

**Wyboston, Chawston & Colesden
Parish Council**

contact@eastwestrail.co.uk

18th August 2020

EastWest Rail proposed adoption of the Northern Route.

Wyboston, Chawston & Colesden Parish Council believe that this proposal is flawed in a number of ways.

To bring the line THROUGH Bedford is both disruptive, destructive and vastly more expensive. This is totally unnecessary especially as the route (so far) will be taking a line approximately from the South-West to the North-East, heading from Milton Keynes, it is an IDEAL opportunity to link with WIXAMS which has been promised a 'railway station' that this route scheme will IGNORE. The EastWest Rail line could then easily link into Bedford Midland with minimal disruption and expense.

To route then (after the splitting of Bedford), going via Clapham and across country eastwards through a very undulating landscape is doomed. Any route through this area will have changes in elevation from 30m to 70m+ above sea-level whereas the previous rail line south of A421 (which was the Bedford to Sandy line) averaging around 25 m with little variation, all along the river 'valley' and using 'brownfield' areas.

The financial cost of the earthworks to move millions of cubic metres of material to get a relatively level rail-line would be astronomical, devastating to the environment, creating a significant loss of good food-producing agricultural land (essential to reduce food imports and help boost post-Brexit exports), wanton disruption to wildlife habitat (LadyWood and PalaceYard Woods being examples). The route would blight the historic buildings in the area, some pre-dating the Domesday Book, also impacting on a Bronze-age ancient burial mound at Round Hill amongst other important historical sites.

Any route to the North of the A421 would present major construction challenges on the approach to and crossing over the new A1 adjacent to the Black Cat interchange and then onwards over the River Great Ouse, needing large sections of unsightly elevated line to clear these areas. This is a 'RURAL' area, NOT a high-density urban/city environment.

Considering the MASSIVE debts that this country is facing, especially post Covid-19, the burden on the taxpayer (you and us) will be untenable, furthermore with the exorbitant build costs and any 'investors' looking for a return will only lead to higher fares thus reducing the usage and make the whole scheme unviable, and therefore unnecessary.

We have yet to see ANY studies or proof that this scheme will REDUCE road traffic in the area, it will certainly not IMPROVE the life of the majority of residents in this catchment and will only benefit those travelling from or through the area to employment BEYOND this region therefore taking revenue AWAY not bringing it in.

We look forward to your response in due course.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D Robins', with a stylized, cursive script.

Diane Robins, CiLCA
Parish Clerk