this horrible project is going to ruin it. I am disabled and don't have energy to move house otherwise I would be gone.

Whichever route is chosen and bulldozed through the planning procedure and public enquiry, what provisions have been made to; Minimize the visual pollution; Above ground railways are ugly, proposed 15mts viaducts are visible from a long distance, no one wants a rail track in their back garden; Minimize the audible pollution; Houses some distance from any proposed track with be affected adversely. Great Barford already has noise pollution from the Southern Bedford By Pass which is getting worse as traffic volumes build up. The proposed Black Cat flyover system will only increase vehicle numbers and this noise pollution. The simple solution for this and any further increase in noise from the railway tracks would be to put it in a cutting below surface land levels or build a mounds of earth /embankment alongside the track high enough to hide all construction and trains. This would also smother any vehicle noise from the road system. Added benefit of being environmentally friendly and ecologically sound. Noise is a vibration, the earth would absorb the vibration, deadening the sound, high enough to visually hide all train traffic and construction. Trees, bushes and grasses would soften the damage to the countryside, provide wildlife habitat and filter emission pollution. Any cost would be small in comparison of the overall cost of the project. Stop ignoring people and where they live.

What guarantee are any parties giving about the increase of flooding risks where the track is going?; For example Great Barford suffers from flooding now, the giveaway is in the name – BarFORD, shallow place in a river for a crossing. The Bypass has caused extra actual flooding in the 16 years it's been open and was severe this winter. A lot of excess water comes off the bypass now. We have a stream at the bottom of our garden, its normally 4" of tadpole water. On Christmas day this year we had a leaflet suggesting we moved furniture upstairs, turned everything off and move out. Because this stream was now threatening to overflow. This water was coming from Bypass and surrounding area on its way to the river so not caused by rivet flooding. The fields behind the village hall going towards the Bypass were flooded, worse we have seen since Bypass opened.

There are lots of issues about which route and why they are being proposed. Lots of comments about the countryside being ripped up and ruined. This will lead to more infill housing , more vehicle traffic on already inadequate roads (Bedford western 'bypass ' is a joke). Houses being demolished, homes being blighted by being close to but not close enough for compensation. If this proposed East to West rail link is so important and so valuable for businesses and communities, do it properly, do it well, with forward thinking. The Southern Bedford bypass solved a problem but also created more by throwing extra traffic onto the Black Cat roundabout that could not and has not coped. Sixteen years later we are still waiting when everyone (drivers especially) knew it would be a problem from day one. Is this East/West rail proposal going to be an equally poor example of lack of forward thinking?

My preference is for a southern route option, with a new parkway station to the South of Bedford, either separate to or joined with the new Wixams station. I do not agree with the EWR line going through Bedford mainline and out to the North to get to Cambridge. The claimed benefits of EWR going though the centre of Bedford are negligible and do not justify the destruction of the countryside to the North of Bedford especially given the longer route that would entail and the extensive and expensive engineering works required when a shorter, quicker, flatter, cheaper Southern route is available along an existing transport corridor. I am appalled by the lack of transparency on this subject to date as well as the lack of proper consultation in 2019. I am similarly appalled by the use of taxpayers money by BBC to skew the position to their own ends by employing consultants to review only certain of the possible routes in order to obtain the outcome desired by BBC. Should EWR go ahead along a Northern route, the legacy left by the Mayor and the majority of Borough Councillors who appear to be blindly following a party whip, will be one of which all those complicit should be greatly ashamed.

Would the Mayor agree that the Alignment 8 and 9, the southern options provide a more sensible and less detrimental route in terms of impact on the landscape, villages and environment as well as being topographically less challenging than Alignments 1,2 and 6, the northern ones. The southern options go nowhere near as close to village centres such as Renhold, Wilden, Clapham, Brickhill, etc. and therefore will have less impact and I'd therefore ask does the mayor support the selection of alignments 8 or 9?

Please take my comments below as my response to BBC's request for views to inform their response to the ongoing EWR consultation. I do not agree with the EWR line going through Bedford mainline and out to the North to get to Cambridge. The claimed benefits of EWR going through the centre of Bedford are negligible and do not justify the destruction of the beautiful countryside to the North of Bedford especially given the longer route that would entail and the extensive and expensive engineering works required when a shorter, quicker, flatter, cheaper Southern route is available along an existing transport corridor. My preference is for a southern route option, with a new parkway station to the South of Bedford, either separate to or joined with the new Wixams station. The lack of transparency on this subject to date is outrageous as well as the lack of proper consultation in 2019. I am also appalled by the use of taxpayers money by BBC to skew the position to their own ends by employing consultants to review only certain of the possible routes in order to obtain the outcome desired by BBC. As a Putnoe resident I have concerns we will suffer from disruption through construction in the operational phase of this project with the major roads -in and close to Putnoe - Wentworth Drive, Kimbolton Road, Putnoe Lane being made the designated route for any construction traffic. I am also concerned that we will suffer from noise pollution and vibrations created by the railway. I feel highly disappointed that there seems to have been no effective attempt to inform your residents about the EWR 2019 consultation which has ended up bringing this line to our front door. Should EWR go ahead along a Northern route, the Mayor and the majority of Borough Councillors should hang their heads in shame.

My preference is for the southern alignment route with a Tempsford station.

Please take my comments below as my response to BBC's request for views to inform their response to the ongoing EWR consultation. My preference is for the EWR line to take a southern route option, with a new parkway station to the South of Bedford, either separate to or joined with the new Wixams station. I do not agree with the EWR line going through Bedford mainline and out to the North to get to Cambridge. The claimed benefits of EWR going through the centre of Bedford are negligible and do not justify the longer route that would entail and the extensive and expensive engineering works required when a shorter, quicker, flatter, cheaper Southern route is available along an existing transport corridor. I am appalled by the lack of transparency on this subject to date as well as the lack of proper consultation in 2019. I am similarly appalled by the use of taxpayers money by BBC to skew the position to their own ends by employing consultants to review only certain of the possible routes in order to obtain the outcome desired by BBC. This combined with BBC's offer to fund the upgrade of Bedford Midland Mainline Station were undeniably the decisive factors in the selection of the illogical route E. I suggest you rethink your support and tactics on this matter before condemning this and future generations to a destructive, inefficient and illogical route that is only even under consideration due to your influence. Should EWR go ahead along a Northern route, the legacy left by the Mayor and the majority of Borough Councillors who appear to be blindly following a party whip, will be one of which all those complicit should be greatly ashamed.

I have just come across this paper by Rail Freight Group http://www.rfg.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/E-W-Rail-Position-Paper-July-2017.pdf?fbclid=IwAR2QiRgoX6Yur4WBa2KaXAL9BA2F6amvtqLj9we1hSA4uDnVBE6_kFJbY4E stating that the EMR scrap recycling site in Bedford town centre next to the Cauldwell train maintenance and servicing depot is considered to have significant development potential as rail freight terminal, with plans to relocate EMR to Stewartby, thereby releasing a valuable plot of land for redevelopment or an expansion of the Cauldwell servicing depot. Could you please give me an update on these plans and also explain what the impact on local residential properties would be.

Can you confirm that only electric trains will be using the new line and that there will be no diesel trains running (either passenger or freight)

Are there any quantified predictions, assumptions or targets about how much traffic will be removed from the roads when the EWR service is up and running and consequently what reduction in emissions is expected.

I strongly oppose east west rail route E for the following reasons. This route has the biggest environmental impact, carving up beautiful north Bedfordshire countryside. It is a less direct route increasing carbon footprint and journey times. Routes A-C to the south of Bedford are all cheaper, making use of existing infrastructure and are all more environmentally sensitive. Why has this route been chosen?

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Which part of the Bedford to Bletchley line be it affect ?

Is it true houses in Spencer road Bedford will be affected or even demolished ?

Supoporter of Route E - see word doc saved with emails - 11 pages. Addition comment sent in 2nd email - I would certainly be able to join either or both of the meetings. My 'comments' were more in my support of Route E, the Council's choice of route E, to move forward and, to try to avoid any delay in the delivery of EWR (such as to re-run a past consutation and descision process). Also to say how I consider this might be achieved in the most sympathetic way and without impact to domestic property. All of this is to off-set the undoubted opposition to any change. If it assists the Council in their support of E and the benifits it will deliver, I can frame something in the manner of a 'question' or just give a supporting comment from both my local knowledge and my knowlege of rail both domestic and world-wide.

1) Could you please clarify what the plans are with regards to new housing AND a new train station on the land next to Britannia Road, where the South Wing Hospital staff car park currently is. According to these plans (https://bedfordspd.htadesign.co.uk/south-river?fbclid=IwAR1i2_fEwMmDJAGe0D_KaaNWbLeeIDIZ7VDTcDUevRIW8nwjq9HgZBSX2dA), 875 new homes are planned south of the river. How exactly will it be possible to build a new train station and dozens / hundreds of new homes next to Britannia Road, where the hospital car park currently is?

2) When did the Mayor and local councillors find out that EWR was going to be diesel only (non-electrified)? And was that information included in the 2019 consultation? Because I believe that this was actually announced as early as 2016 (see section 7.34 of the following document: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/862577/Network-Rail-East-West-Rail-Bicester-Bedford-Improvements-Order-Inspectors-report.pdf?fbclid=IwAR119KL5WG52XH1fQZTmdMMW_sTRTpUxczSyk3ObL8NCIlaKlvB5sEQs7-I; I have also attached a screenshot of the relevant section).

I am in favour of the EWR route linking Oxford and Cambridge but have serious reservations about which route is taken re. my village, Wilden.

I am asking for Alignments 8 and 9, the southern options, rather than Alignments 1,2 and 6, the northern ones that will devastate Wilden by running straight through the middle of our village.

The southern options don't go anywhere near as close to other village centres such as Renhold, Clapham, Brickhill etc, so are nowhere near as bad for them.

Wilden is hit harder and closer than anyone else by the northern lines.

The very close northern route diesel freight and passenger trains will cause Wilden untold noise, vibration, pollution and disruption.

There will also be years of road closures, dust and lorries as they build the double railway line through here only 100 metres from the Village Hall and High Street, cutting across Shrubbery Lane, Chequers Hill and Colesden Road. When I decided to move to Wilden over 20 years ago I was attracted by the peaceful and rural setting of the village which I do not want ruined.

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The very close northern route diesel freight and passenger trains will cause Wilden untold noise, vibration, pollution and disruption.

There will also be years of road closures, dust and lorries as they build the double railway line through here only 100 metres from the Village Hall and High Street, cutting across Shrubbery Lane, Chequers Hill and Colesden Road. When I decided to move to Wilden over 20 years ago I was attracted by the peaceful and rural setting of the village which I do not want ruined.

Will you please support Alignments 8 and 9, the southern routes, as against alignments 1, 2 and 6 of the northern routes, because the latter would devastate Wilden because they go right through the heart of the village. In fact far closer to any other village centre, for example, Brickhill, Clapham and Renhold. The northern routes would be unnecessarily destructive when alignments 8 and 9 would cause far less amenity and environmental damage.

Of the 5 routes submitted for our views in the initial consultation route 5 was by far and away the most expensive for obvious reasons of geography along with causing the greatest impact and destruction along with environmental impact and increasing congestion in Bedford centre.

The mysterious re-costing of routes 1 to 4 (route 5 hardly changed) making them compatible with route 5 has never been explained and in some cases was so significant questions remain about the original costing .

I would like an explanation about why we were misled in the original consultation, how these significant re-costings can have occurred and lastly why it should not be expected that route 5 will also cost significantly more .

The lesson to be learnt by all government funded schemes , ie HS2 , is that there will be huge overspends and given that the route 5 chosen is a problem route in terms of topography etc this surely is a flawed decision Perhaps our mayor can answer why he seems so obsessed with bringing extra traffic into Bedford, demolishing countless homes , ruining the countryside with diesel freight trains as rail passenger numbers are in serious decline and burdening the taxpayer with unprecedented costs at a time the country is recovering from an event as great as WW2

I would like to know if the meeting on Wed 12 May will be open to the public; if so how do you join or view?

The questions I would also like to ask however, are:-

1. Does Bedford Borough Council favour Bedford (Midland) Station regeneration in it's present site? Will it include a bus interchange as well as larger spaces for taxis and cycles?
2. Does Bedford Borough Council favour Bedford St Johns to be closer to Bedford Hospital South Wing? (Both locations will presume the building of multi-story car parks in both locations)
3. What are the views of Bedford Borough Council for the north junction of EWR and Midland Lines; in other words would Great Ouse Way and Paula Radcliffe Way need to be rebuilt/re-located to make room for the EWR? What would be the visual impact of a railway (or new roads) viaduct have on the environs.
4. What route would the EWR take to circulate around Bedford to regain the Easterly alignment towards Cambridge?

As an aside, I assume the preference is to keep the lines northbound as a 4 track railway. Demolition of property, rebuilding (again!) of Bromham Road and Ford End Bridges to accommodate a 6 line railway is completely over the top for a distance of 2 miles and also prohibitively expensive.

Has the council seen detailed costings of the different routes? Have they queried why route E is now, amazingly, much cheaper in the rankings, whereas before it was by far the most expensive?

Are the latest costs shown net of estimated economic benefits? If so how have these benefits been arrived at?

Can we see a full detailed analysis of the costs of each route?

We are writing to seek your support in recommending to EWR route Alignment 9 (purple).

The alignment routes 1,2 and 6 are devastating for Wilden, Colesden, Wyboston and Chawston as they go right through the middle of the villages.

WILDEN alignment 1, 2 and 6

The line will only be 100m away from the Village Hall and High Street and all residents of Wilden will be affected in some way.

Routes 1, 2 and 6 will cause Wilden untold noise, vibration, pollution and disruption including years of road closures and dust and lorries as they build the double railway line.

South Brook which runs through Wilden already has a flooding issue. The construction of the line could make this much worse with the amount of earth being removed and the very deep cuttings (over 30m in places)

Wilden is the worst affected village on the line from Bedford to Tempsford.

The line at Wilden would could cut through 3 roads, Shrubbery Lane, Chequers Hill and Colesden Road and tear through very productive farm land.

Many footpaths are in these areas and are widely used by residents.

Other Considerations

- 1) Can you confirm if this line will be electrified, if it's not why not!
- 2) Can you confirm there is an intention to have this a major freight line and will this line carry dangerous and hazardous goods
- 3) I understand RouteE is the most expensive route and it then has two stations in Bedford within a mile of each other with limited parking. Would an out of town station like at Wixam not have been better for the second station (with better land for a new station, access and Assess ability! Why was this option not chosen?

concerning the East-West Rail Consultation I am very concerned about the reasons put forward concerning choice of the 'North of Bedford' rail route. This decision made by Government in early 2020 with little publicity, and minimal explanation. The initial consultation indicated that economically routes 'South of Bedford' were best; then, without obvious explanation, significant costs were added to the 'South of Bedford' cost figures so that very surprisingly the 'North of Bedford' route costs became the cheapest. Where is the supporting detailed documentation to explain how this massive change in costs came about?

My conclusion is that the final route decision is deeply flawed and that a complete and detailed re-evaluation is required.

Precis - Cannot see that destruction of countryside is warranted or feasible. Full comment saved in screen shot

How do you reconcile the apology you gave to all Bedford Borough residents about the comparatively short over run of the closure of Bromham Bridge with the years of chaos and devastation that is going to be caused to the town and the countryside because Bedford Borough Council lobbied so hard for route E? According to the archives Network Rail, EWR, Sandy Council, Will Gallagher EWR Strategy Director and many others presumed, before the flawed 2019 consultation, that the route would be south of the river along the existing transport corridor. With all the evidence that a southern route is more environmentally friendly because it would be cheaper to build and run, shorter and therefore quicker, would not require the demolition of parts of the town and swathes of the countryside and could be electrified because it is flatter, surely now is the time for BBC to rescind its support for route E?

Could the Council please explain how route E became the best route after being the most expensive?

Considering Bedford Town Centre is dying, the town is gridlocked whenever a road is closed for work to be done. How is the Council going to keep the traffic moving once they close Bromham Bridge and other roads again?

We did not receive any notification back in 2019, what happened? After speaking to our neighbors they have confirmed that they didn't receive any notification either.

I'm seeing various information regards upcoming updates to Bedford rail station and associated lines. Something not yet clear, is whether the rebuilt Bedford station will get the southbound fast line platform, so that there can be good & fast train services back from Leicester-Bedford-London. For the updates to the network to bring the benefits to the town of Bedford being purported, having such a fast line in operation is considered pretty essential (it would certainly influence my potential return to the town after having moved away for reasons related to work commute).

I wish to comment and question the proposed route of the E-W rail route from Bedford for the next 10 miles towards Cambridge. The present plans bring the line through Carriage Drive and close to the North Brickhill Country Park before crossing Graze Hill and heading East across the B660. This is a tragic loss of recreational amenity and will have long-lasting noise impact to a significant number of the urban population in North Brickhill. The present configuration of paths and bridleways that these plans will damage, make less accessible and attractive and damage the local flora and fauna, is an avoidable consequence. The flat terrain North of Twinwoods is much less densely populated. Taking the line (say) 4 miles further North towards North of the rise that is the old Twinwoods aerodrome would save the amenity used by hundreds of people exercising daily and reduce the noise and other pollution to a densely populated area. To what extent is the cost to the residents of North Bedford in terms of health, well being and disruption considered in making plans and why has this less impactful route not been considered?

Why was route e supported when a flatter more direct route was available south of Bedford

Why does the council find it more important to renovate the Bedford station, and have the line going through Bedford, than preserve the countryside of north Bedford

Why is it not more feasible to the people of Bedford to put the station in somewhere like Wixams where people are happy to receive the infrastructure, rather than concentrate everything in the town

I feel the consultation was flawed, not just because I didn't receive any notice of the line that would directly affect me (apparently 2019). But also because I feel the council bulldozed their plans through without wanting to listen to their town. There seems to be other agendas in terms of having the line come through Bedford station so it can be renovated. And no care for Bedford countryside. What will the council do to rectify this and show their support to the people affected.

House prices in the affected areas are going to go down, it will be less desirable to live with a train line directly going past our house. What is the council going to do to protect us?

I still don't understand why a reconsultation on the chosen route can't go ahead. Please don't blame ewr, as the council fully backed route E, which it seems a lot of people do not want. So why is the council and mayor not listening?

How did route E become most desirable and more economically viable when it was the least viable? I've heard the council had a play in this and made the figures look better, is this true? And why?

I've also seen evidence of the council ignoring advice by Kilburn consulting, February 2019, where it recommended a southern route. Why did the council ignore this?

Will the council actually do anything with the information and questions it gathers? Or is this consultation by BBC just to pay lip service to the people of Bedford with no action?

Why is the council and mayor so happy to sell off the countryside which is such an integral part of living in the north of Bedford?

Route E will cause a lot of disruption to schools in Brickhill if works go ahead what will the council do to stop this?

I am so disappointed with the route E decision for north Bedford. It should not go ahead.

I am submitting a question for the meeting regarding the rail extension and it is at the end of this letter but first may I add my voice to the many people who are seriously concerned at the plight of those who are at risk of losing their homes to this venture? Surely nothing is more precious than a home? And I fear that, historically, compulsorily purchased homes leave erstwhile occupants much worse off. PLEASE do not cocoon yourselves with the thought that the greater good is served by the sacrifice of a few. Unless you can reassure us that FULL AND FAIR RECOMPENSE will be made to those people who will be made HOMELESS, you must not continue with these developments. We live in times when politicians are trusted less and less and seen as self-serving and greedy. I beg that you use powers wisely and benevolently. Thank you for reading this. HERE IS MY QUESTION FOR THE MEETING "Can you assure us that any home occupiers, whether owners or tenants, made homeless by these plans, will be FULLY AND FAIRLY recompensed and that budgets for all proposed works which include compulsory purchase and home demolition reflect these costs?"

Hello. I'm an ordinary person, living an ordinary life in a small village called Roxton. As a small village we have little to no voice! I have several concerns relating to EWR, one is the choice of 'route E' but the other, even more pressing is due to 'land locking' our small village because of road / rail infrastructure within a triangle that is less than a mile in length. Cutting off public footpaths and rights of way. I am completely baffled by the decision to choose 'route E'. The initial consultation for the railway highly suggested that 'route E' was the least favoured by EWR due to the significant structural costs involved. It involves viaducts, cuttings and embankments being constructed at considerable financial cost as well as high impact on the environment and surrounding landscape and a number of small villages that have little to no ability to object in number. It has significant impact on residential areas of Bedford. (So how and why was this route suddenly chosen as the favourite?) There seems to of been considerable lobbying and financial incentives offered to EWR to choose this route (it was not their preferred route or preferred area for a new station.) In order to significantly lower the building cost and provide a new train station in Bedford, the current mayor of Bedford has it seems offered the incentive to build the new station and multi-storey car park from local tax payers money. This at a time when they have cut all essential services to the bare minimum. (How can they afford this but cut essential services?) The station is being moved to an area that is gridlocked mornings and evening and sometimes during the working day. It makes no sense from a pollution view point nor a 'busy commuter' point of view. It is an area people try to avoid. It involves demolition of a significant number of houses. There is on the edge of Bedford (the original preferred route A) land and the road structure to support a new train station it doesn't make sense not to utilise this. It has been highly suggested that talks between the 'new incinerator at Stewartby', warehouse / container distribution in the Midlands and the new large extending port at Felixstowe have also been instrumental in lobbying. In all of EWR consultation documents there is little to no suggestion of freight being carried, it focuses purely on passenger use. However, (contrary to current government promises

In the repositioning of both St John's station and Bedford Midland station much of the car parking will be lost either temporarily or even permanently. EWR mention in their technical document that multi story car parks could be build to provide the additional car parking required. Does the council know where the money for these multi-storey car parks will come from? Are they included in the cost of the project or will money from elsewhere need to be found? In addition how will the council propose to alleviate the disruption caused by the lack of car parking for both NHS staff and patients as well as those commuting from Bedford Midland?

There are minutes of a Clapham council meeting ([19.03.19 https://linkprotect.cudasvc.com/url?a=https%3a%2f%2fclapham-pc.gov.uk%2fwp-content%2fuploads%2fsimple-file-list%2fMinutes-2019%2f2&c=E,1,wsXIIA01g4Lt6_Pkbnoj89x415j87VH5AN3bibEyIh2zu37dAD5IjDgSQzMdBkq_d_MkxylwppidtOtj95L96C3komvmV9fqDGaxiuScYtTgmp8j&typo=1019_03_19_minutes.pdf](https://linkprotect.cudasvc.com/url?a=https%3a%2f%2fclapham-pc.gov.uk%2fwp-content%2fuploads%2fsimple-file-list%2fMinutes-2019%2f2&c=E,1,wsXIIA01g4Lt6_Pkbnoj89x415j87VH5AN3bibEyIh2zu37dAD5IjDgSQzMdBkq_d_MkxylwppidtOtj95L96C3komvmV9fqDGaxiuScYtTgmp8j&typo=1019_03_19_minutes.pdf)) where Councillor Walker is recorded as saying 'Walker noted that improvements to Bedford Midland, including a multi storey car park and extended platforms, would be funded by Bedford BC thus reducing the cost of the northern routes' Can you confirm that BBC will be funding this as stated in the minutes?

As the viaduct across the A6 will be such a visible part of the railway is it possible to have an iconic design which will draw people to Bedford to see it and will the people of Bedford have any say in the chosen design or will it be imposed upon us?

Has any environmental impact survey been undertaken by the council to show the effects on air quality and wildlife for both the proposed northern route and the previous southern route? If so, what was the outcome? if not, why not?

Given the already poor air quality in town, particularly around Midland Road, Ashburnham Road and Prebend Street, has the impact on air quality of increased road traffic, a multi-storey car park and diesel trains as a result of route E been formally assessed particularly on low-income households, and also the elderly in St Bede's and other nearby residential care home residents?

Will the council ensure that as a result of further deterioration of air quality as a result of route E that firms or organisations providing air quality consultation or improvement implementations that have links to either the Mayor or his wife (or any of his family) will be allowed to bid for or be granted any work as a result? As there is a clear and direct conflict of interest (hence please forward this email to your head of Internal Audit, and copy me in - who I expect, under their professional standards, will help ensure).

Will there be any investigation as to why Councillor Headly failed to tell Harpur councillors of the potential of a six track solution, or any investigation as to the extent of how Harpur councillors have put their self- interests (by serving on Exec committee and getting additional allowances) ahead of those of their constituents, by failing to even ask how the proposal would affect us.

The investment into Bedford Station(s) is greatly needed and the economic benefits to the area and Oxford-Cambridge Arc in general are huge, it was a mistake to close the line 50 years ago and the quicker EWR get on and compete this project the better! This will mean more jobs/Investment and less traffic on the roads and less pollution. It's very disappointing that a minority few want to delay or try and postpone/cancel a major project that will benefit our children and grandchildren.

I'd like to draw your attention to the major disruption to the life of Bedford and surrounding area residents if the East West Rail (EWR) goes ahead in its current form. In addition to the well published demolition of many homes, the project will impact Bedford in many other ways. In particular Great Ouse Way, Bromham Road, Ford End Road, Paula Radcliffe Way, Clapham Road and several others road which will need to be closed for extended periods of time. The recent Bromham Road Rail Bridge rebuilding took nearly 2 years. It is unlikely that re-widening of the bridge will take any less time as all of the services will still need to be re-routed. In the case of the Great Ouse Way this will need to be closed whilst major earth works take place to raise the height of the roadway. Whilst the exact timing & duration of disruption are unknown, it's unlikely to be less than 12 months. The consultation document also implies that the Clapham Road Roundabout will also need to be raised/modified. As for the Ford End Bridge it is likely that it will need to be demolished & re-built. Again yet more disruption to Bedford.

Another impact of EWR is the loss of 12 car Jowett Sidings at Bedford Station. The direct impact of this will Bedford will lose its 12 car trains to London on Thameslink. East West have provides no alternative solution to the loss Jowett Sidings. If East West goes ahead Thameslink will have no option but start the 12 car trains south of Bedford, and Bedford will lose its regular frequent service to London. The north south service is much more important to Bedford Residents than a slightly quicker journey to the outskirts of Cambridge.

The economic effect of all these road closures and disruption to rail services should not be underestimated, especially in the post covid world where Bedford and its shops are already challenged.

My question concerns the choice of Route E over the southern routes.

Qu. Did anyone from BCC walk or cycle the original route from Bedford out towards Sandy to check the viability of using it once again - as much of it still exists?

I have viewed the Railtrack land available from just south of Ford End Road bridge out to Cardington Road.

A new Bedford South station could be sited just south of Ford End Road bridge, a couple of hundred metres walk from Bedford Midland Road Station. Plenty of space is available to bring passenger trains in and the out of such a station. Freight trains could simply use the existing pathway running east-west and have no need to enter central Bedford. The passenger line could then return via the very original St. John's line, under the London Road bridge, through the gap between the Bus Depot and B&M's garden store and out to Cardington Road. Across the road the original trackbed runs to Willington and beyond.

I realise Cardington Road would require a bridge section, as would the Bedford Bypass, but this route negates the necessity to carve up much new land, obviates the need to buy and demolish houses in Sydney Road and removes the need to re- build Bromham Road and Ford End Road bridges again. It avoids the building of a huge viaduct over the River Ouse and the A6 etc., does away with the cutting into Clapham Hillside and all that involves, is shorter, flatter and is probably a cheaper option.

Route E would still have to cross major and minor roads, the A1, the mainline between Sandy and Peterborough.

I strongly urge the Council to review the consultation and look again at a southern route. It makes sense!

Why do the homes adjacent to Shakespeare Road and on Ashburnham Road need to be demolished for 2 new rails? There are already 4 rails North of Bedford Station. Why can't these be used to the junction where the line would switch East TOWARDS Cambridge?

Why has a new car park been constructed on the old Danfos site to be demolished soon after? The Marston Vale line is to be switch at the St John's Station to go through it instead of the curve round it.

The decision to take the northerly route is totally wrong for the following reasons: 1. A direct line from Oxford via Bletchley to Cambridge goes to the south of Bedford, thereby drastically reducing the financial cost of the line. 2. The parking at Bedford station even with the proposed North Bedfordshire council funded multi storey car park will not be large enough even for the midland Mainline. 3. Now that all the department stores have closed there is no likely hood that people will want to dismount at Bedford Station. 4. No houses will need demolishing if the route stays to the south of the town. 5. It was always intended to put a railway station at Wixams and access to Bedford would be by bus extending the current park and ride route from the south of the town via Ampthill road. 6. If the northerly route goes ahead the bridges over the railway at Ford end road and Bromham road will not need to be enlarged saving more disruption to Bedfordians. 7. Trains do not like going up hill-The southerly route is virtually flat. 8. Disruption to the commuters into Bedford from the north of Bedford will be minimal. 9. The environmental disruption will be significantly less with a southerly route. 10. When one looks at the Bedford Mayors assessment of the financial benefits to Bedford these are negative when one includes the costs of his multi storey car park project. Please reconsider the current plan of a northerly route.

Thank you for the opportunity to input into the consultation on the East West Rail route around Bedford. We do support the need for an east west rail link but have strong reservations on the nature of how the initial consultation was conducted, the limited and in some cases non existent impact studies into pollution and traffic for Bedford that this will cause and the current preferred northern routes. Our primary objections are:

The original consultation was not very public, in fact we only learnt that it had even been conducted earlier this year. Any project that has such an impact on an area should be actively publicised by the relevant authorities

The original consultation did not say freight would come through the town and that it would be diesel. This will impact the town through both noise and smoke pollution.

The longer route would have more gradients and turns so would be more expensive and not a green option in any way at all. This seems contrary to the logic of current thinking regarding the environment but also at a time when government (tax payer) spending is under extreme pressure this seems bizarre

The trains should be electric. Yes this would be more expensive but would be partially off set by using a southern, shorter and flatter route and have the added benefit of longer term reduction in pollution.

Increased traffic to Bedford Station will significantly impact on air quality, adding to the damage caused by the diesel freight trains. Will the passenger trains also be diesel?

Little consideration for road traffic/parking, we understand Bedford Borough Council is funding the development of the Bedford Station site and multi storey parking... but the approach roads are already extremely busy in the morning, even during lockdown. We also hear there is an issue with Ford End Road bridge and it could be closed/removed. Clearly the person who suggested this does not live in Bedford or understands the

<p>Unnecessary impact on home owners - noise, loss of homes. We understand nearly a hundred homes will be lost and a number of people have already been put on notice. This is terrible for them but it is made worse knowing the preferred route makes no sense.</p>
<p>Years of construction inconvenience in an area already impacted by years of inconvenience (western bypass and Bromham Road bridge). We understand Bromham Road Bridge will be worked on yet again (it was closed for a year and a half in 2019/20) and the A6/Clapham Road area has been a bottleneck for sometime whilst work is very slowly completed. Potentially this will finally be resolved only to be impacted by major works to build a viaduct etc. If the route went north how many years would construction take? Projects like this never run on time.</p>
<p>Minimal financial benefit to the town - particularly now if Bedford Borough Council are paying for Bedford Station and Parking. In truth there needs to be transparency on this. The best figure we've seen is £6M and this seems pitiful for a town with over 170,000 residents and this will be eaten up with the work at the station.</p>
<p>Our final reservation, overall is whether there is the same call for the route, in the post lockdown environment there will be less commuting, this will likely lead to higher fares and/or additional freight trains, this needs to be accessed in the light of world changes.</p>
<p>A southern route along side of A421 is a more logical, cost effective and greener solution. There are far fewer homes impacted, there is minimal "countryside" to destroy, the route is flatter and virtually straight. How can this not be the logical route.</p>
<p>Potentially the southern route can be designed with Wixams station in mind - it wouldn't take much effort and would again be more cost effective than trying to develop Bedford station.</p>
<p>Parking could be better managed e.g. move the Bedford park and ride to the site - Bedford residents could drive to the station and change trains from Bedford at Wixams. Much of the land in the Wixams area is former industrial/MOD property so again the environmental impact is minimal. Also being near to the A6 and A421 commuters in the villages south of Bedford would not need to drive into Bedford station.</p>
<p>If northern route goes ahead there needs to be assurance that any loss of habitat is replaced at a ratio of 3:1. New habitat also needs to commence along side the construction, not afterwards, we need established habitat as soon as possible 1. for the benefit of the wildlife being displaced 2. to mitigate as much of the pollution damage that will be caused as quickly as possible and 3. to create sound screening for the residents of north Bedford and the affected villages e.g. Wilden, Ravensden etc.</p>
<p>Local tax payers should not be asked to pay for development of Bedford Station/Multi Storey parking that has a serious risk of being an under used white elephant.</p>

We will be making representations to the consultation being undertaken by East West Rail on behalf of our client Tarmac Trading Ltd. The focus of representations will be in regard to the implications of the proposed route alignments 8 and 9 on the working and delivery of the sand and gravel resources at Roxton and Blunham which are allocated in the adopted Minerals and Waste Local Plan. These route alignments would potentially sterilise part of the allocated area for Roxton and impact on the identified mineral working access route for the combined Roxton and Blunham allocation areas. We do not propose to take up specific time at the consultation event. However, we would maintain that the Council should be questioning the impact that route choices have on mineral resource safeguarding, allocated mineral resources and the implications for sand and gravel provision over the Plan period. Specifically, we would like to know how the route choices will be assessed under the provisions of Mineral Strategic Policies 11 and 12 (extracts below) of the Bedford Borough, Central Bedfordshire and Luton Borough Council Minerals and Waste Local Plan: Strategic Sites and Policies (adopted 2014)?

My question is "**Why did this EWR Plan all change?**" Initially four routes, A, B, C and D. All southerly and utilising brownfield sites, existing currently out of service railway routes and stations, along flat country. All costed as similar, and northern Bedford routes ruled out as expensive, hilly routes with large land purchases and compulsory home removals in town. Suddenly: Everything in the EWR Plan changed. The RSPB at Sandy vs thousands of Residents affected; Come On! EWR - "We cannot guess how much diesel rail freight will use this line" - Well try to make a reasonable stab at this, as it is so environmentally sensitive and important that the Public NEED To KNOW! Destruction of prime arable farmland, countryside and public rights of way, and not one Public crossing, bridge or subway are mentioned anywhere on Route E. Noise, diesel fumes and vibration at all hours, day and night. Peaceful Brickhill turned to ruin all for the sake of a slight proposal of "visitors" to our dead town centre, in the weak hope of it bringing some kind of "Revival", without any regard for the years of destructive construction to come with it in the town and surrounding areas. AND the support of the local Liberal Democrats for their local voters is appalling, remember "No More Bricks in Brickhill", then us getting the cynical Ravensden quota on the extreme edges of Ravensden Parish, nearer Brickhill than Ravensden. After three stages of building Woodlands Park here we got a "Country Park", full of rusty wire fences and collapsing poles, and three football pitches. Wow!. Now we have "Ravensden Park" being built to our North, above the Woodlands Park development, another cynical exploitation of Ravensden's parish boundaries extreme limits, and again nearer Brickhill; so anyone thinking of buying there will be on top of a busy diesel freight route running 24/7. **OOPS!**

I would also like to ask, following all of the surveys and investigations, how Route E suddenly became the best, cheapest, most environmental and beneficial Route for EWR and the Liberal Democrats? Do not blame the Government, they are financial backers of this EWR project, but EWR and Bedford Borough Council are the driving force behind this sudden and unexplained reversal, that kicked out sensible Routes and chose Route E. In summary, people in Brickhill feel cheated by the EWR sudden change of plan, and let down by our Parish and Borough Councillors, there is also a feeling that a lot of this was pushed along behind the cover of Covid 19 and people being more concerned with Living than their future quality of life in Brickhill. The last video meeting I watched pushed all EWR Route E concerns to the end of the meeting, then closed due to lack of time, effectively stopping critical opinions being heard. Democratically this is not fair and not even subtle.

I have lived in Brickhill for 24 years. It is a fabulous area in Bedford. Some of the attractions of living here is the closeness to the countryside. Clapham Woods and the Renhold and Ravensden have the most amazing public footpaths which transport you to a calm and peaceful place. Also the wildlife which is in abundance also. The amount of properties that will be lost because of this route is also ridiculous. I do not think this will attract people to Bedford. There is nothing here. The town is dead. If anything people will leave the area due to the disruption and the road infrastructure cannot cope at the moment the town will become one big traffic jam. It would make far more sense to put the station to the south of the town and use the existing old track to Sandy. I feel Bedford will never be the same again and it is such a shame. So much more could be made of the town perhaps if the rents were lowered slightly more shops would be occupied? I don't think that's rocket science. I hope a complete rethink of Route E is looked into. The town cannot cope with the traffic it has at the moment. Bromham Bridge has already been worked on if they have to do it again what a waste of our hard earned money. The disruption all over again. It is totally ridiculous to my mind.

With all the evidence showing the original consultation was flawed, did not go anywhere near those that will be affected, with replies in such small numbers compared with the potential numbers who could have replied from Cambridge to Oxford, with only around half the number quoted who responded coming from members of the public rather than vested interests and the refusal of EWR to provide information on where the replies to the consultation originated, surely for transparency and legitimacy another consultation exploring all 5 routes should be undertaken, where comparisons for the pro's and con's of each aspect of the routes can be evaluated equally and fairly, rather than choosing a route that has no public support and suppressing other routes that have obvious advantages and fewer disadvantages. I demand a re-consultation and ask why our Mayor and council refuse to agree to it, unless they fear the result of the response of their residents?

What is the Mayor doing to mitigate the effect of the railway running through the up-to-now unspoilt countryside to the north of Bedford? What specific mitigation measures is he going to press EWR for?

I would like to know why residents of Clapham knew nothing about the consultation in 2019, and therefore were unable to respond appropriately. Therefore any results from the consultation are inherently flawed, leading to a flawed 2021 consultation. Is EWR prepared to have a rethink on allowing LOCAL residents to state their case for choice of routes.

1) Will BBC conduct an evaluation and analysis of using tunnels instead of cuttings on Alignments 1 and 9?

BBC have spent significant amount of money getting cost reduction evidence for route E through Bedford for the needs of the many. To mitigate the life changing upset and sacrifices potentially imposed on villages on these favored alignments, will BBC attempt to persuade EWR that tunnels would be better than cuttings, regardless of the chosen route.

A resident of Ravensden has proposed an alternative to Route E. The proposal, still uses Midland Mainline station, but instead of continuing north, it uses an IN/OUT system, whereby the trains come into Bedford via a station at Wixams and then comes out again, following the A421 towards the Black Cat. I know the resident has sent you the proposal, so have you considered adopting this instead of Route E, as your preferred route, especially in light of the recently announced demolition of houses in the Poets area if Route E is pursued?

Have full environmental impact assessments been carried out to establish that route E is the least damaging route for the environment given that we are reaching crisis point in our bid to reduce carbon?

1. I have been told that the financial benefits of Route E are "self evident" and "overwhelming" by Lib Dem Councillors. Please can you provide the documentary evidence of these benefits and the evidence that these are additional benefits that Route E would provide over and above a Southern Route.

2. I don't recall any consultation by BBC on Route E prior to 2019. What evidence do you have that Bedford Borough Council have acted on the wishes of Bedford residents when lobbying so strongly for Route E?

1. What is the projected passenger vs. freight payload over the next 20 years?

2. Where is the evidence that BBC's purports to have, that highlights the benefits of Route E through north Bedford villages? If it exists does it prove the benefits outweigh the negatives for ALL of Bedford residents both during and post construction (cost, pollution, disruption and environmental destruction on a grand scale)?

3. Can BBC guarantee that freight usage will not include transportation of toxic waste or waste destined for the incinerators at Stewartby?

4. EWR originally rejected Route E on affordability grounds (e.g. the huge cost of the proposed viaduct over the Roxton section of route E). Route E become affordable only after the BBC had agreed substantial funding towards this route. Why wasn't there a full public consultation about this?

Do you actively welcome freight through Bedford town centre?
What environmental impacts did / have you asked EWR to consider for their routes?
How many roads will be permanently cut off as a result of the route, and what will you be doing to support residents who are effected?
What level of confidence do you have in the cost models from Kilborn Consulting, and also from EWR?
What impact assessment has been done on the impact to air quality of driving diesel trains through Bedford Midland station, considering air quality in Bedford already breaches the levels per the Air Quality Management Area?
Have there been BBC discussions with Covanta about providing rail freight services to the Stewartby waste facility?
Where will the £6m funding contribution from BBC towards the redesign and development of Bedford Midland Station be coming from?
Will this funding from BBC effectively net off the benefit to the town?
As one of the technically most challenging routes, and with the most gradient changes, Route E is going to be the least environmentally friendly to build (due to greater construction impact) and operate (due to increased track length vs other options, and associated consumption of diesel on gradient change). How will BBC mitigate these impacts for residents?
Has the level of public response against Route E surprised you?
When the EWR Technical Report states that “a new station south of Bedford would generate slightly greater increases in jobs and productivity than routes serving Bedford Midland due to faster journey times”, what other considerations made you choose to lobby for passenger and freight services through Bedford?

1. How can the change in expenditure on the alignments be explained between the change in route choices?
2. How can the already congested town centre roads and station parking cope with the increased demand brought by the new railway?
3. How then can development plans for Bedford that are not practical, due to space and congestion, be used to justify the destruction of rural areas for both residents and wildlife?

1. Did the full Council authorise the decision to pay £75,000 of tax-paper's money to an independent company to produce a report to value engineer Route E to show that it would be affordable and should be supported? What powers entitled the Council to spend this money?

2. Why was the Council's decision to support Route E not fully consulted on, or even conveyed to those people affected and why was it not openly debated by the Council until apparently months after the response had been submitted? Surely a matter of this magnitude, with all its implications, should have been conveyed to all those people affected and their views considered by the full Council before their submission was made.

3. During a period when they are constantly having to make extensive cuts, where do the Council propose to find the money to re-build Midland Road Station and a new multi-storey car-park? Will it mean that there will have to be further cuts to services?

The council has hired consultants and briefed them to find ways of reducing the chances of some demolitions. Can the council please brief its consultants to find ways to avoid ALL demolitions of homes in the Borough? Can the council please also brief the consultants to find ways of maximising the chances of there being a fast-line platform at Bedford's main station which would both help reduce the chance of demolitions and improve the chances of trains from Leicester to London calling at Bedford?

First I wish you to note we are against route E. We do not feel that as a Council you properly informed the residents of Bedford as we don't all get emails from the Mayor or local papers.

Not enough information has been provided, that is demonstrated by you being unable to answer residents questions on some of the fundamental issues.

That the Council and parish councils have had to have all these emergency meetings with yourselves and also the residents, highlights as to how flawed the lack of consultation has been in the past. These meetings should have taken place a long time ago, to gain feedback of the Bedford residents. How it has been done shows a clear disregard to serving the residents of Bedford. That it has been flawed to 2019 consultation, information for 2021 is further flawed.

You now try to state decision made by EWR, however this has been done based on the recommendations from the Councils, a letter to which you signed.

Looking at previous documentation that has been highlighted on Social Media and the EWR web page, the Southern routes were a lot cheaper and less impact on the environment. We can not understand how now Route E becomes comparable in costs. This route is to a flood plain and steep gradients, which impacts on costs rather than a flatter southern route, along with being less environmentally friendly. There is no transparency in the costs.

I would like to fully understand your justification for Route E?

You list a figure of it bringing £6m a year to the town, how?

Running the train line through Bedford Midland, other than Manton Lane Ind Est, is away from the other industrial estates, especially with more industrial development in Kempston & Wixams, thus we can't see it being about bringing businesses to the town,

That a new station and car park is to be built, what is the costs? The Council have stated that this is being paid by the residents of Bedford, which is not acceptable and should be paid by EWR. What are you doing to ensure that happens? If paid by residents for years this will impact to the revenue you states it will bring to the town and also impacts to the true costs for Route E.

The drive from the pandemic is for people to work from home, which is less reason for the need of public transport to outside towns.

If it is about trying to serve a big future development at Twinwoods, then why are you not pushing to take the line further to that development? Cllr Roydon indicated this in a public meeting and would put that as a proposal to EWR, is that something the Council will push for or is that another thing said without conviction and weight? . Is your plan to look at having a parkway station by Twinwoods in the future?

EWR meeting and brochure states that the route alignment 9 is the emerging preference. What are the Council doing in pushing for a more Northern route? Cllr Roydon stated that the Council will push for that, is this true? Will you be joining forces with the northern parishes to ensure this happens?

Open Country side has a bigger impact on noise travelling, so what will be done to ensure it is reduced? The Cllr for Castle Ward stating that he lives close to Bedford Midland is not impacted to noise, is not an acceptable comment when the buildings reduce the sound. I hear your solution is in planting trees and possibly being done before the route is in place. Who picks up that costs? When would you look for that to be done?

You recently stated that you are now to push for the line to be electrified. This should have been done in early consultations as if not, that has to become a deciding factor to the chosen route.
Being electrified whilst reducing the noise then has an impact to the view on open countryside green belt.

For the route out of Bedford, impact many public pathways. What investigation has been done by yourselves regarding that?

Why are you against a Parkway station to the south? Other towns have shown to be a success. I don't see the argument against it due to travelling as they would have to travel to Bedford Midland, which is already a heavily congested area.

That is was agreed to a Wixams train station, why can that not be a parkway station to a Southern route? If development starts within the timeframe there is no reason to then not have the station.

The massive viaduct by Clapham will be an eyesore. Also, on an EWR web meeting they indicated a viaduct will be required by Graze Hill, how true is that?

As a Council, you were unable to answer the questions around the congestion to the road network around Bedford Midland or near Clapham. This has to be paramount in being a deciding factor. The impact of works when Bromham bridge closed, the road works to Manton Lane, has been a nightmare and still is, around the badly designed roundabout by Brewpoint. What investigations are taking place to road congestion to Route E vs a southern route?

How many tracks will there then be through the green belt and what width will the cutting have to be?

If EWR are adamant for a 6 track around Bedford station, will you reconsider an alternative route, to avoid less impact on peoples homes? There are documents dating back to 2018 from network rail stating the impact on homes for 6 tracks that you must have been aware of.

In regards to Freight, neither EWR or BCC can properly address this. It is clear from EWR freight is part of the proposal. How as a Council could you look to have this going through the town, with increased waste from Stewartby? A Southern route would be better for all.

The Council paid out £75k for their own investigation, however the focus was more to Route E and not full investigations to a Southern route, so in itself that report is flawed.

Cambridge, Council are still in discussions to the route around them, we think Bedford should also be pushing the same. This is something St Neots wish to address for further talks before decisions can be reached due to the massive viaduct. There are a lot of unanswered questions before a major decision like this can be made. How could a decision on Route E be made, without these questions being answered.? Why as a Council have you not pushed for better maps rather than a faded white band? The consultations are flawed and misleading and therefore we ask the Council to listen to the concerns of the town and state more answers are needed prior to agreeing to the proposals and readdress to which route is in the best interest for Bedford.

Background. In the 2019 Consultation EWRC have been unable to say how many responses came from the Bedford Borough and have published maps showing returns in the 2019 Consultation from areas across the whole of UK. Residents in Cambridgeshire and Huntingdon seeking new stations serving St Neots and Cambourne may have favoured Option E, but this should not be seen as supporting a particular alignment through Bedford Borough.

This grouping of all the results together in this way distorted the data and allowed EWRC (and the Bedford Mayor) to claim that a preference was declared for a route through Bedford Town centre and across north Bedfordshire. Clearly, the recent upsurge in public protest around Bedford indicates this is not so.

Question. Can the Mayor use his good offices to demand that in the current (2021) round of EWRC consultation all responses include information indicating the first 4 characters of the responders Post Code, to give local identity to data without infringing privacy requirements?

How specifically will the line passing through the centre of Bedford bring economic benefits and renew the town centre as opposed to a line running to the south of Bedford. We have been told that it will but not how it is expected to happen - specifics not generalities please. Why do previous reports state that a line through the centre of Bedford would only bring £6,000,000 of additional economic benefit?

Consultation Period extension

There is so much data and information and knowledge, from many different communication channels. To evaluate and assimilate, and give a coherent response, is very challenging within the consultation period. The consultation period seems very short and is being terminated before we are allowed to have physical meeting this also seems to be an unfair decision. You can communicate a point of view fully when in the same room with the person with whom you are communicating. It is far too structured and controlled in a virtual environment and does not allow for the spontaneity that is required for a full debate of a subject.

Q: Will Bedford Borough Council (BBC) ask for the consultation period to be extended?

- Councillor Headley has confirmed he was aware of a 6 track requirement to exit Midland Road Station to the north of Bedford before the 2019 Route Consultation. There is a Network Rail report of October 2018 that details the requirement to demolish houses to enable an additional 2 tracks.

Q: Why did Bedford Borough Council not make Bedford Borough residents/voting electorate aware of this requirement, before or during the 2019 Consultation?

Q: Will BBC stop supporting Route E now that EWR Co have confirmed the requirement for the devastation of 100+ properties, including demolition and removal of gardens because of the expansion of Midland Road station and the new requirement for 6 tracks when existing Midland Road station ?

Pre Consultant facts about cost of the routes for consideration in 2019 Consultation have been changed after the consultation which appear to have significantly influenced the decision. There has been no clear explanation to why the costs changed. Q: Why did Bedford Borough Council employ Kilborn Consulting to do further technical analysis to supplement BBCs initial findings that "Option E is not only desirable on an economic and connectivity case, but is also technically deliverable at significantly reduced cost from that put forward in EWR Company's consultation." ?

- A southern route option, using some of the Old Varsity Line, which was recommended by Kilborn Consulting, was not given to EWR Co as an option for consideration, by Bedford Borough Council. Report Reference: 1661-TR002, Revision: 0-3 DRAFT, Date: 12/02/2019, Compiled by: J.Sindall

Q: Why did BBC not submit the this route as an option to EWR Co for the 2019 Consultation ?

- The use of freight was omitted from the consultation paperwork. There are several reports from England's Economic Heartland Strategic Transport Forum, Network Rail, Rail Freight Group, EWR Co, that has outlined the use of freight on the EWR line. E.g. A presentation from EWR Co in December 2020 indicates that Route E will carry freight between Felixstowe and Southampton (with the UK's biggest freight hub planned for Bicester). Network Rail's freight report of 2017 states that the demand for freight is forecast to increase by 3% per annum to 2042. This would mean a 35% increase in demand by the time the EWR line goes live in 2030.

Q: Is BBC aware of the increased freight traffic that is proposed for the EWR line?

Q: What is the benefit for significantly increased freight traffic coming through the centre of Bedford and through rural Bedfordshire countryside?

Q: Does BBC agree that it would be more beneficial that additional freight traffic, i.e. freight traveling solely East to West/West to East on the EWR line, did not travel through the town?

Q: Has BBC completed an environmental study of the impact additional freight traffic would have on the town and countryside, especially as it is very likely to be using diesel powered trains?

Q: Would not a better solution be to have the, solely East to West/West to East, freight traffic traveling along an existing traffic corridor around Bedford, i.e. the A421?

- In light of all the new information that is emerging that has significantly changed the scoring of Route E against EWR Co's route selection criteria.

Q: Would BBC consider another route option that encompasses the following points:?

- o Avoids devastation of rural communities & heritage
- o Avoids disruption & demolition of 100+ properties in Bedford
- o Ensures EWR access to Bedford Midland as terminus & interchange
- o Supports planned houses & jobs growth
- o The best approach for low carbon, sustainable Bedford with least damage to the environment
- o Potentially the fastest, low cost, low risk, solution.

The lack of community awareness regarding the biggest capital investment project we will see in our lifetime I feel is an indication that the efforts to communicate have been insufficient and the impacts have not been adequately explained. I feel this is a failure of process.

This is the biggest investment in this area for decades and the majority of people, including myself, were unaware of the action BBC was taking to promote Route E to EWR Co.

Q: Does BBC think they have engaged sufficiently, in a transparent and open manner, with the Bedford Borough residents/voting electorate, ensuring they were fully informed, prior to the selection of Route E as a preferred route?

Background. The Bedford Borough Council's own analysis of the financial benefit to the Borough admitted that the financial benefit of EWR in terms of GVA uplift was less than 1.5% (being £57m in an annual GVA of £4000m). No corresponding assessment has been made public on the cost to the Borough's taxpayers resulting from the devastation of communities in urban Bedford and across north Bedfordshire. This will not only be the loss of amenity and losses due to reduced house prices, but will include the collateral cost falling outside the EWR budget in terms of supporting infrastructure, road congestion, pollution, and any expenditure to fully realise benefits claimed for EWR (such as providing effective 'first-mile-last-mile' travel arrangements)

Question. What is the true financial benefit to Bedford from EWR taking into full account the impact of engineering work and loss of amenity? Will the Mayor be transparent with the financial case available to the BBC and press EWRC for a full, accurate, and up-to-date statement covering build and operating costs for Option E and any reasonable alternative, together with information on those items that will fall on Bedford Borough taxpayers?

Removal of Support for Route E

I would like the council to remove their support for Route E. I believe that the initial consultation was flawed. I live very very near the route in Clapham and did not receive any consultation documents or postcards regarding this and only heard about it after route E was chosen and so could not have my say. I do not believe that the council decision to back route E is representative of the views of the people of Bedford. I have not met a single person in Bedford that supports Route E. Everybody had been led to believe that Wixams would be where this line came in and out of and as such represents a much better route option.

Route E will only further congest our town centre that cannot cope with traffic at rush hour already. It will most definitely make any commute from Clapham across to the other side of town worse (when I commuted it was already 40 mins to go 4 miles) as so much extra East West commuting traffic heads to the main station.

The route cuts through a very narrow corridor of green land that is used extensively by not only residents of Clapham and Brickhill areas but people from all over Bedford. Green spaces within our town borders are so important for the well being of the residents and to provide places for recreation and walking. The areas are home to all sorts of wildlife and birds, (bats, owls, woodpeckers to name just a few).

The viaduct the is being proposed to cross the river, the floodplain, the A6 and the road in Clapham will totally spoil the rural sense of the village and the cost in time, money and environmental effect of such a project surely out weight the benefits - when a route via the south would not require such engineering feats.

I totally reject the council suggestion that the route needs to come into the town

Route E Consultation

These are my comments on the different things being proposed now Route E (is currently) the chosen option.

Deep cuttings and huge viaducts are going to completely destroy the rural setting of Clapham and the green recreational areas as outlined above. We cannot let this happen.

Why are there no other options for this section of the line - why can't it go further north and then cut across at twinwoods so that it does not destroy this lovely stretch of green land between Bedford and Clapham. Other parts of the route have options but for this part through Clapham no other options are given! This railway is a direct violation of all that the Clapham Parish Council put into their Clapham plan.....it destroys the nature and character of the village in so many ways.

We cannot allow any possibility of freight on this line. Will you ensure this?

The only way to retain any sense of the countryside and character of Clapham would be for there to be tunnelling rather than a viaduct and deep cuttings This should be looked into and taken into account. If it is more expensive or not possible then this is more evidence that route E is not a sensible option.

Disruption to Clapham will be huge from construction ...how can this be mitigated? As it is we struggle to leave our village in the mornings because of traffic - it can take up to 20mins or more currently, The levels of disruption to build these kind of engineering feats to cross the rivers and roads with viaducts will be unacceptable to the residents of Clapham.

The Kilborn report issued in February 2019 states: “Bedford Midland Options....come at the cost of increased construction costs, increased disruption, longer journey times and increased operational costs, as well as increased congestion and other highway costs.”

“In short neither Route D or E [the northern routes] have much to recommend them to EWR... However there is an alternate approach that should be explored with EWR....”

It goes on to recommend an alternate option which they surveyed and identifies that there were “no insurmountable physical obstructions...” It follows the old Varsity line. They identified some specific features that would require design solutions “none of which seems to be insurmountable”

It goes on to say: “The route is almost straight from Bedford to Sandy and on to Cambridge, minimising distance, route costs, and journey time while maximising value of time benefits.”

1a. What did BBC do about suggesting this alternative to EWR?

1b. What feasibility study was done?

1c. Why didn't BBC pay Kilborn to “Value optimise” this route or the Southern Routes as well as Routes D&E?

1d. Why weren't these reports made public before an FOI request?

1e. How much money has BBC spent with Kilborn and other consultants for the purposes of responding to EWR consultation since 2018? Who were the other consultants?

The Kilborn Report of March 2019 states “Bedford South options are “more direct, less complex” and that Route E has “significant interface complexity with the local highway network” BBC then paid Kilborn to cost engineer Route E.

BBC would welcome the opportunity to continue to work with EWRCo to reduce the costs and risks of Route E in order to build a stronger financial and business case and lead to the development of a scheme that can win wide political support...”

2a. Why did BBC select Route E for special treatment with public money and not the other Route Options?

2b. Given this is a “once in a generation investment” Would it not have been fair to all residents of Bedford Borough to adopt an even handed approach, rather than push the political agenda? Why wasn't an even handed approach adopted?

2c. Why was this not debated at full council in 2019 for a decision?

Given that this report advocates EWR making concessions with regard to gradient north of Bedford and the implications that has with the lower accommodation of freight on the network:

2d. How does this reconcile with BBC's Climate Emergency and the reduction in getting freight traffic off our roads? (declared the same month – March 2019)?

EWR continue to evade questions about cost transparency and persist in the fallacy that they are “constantly back-checking” their calculations.

- EWR have not provided the information that shows how the relative route option calculations changed from 2019 to 2020. Route E went from being the most expensive to the second cheapest with the other 4 routes being inflated by 50%-80% with no plausible explanation. *Note Route D also inflated and this would have benefitted from the BBC value engineering – so the reason cannot be solely that.

- EWR have not provided all the cost information for the 2021 consultation – the cost information for the Bedford section is not included. Therefore it is impossible to verify their cost calculations on a like for like basis.

3a. Costs are evidently already increasing for the chosen route E – When will BBC pressure EWR to be completely transparent about costs so ALL your residents can be reassured that costs are being back-checked?

3b. Just because EWR has reached the conclusion the Mayor wanted, does not mean that the process that EWR went through should not be challenged by BBC. Why Are the Lib Dem members of BBC propagating the EWR marketing spiel, rather than representing the very reasonable concerns of the residents?

3c. Why is the BBC not supporting the Northern parishes in demanding from EWR transparency on the 2019 consultation and the addresses that were not informed? EWR now state that there are 268,000 addresses within 2km of Route E – but they only sent out 120,000 postcards in 2019? Why are BBC not supporting the legitimate concerns of residents over the flawed process?

Network Rail put forward the six track option in October 2018. EastWest Rail had visibility of this in February 2019. In the recent Parish Council meetings Cllr Headley admitted to first knowing of this in August 2019.

4a. What was the precise date that anyone at Bedford Borough Council, (employee, elected representative or consultant – even if they have since left BBC) first know of the six track option?

4b. Why was this not mentioned to the impacted residents at the time that this information first came to light, thereby giving them the opportunity to raise a challenge? (Bear in mind if they wanted to raise a Judicial Review, there is a time limit) - An unacceptable response would be: “It was only a rumour, or a possibility and we didn’t want to raise any undue concerns.” The whole rail project was only a possibility in 2019 – it didn’t stop BBC spending public money on a response.

4c. What other “possible” projects with negative consequences are BBC NOT sharing with the residents because Councillors deem it not in the best interests of the individuals? Should others be preparing to defend their homes against unknown threats that BBC currently think are “just a rumour”?

Reasons given for rejecting the old varsity line include:

- It has properties built on it - So does Route E
- It runs along side a country park - So does Route E
- It runs near scheduled monuments - So does Route E

It is shorter, flatter, straighter, more environmentally friendly and the vast, vast majority of the economic benefits to Bedford available.

5a. Why was no feasibility study or effort to challenge EWR to use this established transport corridors of the OVL and the A421 transport development corridor made?

BBC repeatedly crow about "self-evident" economic benefit.

6a. It isn't self-evident – please provide the evidence

Cllr Headley repeatedly crows about £6.23m incremental GVA economic benefit to the town, and that this is 12% more than with Southern routes (which means 88% is available with the Southern Routes).

6b. Please put this into context by telling us the total GVA for Bedford Borough and therefore the proportion increase of total GVA this represents.

6c. In the calculation of this increase – how much has been calculated to go into the local businesses as opposed to corporates?

6d. This calculation was made in March 2019. BBC say they had no knowledge of the six track option until August 2019. Therefore the incremental disruption cannot have been taken into account. What is the impact on the outcome of this calculation of the following disruption:

- The homes that would be demolished
- The road closures for road remodelling
- The bridge closures for bridge widening etc.

6e. What was included in this calculation for the negative economic impacts of increased traffic, congestion, disruption during the years of construction and town remodelling, air quality issues, poor air quality associated health issues etc. etc. etc?

Background The devastation of rural communities was not accounted for in either the BBC 2019 consultation response to EWRC supporting Option E, nor in the EWRC technical case for this as the preferred option. Furthermore, the demolition of about 100 urban properties has been overlooked; the impact on air quality and the environment in general was dismissed; and the certainty of highly disruptive freight train operations was not admitted. Recent revelations and petitioning by professional bodies such as CPRE have failed to provide increased priority to these key issues that impact on residents' health and general wellbeing.

Question Why has BBC failed to undertake and make public studies on the total environmental impact of EWR and in particular of their recommended Option E through the town centre and through highly valued rural Borough landscapes? Has BBC any data on pollution during construction and operation of EWR and the possible impact on Bedford's AQMA, and will it petition EWRC to provide such information, including the added impact of freight operations?

Will Bedford Borough Council commit to ensuring that the East-West Rail is fully electric from the beginning, rather than having an initial period of operation using diesel locomotives, in order to meet both current and future sustainability commitments, including a zero carbon emission?

Will Bedford Borough Council commit to developing a North-South AND East-West station south of the river to meet the expectations of those who bought houses in the Wixams development who were expecting this?

Will Bedford Borough Council commit to minimising the destruction of farmland and natural habitat in its decision making, better serving the wishes of the rural communities it represents?

Will Bedford Borough Council commit to avoiding the (apparently considerable) destruction of housing in the Poet's Area of Bedford?

Will Bedford Borough Council commit to ensuring that the East-West Rail follows existing transport corridors (as encouraged by East-West Rail themselves) rather than creating new ones?

Dear Mr Mayor and Councillors,

I am a resident of Wilden. My husband and several generations of his family have lived on Chequers Hill. We are utterly dismayed to learn that Alignments 1,2 and 6 of the East West Railway line will run through Wilden village and cut straight across Chequers Hill. Every home and many acres of productive farmland will be affected by this Alignment. In fact the whole parish of Wilden will be totally ruined.

In the forty four years that I have lived here, there has been a persistent refusal by planners to allow any new development in the village. The prominent reason for this has always been that, the CHARACTER of the village should be preserved. Whilst this has been a valid reason, it has resulted in young people, including my four children, being driven away from the place they grew up. Amenities such the pub, church and school have all struggled to survive.

Now, this beautiful traditional village, is about to be damaged for the present and future generations. Not to mention the vast cost and disruption of construction, villagers will have to endure the noise, dirt and damage to their way of life, as numerous passenger and freight trains thunder through their lives if, Alignments 1,2 and 6 rather than Alignments 8 and 9 are chosen.

There is evidence that there will be greater cost, loss of farmland and devastating visual impact with Alignments 1,2 and 6 than with Alignments 8 and 9. There will also be more homes demolished outside Bedford.

I would like to know how you can possibly consider the destruction of the character of this village, which planning committees have steadfastly insisted should be preserved as an example of a historic linear village, evidenced by refusal of any new

QUESTION: on the proposed line drawings/plans, it shows that 2 nos roads will be shut off by the route of the line 1) spenser road/chaucer road and 2) Sidney road/Milton road .

Is this going to be a permanent shut off or will there be a connection to get round.

This going to cause endless misery to people having to do u-turns in roads plus increased danger to pedestrians with increasing u-turns.

How is the scheme if it goes ahead ,going to compensate people for sound disturbance as the tracks move closer to their homes.

Are they going to pay for triple glazing.

What is the qualifying criteria .

I just have to join the thousands of others voicing our dismay and horror at the idea of a rail route north of the town.

The council and the Mayor seem to have absolutely no idea of the destruction and ruination of the best bit of rolling landscape not to mention the wildlife. Years and years of unbelievable disruption and noise in an area that is gridlocked with traffic at the present time.

I moved to Brickhill from London 50 years ago and at that time it was deemed "The best part of Bedford to live," we were about a minutes walk from beautiful peaceful countryside. I now live in Clapham and the same can be said. Carrige Drive and Hawk drive have remained unspoilt for over 50 years and MUST BE SPARED from being ruined by a train line much better suited to the flatter route south of the town!!!!

Do you actively welcome freight through Bedford town centre?

What environmental impacts did / have you asked EWR to consider for their routes?

How many roads will be permanently cut off as a result of the route, and what will you be doing to support residents who are effected?

What level of confidence do you have in the cost models from Kilborn Consulting, and also from EWR?

What impact assessment has been done on the impact to air quality of driving diesel trains through Bedford Midland station, considering air quality in Bedford already breaches the levels per the Air Quality Management Area?

Have there been BBC discussions with Covanta about providing rail freight services to the Stewartby waste facility?

Where will the £6m funding contribution from BBC towards the redesign and development of Bedford Midland Station be coming from? Will this funding from BBC effectively net off the benefit to the town?

As one of the technically most challenging routes, and with the most gradient changes, Route E is going to be the least environmentally friendly to build (due to greater construction impact) and operate (due to increased track length vs other options, and associated consumption of diesel on gradient change). How will BBC mitigate these impacts for residents?

Has the level of public response against Route E surprised you?

When the EWR Technical Report states that “a new station south of Bedford would generate slightly greater increases in jobs and productivity than routes serving Bedford Midland due to faster journey times”, what other considerations made you choose to lobby for passenger and freight services through Bedford?

1. Why did Bedford Borough Council ignore recommendations from the Kilburn report, Cranfield University and CPRE to name just a few organizations for a straighter, more cost effective build (without distorting real costs) and environmentally friendly southern route unlike their biased 2019 consultation preference for a northern route?

2. Why are Bedford Borough intent on damaging the health of local people by insisting on bringing the EWR route through the centre of Bedford because of the increase in pollution, traffic congestion and the total lack of present and planned road infrastructure?

3. Why is Bedford Borough intent on destroying the North Bedfordshire countryside, ancient woodlands, landmarks and villages when a less environmentally damaging southern A421 corridor route is available and has already been shown to be straighter, cheaper (without distorting real costs) and more environmentally friendly?

4. Why is Bedford Borough Council not working with EWR to revisit the 2019 consultation as it is perfectly clear that it was seriously flawed due to lack of correct information, poor public notification, undeclared facts and biased instructions from Bedford Borough Council to their consultants?

5. How could the general public be expected to come to an informed decision with the lack of proper and up-to-date information, poor quality maps and staff at the time unable to adequate answers at the time of the 2019 consultations? Bedford Borough Council appears not to have all the relevant information at the time of the consultation when they made their decision.

6. Why was Bedford Borough Council not aware that routing the EWR line through Bedford would result in the demolition of in at least 60 homes in the Poet’s area? Were they not informed during the 2019 consultation that an extra two tracks would be required and that again Bromham Road Bridge would need to be widened? If they were not aware and this has only just come to light then this proves that the original consultation was deeply flawed.

7. Why was Bedford Borough Council not aware of the intended 24 hours use by freight trains? Were they not consulted or not informed during the 2019 consultations. If they were not aware and this has only just come to light then this again proves that the original consultation was deeply flawed.

8. Why is Bedford Council apparently not concerned about EWR freight negotiations with Felixstowe or possible contracts with East Anglian counties for the transport of waste to the Covanta Incinerator at Marston Vale?

9. Why does Bedford Borough insist that the northern route would benefit future house building under their local plan for the northern fringes when there are no stations planned for that area and all footfall and traffic will have to come into an already congested Bedford and Midland Road area?

10. Why is it assumed by Bedford Borough Council that a Parkway hub will not serve the needs of Wixam’s residents?

11. Why is it assumed by Bedford Borough Council that a southern A421 corridor route will infringe on the RSPB at Sandy and Whimpole Hall?

<p>12. Why is it assumed by Bedford Borough Council that the route will be electrified? EWR have stated that the route will not be electrified in the first instance.</p>
<p>13. Why was Bedford Borough Council happy with choosing a route that would require viaducts, deep cuttings and embankments in prime countryside which would not only destroy the northern landscape but would impose much higher safety risks, rather than having a leveller route that the A421 corridor would provide? It would also require greater engineering feats.</p>
<p>14. Why are Bedford Borough Council only discussing the northern routes at local meetings when Cambridge are still discussing both northern and southern approaches?</p>
<p>Which route alignment are you supporting?</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you conducted a review of the proposed benefits of the EWR plans, post COVID, given the changes that are almost certainly to happen, whereby many workers will not commute 5 days a week, to a city centre office? Has this been factored in and how it effects the proposals - the line we are advised is predominately passenger.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As per your plans (consultation doc - page 43), please confirm the trains will be electric or more advanced technology - i am very nervous there are plans for diesel, which will affect the environment and undoubtedly be noisier. We shall be living a few 100m's from the line ... whilst now we live in a rural area, with only the sound of wildlife around us
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I still have no clear picture as to how Route E began as the most expensive route in 2019 consultation and is now just about the cheapest and preferred. Just provide a clear breakdown as to costs in 2019 v 2021 and how they changed for all routes. Why wouldn't one wish to share? I do think this is why many local residents and I (from the clapham area), didn't think it would be chosen and thus spent little time on the plans and added little objection in 2019.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A 900m bridge will be a huge concrete construction blighting the landscape as you enter Clapham - no one has yet shown any drawings as to how this will look. It really feels terrifying thinking about such a structure takes over the landscape. Can it really come down the farmers fields, cross clapham rd, over the river, over Paula Radcliffe Way and under The Great Ouse Way to link with the track?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Sainsbury's roundabout near Aldi and going into Clapham. Just now at rush hour the traffic backs up was beyond Towers but when construction starts - it feels as though Clapham won't be an attractive place to live. Route Clapham residents to Paula Radcliffe Way and into Bedford .. thats just as bad. What is your solution?
<p>Why are you only consulting residents now? Is it because of the possible demolition of houses that has been announced by EWR?</p>
<p>What were the reasons for not consulting residents about the original 5 proposed routes in 2019 before sending the official Borough Council response where it was stated that you preferred route E over all other route options?</p>

Background BBC has given vigorous support to Option E to in order attract jobs and investment into Bedford and to create a nationally recognised transport hub centred on Bedford Midland Station. The financial benefit to Bedford has been shown to be modest with GVA uplift of less than 1.5% and recent studies have demonstrated alternative route options to serve Bedford Town Centre are viable without devastating urban and rural countryside within the Borough.

The key new characteristic is a junction which allows access by EWR to Bedford Midland Station and the option of services calling at a new Bedford South station servicing residential and business developments in the region of the A412 'southern bypass'. The design would avoid demolition of 100+ houses and the devastation of rural communities in north Bedfordshire. Initial analysis shows these alternative route options to be viable, and potentially offer the fastest, lowest cost, low risk solutions meeting the complete range of stakeholder interests.

A summary of the option is attached as a single-page pdf file.

Question. Having established key objectives for EWR serving Bedford, will the Borough Council consider alternatives to Option E that meet all of these conditions and potentially offer advantages without the significant problems and public concern that is emerging with Option E? Specifically, will BBC support investigation of these new options by EWRC as is proposed in the attached summary paper?

Why are BBC only now having more detailed consultation arrangements and have not beforehand when the 5 route options were being consulted upon?

Why does EWR have to go through Bedford, why can it not come into Bedford and then return via St Johns on the Varsity line? Also, how did costs increase 'overnight'? Surely it would make sense to include Wixams stations with the EWR station south of Bedford

Can you please explain why the parishioners of Roxton should welcome a 12m high concrete viaduct and embankment that will landlock the village and close off the footpaths and bridleways around the village?

We believe that EWR are using Bedford to its detriment and this has not been realised yet by the Borough Council. We are concerned that given the disturbing developments since the original Routes were mooted, the people and the councillors of Bedford are being duped and the process will have gone too far before it is realised. Also the world and its requirements have changed significantly since the EWR first began the process and it very much appears that as information comes to light, Bedford and its representatives will be shown up as having sold the town down the river. Can you please listen to your people and stop this now, before it is too late?

Is there really any point in having these consultations? Mayor Dave, can you put your hand on your heart and tell us that there is a chance you might change your and the BBC's collective mind on the Route choice? We hear that councillors are now changing their minds, as information has become available on the realities of the impact and lack of benefit to the town. Will you do the same?

We are not hearing any reasons why people would want to begin travelling into Bedford if there were to be a town centre station connection East to West. At best, those being asked on TV or radio are saying that it might be useful for them to get to or from Cambridge or Milton Keynes. No mention of anyone heading for Bedford as a destination making Bedford no better off than it was before and significantly and permanently harmed. I cannot accept the "Master Plan" as a sensible response. It is possible to invest in the town centre and run down areas and also build more homes/create more jobs without destroying huge areas of Bedford and permanently harming the lives of thousands of others.

We have seen and heard only high level and vague claims of investment, jobs, improved traffic and homes but there is a complete absence of supporting evidence. This is particularly unpalatable given the significant changes brought about by the pandemic as commuting, office locations and workplace use has been changed forever. Where is the evidence of the alleged benefits for the people of Bedford and surrounds? Is this not just a vanity project? Who are the companies who will be relocating to the new Bedford?

Why will having an interchange between the East West and Midland Mainline encourage people to stay in Bedford? Surely it will encourage people to use it as a transfer hub only? I don't feel this has been thought through at all from a local perspective and it is instead another example of how Bedford is being destructively used for the purposes of others in other counties.

If a station and link East to West is truly believed to be necessary infrastructure to support the town and more homes, then placing a station at Wixams would surely tick all the boxes and leave the town unblemished but still ready for development in a sympathetic and non-harmful way.

Please explain why the Bedford Borough Council chose to ignore the advice given by the publicly funded independent reports into the suitability of the different routes? Route E was considered the least favourable on many counts, not least cost, yet after questionable intervention by members of the Bedford Borough council (directly, or by association with the EWR Consortium) AFTER the first, unlawfully short consultation closed, it unfathomably became the preferred route. This is not fair, logical nor transparent and we deserve better from our elected representatives.

May I ask Mayor Dave where he has his home? I ask, in the context of the route choices.

EWR chose Route E. Why did they not use the original Varsity Line route? We accept that no route is without impact, however, according to the BBC's original consultant report, this was a viable option. Please do not insult our intelligence by claiming that the decision was EWR's as we know that it was made following significant input from Mayor Dave and others via both the Borough Council and the EWR Consortium.

Given the depth of feeling and tsunami of negative reactions and distress from so many of the people you supposedly represent now that the situation can no longer be hidden, we ask you to urgently press EWR (directly and via the consortium) to hold a fair, transparent rerun of the consultation. This time, make sure it runs the correct, lawful length of a consultation; make sure it is fully communicated to EVERYONE potentially impacted; make sure all information is made available in a clear format and not in confusing and incomplete maps, diagrams so people can see just how it impacts where they live or travel when asked to express an opinion; make sure the costings are fully and independently assessed and made public.

In summary, we believe that the Mayor and the Bedford Borough Council should give the following feedback to EWR as a matter of urgency:

- Rerun the original consultation process, including the much more viable southern options.
- Do so transparently, fairly and using communication methods that do not discriminate against those unfamiliar with online technology.
- Use consultation forms that are clear, unambiguous and are easy to understand and complete.

IF consultation is not rerun and the BBC fail to stop the atrocity:

Minimise harm and damage to properties and lives by sympathetically routing the railway as far as possible from dwellings and livelihoods

Select alignment 1 and not alignments 8 or 9

Why did the Borough Council give its support to Route E in March 2019 when no detailed Environmental Impact Assessment of the choice of Route E, and how Route E compares to Route B or other routes, had been undertaken or reported regarding environmental impacts of the routes in Bedford Borough?

It is clear and obvious to anyone familiar with the locations impacted by EWR in Bedford, that Route E runs across an area of open countryside and rural villages, whereas Route B is located within an existing transport corridor (the A421) which is already developed for commercial activity.

There can surely be no doubt at all that the environmental harms that would result from Route E very substantially outweigh any negative environmental impacts associated with Route B.

<p>Did the Borough Council support Route E because it shares EWR Cos view that the key project objectives of EWR are to deliver economic growth and support large scale housing growth in North Bedfordshire, and that environmental concerns are way down the pecking order? If that is the case, isn't it clear that without consulting Bedford residents, the Borough Council has pre-determined a very significant element of the Local Plan Review, where in theory such matters are to be decided with the benefit of public consultation?</p>
<p>Why are passing points to cater for slow trains being built in to both route options?</p>
<p>How will the station at St Johns or nearby be accessed? The Ampthill road area is already very congested.</p>
<p>If the Bedford station is expanded into Ashburnham Road which the maps show is quite likely, how will the station be accessed?</p>
<p>You have promoted the East West Rail route through Bedford Midland Road exiting the town northwards. It is now clear that the only way to preserve the rural environment through which it would pass, from huge long embankments, cuttings and viaducts, is for the railway to be in a tunnel from after it crosses the Bedford-Clapham road (the old A6) until it reaches the flatter ground to the east of Wilden and Renhold. Would you please bring the full influence and resources of the Bedford Borough Council to bear on EWR putting this part of the railway in a tunnel?</p>
<p>How can Bedford Borough Council support the building of a diesel train line given the sustainability expectation that the country will become significantly carbon neutral by 2035 and this line is due to be running in 2030?</p>
<p>EWR state in their consultation document that their preference is to use existing transport corridors rather than creating new ones. Can I ask that the Council would support this and reconsider the option of the south of the river line hence reducing the need to destroy the beautiful properties in the Poets area, remove the need to carve up extensive areas of pristine farmland, and give to Wixams the train line and station many home owners had expected when they chose to live there?</p>
<p>Can I ask that the Council would lend their support to the rural communities by listening and giving careful consideration to their objections to the routes north of Bedford?</p>
<p>Can I ask that the Borough Council make available the detailed costings that would account for the dramatic change in the cost of each route and so completely reversing the rank order? I believe there has been an attempt to share some documentation, but it is not transparent enough to promote confidence in the decisions that have been made.</p>
<p>Perhaps the Council could explain how a potential route following a previous course with minimum change in elevation is cheaper than a potential route that is longer and has considerably greater changes in elevation requiring significant engineering, the knocking down of homes, crossing flood plans, crossing the pathway of the gas pipeline which services London, that will involve considerable cuttings and bridges, road closures cutting off rural areas etc etc etc?</p>

Routes 2 6 and 1 go very near many houses, through gardens and at the bottom of gardens. Routes 8 and 9 go near to villages but not through habitations. Could this be a consideration in deciding the route as a means of the Mayor reducing the impact of the rail line? The Mayor has stated that the threat to homes and businesses is something that he takes very seriously.

1. We had serious flooding of properties and the main road in Clapham at Christmas 2020. Have the Borough Council done a flood risk assessment on the impact of building a railway viaduct across the floodplain between Clapham and Bedford?

2. Did the Borough Council do an assessment of the impact on local residents of the noise levels and vibration of a long viaduct between Bedford and Clapham before supporting a Northern route?

3. I seem to remember that the draft local plan that I saw in the library a couple of years ago recommended maintaining the green space between Clapham and Bedford and the views over the river valley. How and when did this change into supporting building a viaduct ,an embankment, a deep cutting and the destruction of the unspoilt countryside North of Bedford which has many well used footpaths and bridleways and is home to much wildlife eg badgers, bats, red kites, owls, foxes, deer etc.?

4. Why were residents not directly consulted for their views by the Borough Council before BBC made their decision to support the Northern Route which at the time of the (flawed) 2019 consultation was considered more expensive and more technically challenging.

5. EWR gave an answer on not reusing parts of the Varsity line at their webinar that properties had been built on parts of it and other parts are now established wildlife areas. However, this implies that the buildings built on the old line are more important than those properties near Bedford Station that would need to be demolished and the newer wildlife areas more important than the long established wildlife in the unspoilt North Beds countryside. Why did BBC not consider the alternative route using parts of the old line suggested by your own consultants?

6. BBC objected to the proposed Rushmoor School development mainly on the grounds of increased traffic problems. How can you then support the inevitable increase in traffic congestion, especially near the Sainsburys/Aldi roundabouts, that would result from the additional traffic generated by the EWR trains stopping at Bedford Midland Station rather than a new Southern Station?

7. I have read that BBC are contributing financially to the redevelopment of Bedford Station and carparks. Is this correct and, if so, what will be the cost to Bedford Borough ratepayers and has this cost been excluded from the EWR route costings?

I do not agree with Route E. The best Route for Bedford is A, B or C.

Economically and Environmentally these are clearly the best routes. A New Bedford South Station is the best solution for Bedford.

I have a number of questions, which I have listed at the end. I have a few points I wanted to make first as some background.

I feel very passionately about the EWR railway proposals, my husband and I moved to Wilden five years ago because we wanted to live in the countryside and enjoy a better quality of life. We have ¾ acre of land in which we planted willow trees so we could become self-sufficient in fuel for the winter, a large vegetable and fruit garden and many rescue hens which roam around. We like nothing better than to sit outside and enjoy the views and wildlife with a cold drink of a weekend. All of which will be flattened by alignments 8 & 9 which is coming through our garden. We had plans to put in ponds, renovate the house because my mother was diagnosed with Alzheimer's during lockdown 1 and is becoming increasingly difficult for my 82 year old father to manage and they live in Suffolk. Now we are trapped unable to change, unable to move. This is the human impact of EWR.

Whilst I do agree with having an Oxford to Cambridge railway, I do not agree with the route alignment north of Bedford for many reasons, and feel that it has not been done in a transparent and just way. I feel very let down by what I thought was a democratic and fair society we are lucky to live in.

In my previous job I worked for a company based in Oxford and often commuted into London, my current job is based in Cambridge and therefore I am one of the people who should be benefitting from this railway. I live in Wilden having commuted into and from Bedford previously I have experienced first-hand the terrible congestion and lack of parking/cycle facilities. Why would I commute from Bedford to Cambridge via train when it is much quicker by road especially with the new road to the Black Cat? Cambridge station is 20 mins walk south of the centre, so for many people who work outside of Cambridge town centre like myself it would be quicker to drive than to

2. Has there been any provision for increased cycle commuting to Bedford station? New cycle ways, secure cycle parking (my bike was also stolen from the station on one of the rare occasions I cycled to the station).

3. Why given the cheaper, shorter, flatter, quicker route alongside the A421 have BCC chosen a route which destroys the north Bedfordshire countryside with deep cuttings, unsightly viaducts and destroying wildlife and homes? What is the obsession with coming through Bedford station and destroying people's homes and communities? How will that save Bedford town centre by people getting off to get a coffee to change trains? What evidence is there for this?

4. A parkway station would attract more people to the area given ample parking, cycle paths, secure cycle parking etc. This is the future and would attract me to the area, why is BCC so against a parkway station south of Bedford and a shuttle into Bedford? Cambridge main station is 20 mins south of the centre?

5. Has there been any consideration to tunnelling instead of cutting?

6. Is BCC going to pay for the multistorey car parks and extended platforms which reduced the cost of route E? What is the cost of this and if so how do you expect to pay for this in a post-pandemic time of austerity?

1. First and foremost, we were not consulted in 2019 and DID NOT receive the postcard EWR tell us they sent out. The first we new about it was when I joined the local Facebook page in January 2020. We immediately expressed our concerns to our local councillor and have also made contact with EWR on several occasions. We were told to attend the local meeting with EWR which was cancelled due to Covid and has never been reorganised. If we had been consulted and given the opportunity to object we would have done so. We understand we are now being given the opportunity to comment on the alignment of route E. As there is only one route out of Bedford through the Clapham countryside our only option is to object to route E altogether.

2. The choice or route E is baffling many people in the local communities because of the landscape and the need for a huge viaduct and extensive cutting.

- a) The viaduct will be an eyesore on entering and leaving Clapham
- b) the cutting will literally cut our community in two
- c) the cost of these works must be substantially more than the alternative route B despite BBC denying this - why did the costs suddenly change to favour route E at the end of 2019?
- d) The impact on the flood plain is concerning especially given the horrendous flooding we experienced in the village on Christmas Day
- e) the impact on wildlife species will be catastrophic- badgers, foxes, bats, owls, woodpeckers, hedgehogs, red kites, many plant species ... the list is extensive.
- f) the impact of construction noise, pollution and traffic works and the subsequent noise and pollution when trains are running will be horrific and impact significantly on our lives.

3. Increased passenger numbers at Bedford station will deliver increased traffic on the roads heading to and from the station notably at rush hour. This area of town is already heavily congested at peak times despite the building of the new by pass. The infrastructure simply will not cope.

4. BBC have argued that Bedford town will benefit from route E. It will not bring more shoppers and jobs into town. Instead it will give those who live in Bedford the opportunity to visit, shop and work in Oxford, Milton Keynes and Cambridge. If the stations are to be rebuilt using tax payers money should we not have a right to object as it is our taxes being spent here. This has never been put to us even in the original route options consultation.

5. We have always been led to believe that the area of land between Fairfield park and Clapham would not be infilled in order to keep the village identity for Clapham. We already have Towers, a huge warehouse on the top of the hill, now there is a plan for 200 houses to be built. The only land left will be destroyed by the railway.

We urge you to consider the strength of feeling in the local community and think again about destroying the beautiful countryside between Bedford and Clapham and beyond to Ravensden. This is not the best route due to the incline of the land and the associated costs, the construction noise, pollution and disruption it will cause for the community and the eyesore of a viaduct over two roads and the river.

How can you support a route north of Bedford when you still do not know the comparative costings of any of the currently proposed or any of the previously proposed routes?

Could you please explain how you expect Bedford hospital to cope with the influx of people needing it's services with all the housing that will come after EWR is built? What about school's, local shops and access roads?

How will the Council improve access to Bedford Midland station? More routes available to passengers means more people driving to the station to use services, have you factored this in? If so, where is that plan and can residents see it?

If the Council get's what it wants and has a new station south of Ford End Road where will the current Thameslink sidings be relocated to?

Can you make public the actual figures and costings that prove EWR coming through Bedford will be economically beneficial to the town? Can you do this with viable and factual research provided by an independent body not paid for by the Council?

How can you say that any one of the northern routes will 'protect your historic environment through preserving and enhancing your heritage assets' when you are totally destroying buried archaeological assets and significantly and adversely affecting standing historic buildings and their settings?

Please explain why the people of Roxton should welcome the below? (picture of train travelling through countryside)

You have promoted the East West Rail route through Bedford Midland Road exiting the town northwards. It is now clear that the only way to preserve the rural environment and reduce the catastrophic impact to the environment and villages that as Bedford Mayor you are meant to represent, from huge long embankments, cuttings and viaducts, is for the railway to be in a tunnel from after it crosses the Bedford-Clapham road (the old A6) until it reaches the flatter ground to the east of Wilden and Renhold. Would you please bring the full influence and resources of the Bedford Borough Council to bear on EWR putting this part of the railway in a tunnel?

<p>Can you explain why the original consultation in 2019 wasn't held again following BBC's input and support, which changed the costings for route E. Full transparency was non-existent and the goal posts had moved. We should have been presented with the new costings and been made aware of your support and commissioning of your own costings for route E, and had the opportunity to vote again.</p> <p>Where-ever the train line is built, can you assure me that access to the countryside via byways, bridleways, and footpaths, will be kept open during and after the building of the EWR line. My village of Ravensden uses such paths daily.</p>
<p>Why did the Mayor deny the parish council's request for the public to be able to attend the parish council meetings in 2021?</p>
<p>Why did it take nearly two weeks before the Mayor's office would release the recordings of the parish council meetings (for example Ravensden)? It is noted that the recordings weren't released until the subsequent meetings had passed.</p>
<p>On what date was Cllr Headley given responsibility for railways in addition to finance? Was there a public notification?</p>
<p>What oversight is in place for the allocation of portfolio holder responsibilities and changes to responsibilities?</p>
<p>Why is Cllr Headley better qualified to lead on railways than the Deputy Mayor & portfolio holder for environment & transport Cllr Headley?</p>
<p>In the week that it was announced that 50-100 houses were to be effected in the Harpur and Castle Wards, in addition to the North Beds, why did Mayor Hodgson and the Deputy Mayor Royden, portfolio holder for environment & transport, not find time to meet or communicate? When was there first communication after the 31st March announcement?</p>
<p>Given the council's budget crisis and the council's current government ranking (337/354 councils nationally), does Cllr Headley have sufficient bandwidth to manage both finance and railways?</p>
<p>After the Mayor and Cllr Headley found out about six-track proposals on 31st July 2019, why did they conceal it from full council and the public?</p>
<p>Was the Mayor and Cllr Headley aware of Network Rail's 2018 six track proposals in 2018 that involved CPOs and demolition in the Poets area and referenced EWR?</p>
<p>Did the Mayor and Cllr Headley ever discuss the six-track proposals with Cllr Royden, Cllr Atkins or Cllr Jackson before the 31st March 2021 announcement?</p>
<p>It is noted that the Mayor spent 75k on Kilborn Consulting as part of their lobbying effort for route E. How much did the council spend in total when factoring the salaries of officers involved and other council resource?</p>
<p>As part of the stage 2 consultation, how (much) is being spent on the consultants SLR Rail and Kilborn Consulting?</p>
<p>Will you publish the brief/scope of work for the engagement with the consultants?</p>
<p>Has the full council been given an opportunity to contribute to the consultant's scope of work?</p>
<p>Why did Cllr Headley and BBC lobby EWR Co for a consultation extension that would allow them more time but deny the public an opportunity to attend physical meetings?</p>

The Liberal Democrats have been distributing party political campaign material designed to look like genuine editorial. What is BBC doing to monitor this to ensure that the public is not misled on EWR?
There are concerns that some councillors are concealing information and making misleading comments to distort the public's understanding on EWR. What is the council doing to monitor this?
In the 2019 consultation, EWR Co only included two of the seven Bedford parish councils effected by the northern routes vs seven of seven effected by the southern routes. Does BBC think this was adequate?
On 24 th February 2021, Cllr Headley moved a motion that had 7 bullets of council notes, 3 bullets on the motion itself and was 341 words in total. Did he prepare it before listening to the statements from members of the public?
Given the motion Cllr Headley moved, why didn't he disclose the information on six-track discussions?
EWR Co's engineering director, Simon Scott publicly commented in December 2020 that they chose to approach Bedford from the north to maintain grade separation. When did BBC first become aware of this?
Had Cllr Headley disclosed the information on six-track discussions, the comments, questions and potentially voting by other councillors may have been different. What democratic oversight is in place at BBC? Is this being looked at?
BBC is denying petitions related to EWR because of previous petitions. Given the 24 th February 2021 discussion at full council was compromised because of the Mayor and Cllr Headley's failure to be transparent with material information, will future petitions on similar topics now be considered?
If the council were to vote again on support of route E, would the Mayor allow Lib Dem councillors to vote independently this time?
On 24 th Feb Cllr Charles Royden, Deputy Mayor and portfolio holder for environment & transport sat through a 3 hour plus meeting without making any comments or asking any questions. Is that satisfactory conduct given his role and responsibilities?
What discussions has Cllr Headley had regarding freight terminals in Bedfordshire brickfields?
When did BBC first have discussions regarding an EWR station at Twinwoods?
Why is BBC denying freedom of information requests for details on their discussions regarding a railway station at Twinwoods?
Why was Biddenham not included in the 2019 consultation? Did BBC raise this with EWR Co? Given there are plans for 3,000 plus houses in Biddenham do you think they should have been included? Is the closure of the Great Denham Golf Course related to EWR and related housing plans?
Why did BBC grant planning permission for a high density housing development inside, new road access and roundabout on the B660, inside the route E corridor just weeks before EWR Co's announcement? BBC had knowledge of their timelines and had been lobbying for route E - what was the rush?
Why did BBC not disclose Kilborn Consultings recommendation to discuss with EWR Co an alternative route that would service a station at Bedford St Johns and leverage existing infrastructure?
Who at BBC was responsible for suggesting the "other organisations and interest groups" to EWR Co? On reflection was this done fairly?

<p>Why did EWR Co only look at BBC owned South Bedford venues (Scott Hall selected and Faraday Hall also considered) for the 2019 consultation event? Did BBC discuss venue selection? Did BBC flag that there are more suitable venues in Bedford? Why is BBC not responding to freedom of information requests on this?</p>
<p>Why did Cllr Royden tell Brickhill residents that route E doesn't go through Brickhill?</p>
<p>Great Barford Lib Dems posted in 2019 "it is clear that East West Rail favour a route that runs south of Bedford". On 24th February 2021, Cllr Headley commented that that is a misreading. Who should we believe?</p>
<p>Freight has been mentioned in the past but clearly the balance of language on passenger to freight has been misleading and freight has been undersold hitherto. Why hasn't BBC done more to highlight this? Why has BBC not been transparent with material information? Who is monitoring the Mayor and Cllr Headley's conduct?</p>
<p>Is there any more information that the Mayor and Cllr Headley been withholding from the public (for example, the recent the six track revelations)?</p>
<p>The article you recently posted on Facebook notes that the midland mainline passing through Bedford is one of only three places in the country to have been officially designated as "congested infrastructure" and that Bedford is known to be a particular "bottleneck". This must have been known to Bedford Borough Council at the time it campaigned for EWR to pass through Bedford town meaning 6 tracks was more than just a remote risk but a reality of your support for Route E. Why has this been covered up by the local authority and your office?</p>
<p>I am writing as requested ahead of your online consultations to confirm that I own a home in Clapham and have found out, by chance, that you intend to run a diesel passenger and freight railway through Carriage Drive, Clapham?. After 40 years of hard work my lifes savings has been sunk into this house move and I have in fact paid a high premium to move to this spot of beauty, emphasis on peace and a train line is unimaginable and I am asking for an explanation please why you would choose this location?</p>
<p>I have been advised by Dave Hodgson the Mayor of Bedford that we were supposed to have received a post card from EWR in 2019 alerting us to your proposals ? I categorically swear that I have never had any post card, letter, email or leaflet posted or hand delivered to my property.</p>
<p>Considering my location and the proximity of the proposed 95 metre CUTTING spitting the road and fields in this area of natural beauty I am staggered that this can be lawful without public consultation in a country of democracy? Is it not law to have advise residents hugely impacted by your trainline? Please provide the correspondence that was sent to me but not received.</p>

I believe the Mayor consciously chose not to advise the affected residents of Clapham, Brickhill and those who are having their homes demolished in the town centre as he is under pressure to build homes and by sneaking this train line in ie backing your trainline WITHOUT adequate open public consultation and during the biggest pandemic the world has ever known, when people were off guard fighting to survive themselves. It feels like underhand dealing has and is taking place by him and I would be grateful to be told, truthfully what meetings you have had with our Council and the Mayor and when those meetings were please?.

Please can I have a meeting in person here, as soon as possible with a representative(s) to discuss why Route E has been chosen when it seems it was originally the most expensive, most geographically challenging and longer than the southern route. I have heard it will be a diesel freight train to cope with Route E's landscape which considering diesel is being phased out by the government I don't believe that can be true - please advise? Please can I ask not to receive a standard email I really am appealing for a visit. I am absolutely floored with shock that this could happen without any communication in such an idyllic location with wildlife in huge abundance. It will be a tragedy and a real loss of enjoyment for future generations.

The tenant farmers here and their fathers before them have farmed here and will lose their livelihood he train line with take acres and acres away from them - there are other routes which will have less impact on people's lives. The land owners I believe do not care about their long term tenants or a train line as they do not live in Clapham.

This Road which will be severed in half potentially if you do proceed and is an area that has become important to people's mental health during these challenging times, to get outside in open countryside , hundreds and hundreds of people walk this road each week with children, family, their dogs.. This isn't just an average road it needs to be viewed and discussed further please. This is people who live in flats, or without gardens or without enough spare income to pay to join gyms - this is a village primarily of working class people that love the village and the beautiful walks and woods that you would be ruining. You have other much more sensible routes, you honestly do.

Summary : No consultation to me smack bang on the train line - why please? Why are you choosing route E when it is the most expensive and most challenging from a landscape point of view? Will it be diesel? How many trains per hour? There needs to be no trains from midnight to 6am minimum - please advise? How long would engineering works take to complete the line in the Clapham area ? Do you know, really know, about the wildlife here? What surveys have you done and could I see them please?

Please can I meet someone as I cannot cope living without knowing what is really going to happen and why you have chosen to do this here. I am pleading with a representative to come and discuss your intentions please as I am living on a knife edge with extreme anxiety. I am not some nutter I am a professional woman passionate to understand what is going on and would appreciate being taken seriously.

When did the Mayor first discuss the for potential "six tracks" with the executive?

I'm a Bedford resident from Brickhill and i'm greatly concerned about this potential Route E and all the potential environmental problems it could cause and destruction of precious countryside and natural habitats to the north of Bedford and also the risk of mass demolition causing many people to lost their homes and potential increased travel congestion in the Ashburnham Road, Bromham Road, Midland Road, Prebend Street areas resulting from greater numbers of passengers using the station. I would like to know why the old route in the Bedford Borough Area hasn't been considered this time around as part of the EWR proposals? When reusing the old trackbed would involve recycling an already engineered right of way and would involve no demolitions and would require diverting a bicycle track and the engineering work required for bridges etc would be minor in comparison to the significant construction works required for Route Option E. There is all this talk about the old line closing in 1968, but the line a mile and a half east of Bedford St John's to what was then Barkers Line Level Crossing, now the entrance to Priory Marina closed in 1981 and was lifted in 1982. The first proposals for the East West Rail appeared in local newspapers back in 1997 and in the late 1990s, the old trackbed of the Varsity line called the Inner Route was the preferred route of the EastWest Rail Consortium, who considered it the most cost effective and generating the highest demand, Bedford Borough Council at the time favoured the Outer Route (Roughly the current Route Option B), but finally appeared to have accepted the Inner Route, providing certain conditions were met. It appears that no further progress happened at the time, due to the then government not providing the funding for the project. More recently the initial report by Kilbourn Consulting for Bedford Borough Council regarding the EastWest Rail, also recommended this as a potential route option and were curious why this wasn't considered as an option by the EastWest Rail Company. With regard to the old line being built on, the first place to the east of Bedford were the line has been significantly built on is at the old Blunham Station site, unlike the old Bedford to Hitchin Line which has been lost under development in Bedford, the corridor of the old

I have a question regarding how the proposed railway route will cater for the very large agricultural machinery and 'building supplies' HGVs in constant use throughout the area. The preferred routes are mostly either large embankments or wide cuttings, due to their extreme width the cuttings in particular requiring significant engineering structures to ensure the roads can continue to carry the large weights the businesses rely on. Has thought been put to avoid these issues by making use of a tunnel, either by boring or cut & cover? It would remove multiple complications and costs, potentially minimizing any overall increase. Would Bedford Borough Council be in a position to push EWR to consider the possibility of this option?

Borough Council's planning committee refused permission for the erection of a Wind Turbine at the summit of Sunderland Hill, Ravensden in 2014. This was due to 'the development having a detrimental effect on a unique character landscape, on nearby properties and historical buildings and causing disruption to Public Rights of Way and Bridleways'. Why is alignment 1 deemed to be acceptable given that it will have a much higher impact on the landscape, heritage buildings and residents within the exact same area?

I live in a prominent listed building on Sunderland Hill, which is situated less than 500 metres away from one of the preferred route to alignments through Ravensden. The EWR technical report states that my property will suffer residual noise impact from EWR. The Grade II listed status prohibits double glazing and the planting of any trees adjacent to the B660 and EWR to buffer the noise from the railway will take decades to grow. What immediately effective measure will BBC lobby EWR for in order to minimise the noise and visual impact of the railway on my home?

Can BBC advise whether it's preference for a northern alignment will lead to further development in the vicinity of Ravensden, including the encroachment of new housing estates and infrastructure associated with East West Rail (EWR). Does BBC have any aspirations for a northern parkway station to service the EWR route and to relieve congestion due to additional commuters travelling into Bedford Midland station?

How can consultees effectively engage with EWR when much of the data pertaining to this area is not available in the technical report. For reference, section 1D 14.3 Climate data associated with operational Greenhouse Gas Emissions measured by track gradients, states 'data not available'. The reports provide insufficient detail regarding the structures that will be required for any route to traverse the undulating topography of this area. How can consultees reasonably determine a preference for any route in the absence of the required technical data?

I am a resident of the Poets Area of Bedford, One who's home may be subject to CPO under the preferred track alignment North of the station. What research have Bedford Borough Council undertaken, or will be undertaking to establish to impact of air pollution, noise AND congestion the proposed redevelopment of the Midland Mainline station and additional track will have on the area, both during construction and after completion?
When will the findings be made public?

I believe Beds Borough Council have carried out investigations into the existing track usage and capacity with a view to supporting the four track option. Has that now been concluded and when will the findings be available to the public? In particular campaign groups such as Protect Poets.

Will the Council see to it that, in the interests of transparency and public interest, the full detailed costings of all proposed routes including all estimates, assumptions, discount factors, costs of disruption, purchase of land, rectifying and mitigating environmental damage, and the project costs of infrastructure and earthworks be made available to the public? And can the figures for both before and after the consultation that narrowed the route options be made available so that we can see exactly how and why the costs for the different routes changed so dramatically that the most expensive routes north of Bedford somehow became the cheapest?

Why does the Council support a proposed route that would require substantial levels of earthworks, and infrastructure construction, in order to overcome the significant changes in gradient and the hilliness of the terrain, in contrast to the route south of the river that would follow this historic rail route that is largely flat and would require significantly less construction cost, time, and disruption?

Why is the Council supporting the construction of a railway designed to run diesel locomotives given the UK government's legally binding target of cutting emissions by 78% by 2035 which is not long after this new route is due to start operation? Is it not more cost effective and climate conscious to future proof the railway by constructing at least an electrified route if not designing a route for hydrogen-fuel cell locomotives?

Has the Council conducted studies and costings of the disruption that will be caused to the rural communities as a result of the construction of the rail route? Including the closure of key road links that will force lengthy detours that will impair response times of emergency services, and the damage and obstruction that arise from HGVs and machinery on narrow and worn country roads. Will these be made public?

Has the Council considered the impact on the health and well-being of the residents in the rural communities who will be exposed to years of noise and air pollution from heavy industry and construction occurring yards from their homes?

Can the Council clarify the purpose of this rail route, and how it will be operated? There has been recent information that has indicated that it will be used for 24/7 freight services, and yet the latest EWR Co. financial statements state the purpose of the railway is for passenger services to connect Oxford and Cambridge, and makes no reference to the use of the route primarily for freight.

Can the Council explain why it is so opposed to building a new purpose built station at Wixams, when it would allow for sufficient parking for the increasing number of commuters living in Bedford, would operate as a single north-south east-west rail interchange, and would open up the option of the railway to run close to the historic route south of the river and be aligned with the existing travel corridor? Connectivity with the centre of Bedford could be resolved with an automated rail shuttle to the existing station (operating in a similar fashion to the DLR)

How can the residents of the rural communities have confidence that the Council will acknowledge their concerns, and fairly represent these perspectives in any consultations, when it is led by a Mayor who has had no discernable engagement with these communities over his time in office, nor supported policies that benefit these areas?

In all five options for Section D of the route presented in the current EWR consultation, I was disappointed to find that all follow the same route out of the north of Bedford. Do you know why various possibilities are being considered for the north Beds villages, St. Neots and Cambridge (which seem to have been developed since the 2019 consultation) but there are no other route alignment options being considered for Bedford?

It is frustratingly unclear in the EWR consultation document what is proposed beyond the urban area of Bedford. For example a great deal of detail is suggested for the Poets area, but then only a vague description of how the railway would negotiate the terrain once it would diverge beyond the existing railway line.

I am particularly concerned about the route through Clapham Park as this seems likely to be the most destructive stretch to what is a most important amenity and I would suggest one of Bedford's most important historic and environmental assets. Would you be able to clarify if Bedford Borough council owns the land in question of the former Clapham Park estate? To what extent is a very deep cutting intended or appropriate? Could a tunnel be considered at least in part where the railway meets the escarpment in Clapham given the considerable level difference and to mitigate against the potentially extreme environmental and visual impact / damage to Carriage Drive, Clapham Park Wood and the golf course? Or why could the route not be directed more towards Twinwoods and the former airfield, maybe even from further north along the east midlands mainline north of Clapham?

In terms of the options for the new Bedford Midland station proposed, it would be helpful to understand if the new station is necessitated as an intrinsic element of the east west railway project or is this a separate project being developed by Bedford Borough Council? I would welcome relocation of the Bedford Midland Station closer to the River Great Ouse. Ashburnham Road is currently a mostly residential area and I feel the current station site would be better developed for residential use. Given that the river and riverside spaces are Bedford Town Centre's greatest asset, and close to the County Council building, Bedford College and South wing hospital. this would be a much more fitting civic entrance to the town

However, I feel there is an huge opportunity being missed in the consultation options as they stand for an out of town station. Wouldn't more stations be better in terms of enabling people to travel by train rather than driving in their cars to access the rail network?

I feel a second station would be far more useful out of town, for example the ideal location would be at the former Kempston -Elstow Halt station close to the Interchange retail park and existing Park and Ride. This location has the unique advantage of being able to serve both east/ west and East Midlands/ Thameslink railway lines where they cross and could enable the people of Kempston, Elstow and south of Bedford to walk to a station rather than encourage a tendency to drive across town to then catch a train.

Finally, I would appreciate an explanation of why route E was preferred by Bedford Borough Council in 2019 as this seems the most environmentally damaging of the options and simply a massive detour for the east west railway. I gather the decision was made on the basis that this route E was considered to be more economically beneficial for the town as it would serve the central station. However, do you have clear evidence to substantiate this theory?

<p>I struggle to understand why the then Route B was not preferred as this is the most direct and flattest route possible, it largely follows the A421 existing transport corridor and therefore must be the fastest and most practical route for passengers and freight. So why is it that the possibilities of connecting route B to Bedford Town Centre have not been investigated?</p>
<p>Which route alignment are you supporting? Do you not think having a station in Bedford town centre will kill the centre as people from Oxford, Milton Keynes and Cambridge will not come to Bedford for shopping / day out. They will go to each other as gave better facilities. And it will drive residents from Bedford out of the town centre as they can get to pretty Oxford and Cambridge for shopping and fun a lot quicker? The centre us already suffering with closures and this will make it worse.</p>
<p>Surely an out of town station would mean less disruption for Bedford residents and make it easier to get to that station especially for all the people in the suburbs and villages north and south of Bedford who could get to a station south of Bedford a lot quicker than they can get into the centre causing more pollution?</p>
<p>Do you really think that if your response to a station in the centre of Bedford is to put on other public transport to get to the station will help? No as will make the commute times even longer. For people who will be using the</p>
<p>Do you actively welcome freight through Bedford town centre?</p>
<p>What environmental impacts did / have you asked EWR to consider for their routes?</p>
<p>How many roads will be permanently cut off as a result of the route, and what will you be doing to support residents who are effected?</p>
<p>What level of confidence do you have in the cost models from Kilborn Consulting, and also from EWR?</p>
<p>What impact assessment has been done on the impact to air quality of driving diesel trains through Bedford Midland station, considering air quality in Bedford already breaches the levels per the Air Quality Management Area?</p>
<p>Have there been BBC discussions with Covanta about providing rail freight services to the Stewartby waste facility?</p>
<p>Where will the £6m funding contribution from BBC towards the redesign and development of Bedford Midland Station be coming from? Will this funding from BBC effectively net off the benefit to the town? Will this funding from BBC effectively net off the benefit to the town?</p>
<p>As one of the technically most challenging routes, and with the most gradient changes, Route E is going to be the least environmentally friendly to build (due to greater construction impact) and operate (due to increased track length vs other options, and associated consumption of diesel on gradient change). How will BBC mitigate these impacts for residents?</p>
<p>Has the level of public response against Route E surprised you?</p>
<p>When the EWR Technical Report states that “a new station south of Bedford would generate slightly greater increases in jobs and productivity than routes serving Bedford Midland due to faster journey times”, what other considerations made you choose to lobby for passenger and freight services through Bedford?</p>

The route under Carriage Drive, Clapham and through the land beyond should be put in a tunnel. This can be made using machinery currently in use on HS2, which will drill through chalk and clay. The tunnel will reduce the local environmental impact of the new line.

Why did Bedford Borough Council ignore recommendations from the Kilburn report, Cranfield University and CPRE to name just a few organizations for a straighter, more cost effective build (without distorting real costs) and environmentally friendly southern route unlike their biased 2019 consultation preference for a northern route?

Why are Bedford Borough intent on damaging the health of local people by insisting on bringing the EWR route through the centre of Bedford because of the increase in pollution, traffic congestion and the total lack of present and planned road infrastructure?

Why is Bedford Borough intent on destroying the North Bedfordshire countryside, ancient woodlands, landmarks and villages when a less environmentally damaging southern A421 corridor route is available and has already been shown to be straighter, cheaper (without distorting real costs) and more environmentally friendly?

Why is Bedford Borough Council not working with EWR to revisit the 2019 consultation as it is perfectly clear that it was seriously flawed due to lack of correct information, poor public notification, undeclared facts and biased instructions from Bedford Borough Council to their consultants?

How could the general public be expected to come to an informed decision with the lack of proper and up-to-date information, poor quality maps and staff at the time unable to adequate answers at the time of the 2019 consultations? Bedford Borough Council appears not to have all the relevant information at the time of the consultation when they made their decision.

Why was Bedford Borough Council not aware that routing the EWR line through Bedford would result in the demolition of in at least 60 homes in the Poet's area? Were they not informed during the 2019 consultation that an extra two tracks would be required and that again Bromham Road Bridge would need to be widened? If they were not aware and this has only just come to light then this proves that the original consultation was deeply flawed.

Why was Bedford Borough Council not aware of the intended 24 hours use by freight trains? Were they not consulted or not informed during the 2019 consultations. If they were not aware and this has only just come to light then this again proves that the original consultation was deeply flawed.

Why is Bedford Council apparently not concerned about EWR freight negotiations with Felixstowe or possible contracts with East Anglian counties for the transport of waste to the Covanta Incinerator at Marston Vale?

Why does Bedford Borough insist that the northern route would benefit future house building under their local plan for the northern fringes when there are no stations planned for that area and all footfall and traffic will have to come into an already congested Bedford and Midland Road area?

<p>Why is it assumed by Bedford Borough Council that a Parkway hub will not serve the needs of Wixam's residents?</p>
<p>Why is it assumed by Bedford Borough Council that a southern A421 corridor route will infringe on the RSPB at Sandy and Whimpole Hall?</p>
<p>Why is it assumed by Bedford Borough Council that the route will be electrified? EWR have stated that the route will not be electrified in the first instance.</p>
<p>Why was Bedford Borough Council happy with choosing a route that would require viaducts, deep cuttings and embankments in prime countryside which would not only destroy the northern landscape but would impose much higher safety risks, rather than having a leveller route that the A421 corridor would provide? It would also require greater engineering feats.</p>
<p>Why are Bedford Borough Council only discussing the northern routes at local meetings when Cambridge are still discussing both northern and southern approaches?</p>
<p>Why has the Mayor and Bedford Borough Council always insisted that the consultations and the final route selection is a Government and EWR decision when The Mayor and BBC have always championed the northern route and insist they are blameless.</p>
<p>I though I'd attach this BBC article that supports the suggestion of a look again at viability, the first point below refers - https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-57010913</p>
<p>The route under Carriage Drive, Clapham and through the land beyond should be put in a tunnel. This can be made using machinery currently in use on HS2, which will drill through chalk and clay. The tunnel will reduce the local environmental impact of the new line.</p>
<p>The main question I have is "Why did this EWR Plan all change?". It would also be prudent to ask " Do any supporting Councillors, the Mayor and any other involved parties within the EWR consultation and planning process have any financial and / or other related ties to EWR that may be causing a Conflict Of Interest?". I think this would be a great question to ask, as there seems to be a complete refusal to listen to us residents of Brickhill, yet a solid backing for Ravensden staying un-touched by 'progress'.</p>
<p>The question I have for the public meetings please, and which I would also like questions 1 and 2 treating as an FOI request please: 1. Please detail and release ANY information received by Bedford Borough Council that at ANY time before August 2019 indicated that EWRCo or Network Rail had at ANY time proposed that a through-Bedford route for EWR could potentially require 6 tracks as it passed through the urban area of Bedford?</p>
<p>2. Please detail and release ALL the information that Bedford Borough Council received from EWR on 1st March 2019 in relation to the planned EWR route through Bedford.</p>

3. Now that Bedford Borough Council knows the full content of the EWR most recent consultation, will the Council now release the latest version of the Local Plan which has been postponed until July? What justification is there for delaying this release now that the EWR consultation is out, given that no further information will now be received that will influence the Local Plan document between now and its release?

I refer to your Consultation Technical Report and the selection of Preferred Route Option E for the proposed route of East West Rail around the north side of Bedford. Option E will involve extensive cuttings in the vicinity of Cleat Hill . The cuttings will be in close proximity to proposed housing off the B660 and near Cleathill Farm and likely to have a detrimental effect. The proposed works will also involve the demolition of houses in Poets Corner which is a mature housing area. The route will also involve a major viaduct over the River Ouse and the A6 Paula Radcliffe Way and involve work to the recently improved Bromham Road Bridge. The two extra tracks will inevitably impinge on the station car park which is in great demand by commuters. It does seem to me that there is a strong case for a reconsideration of the route at Bedford and that a scheme involving trains entering and reversing from Bedford Station would be better and involve less works and disruption. I have spoken to some residents living in the vicinity and they concur with my views. I appreciate that it is late in the day but think that it would be worth consideration. Is this something that could be considered at this stage or has it already been considered?