

Greater Cambridge Shared Planning
South Cambridgeshire Hall
Cambourne Business Park
Cambourne
Cambridge
CB23 6EA



www.greatercambridgesharedplanning.org

PINS reference: TR040012 - 000019

Contact: Rachel Lambert

Principal Planner (Strategic Sites)

rachel.lambert@greatercambridgeplanning.org

31 January 2025

FAO: Karen Wilkinson
Environmental Services
Operations Group 3
Temple Quay House
2 The Square
Bristol
BS1 6PN
eastwestrail@planninginspectorate.gov.uk

Electronic submission only

Dear Ms Wilkinson

Consultation response on EIA Scoping Report – relating to application by East West Railway Company Limited (the Applicant) for an Order granting Development Consent for the East West Rail (the Proposed Development) (PINS ref: TR040012- 000019)

Introduction

This response is provided on behalf of South Cambridgeshire District Council (“the Council”) in response to the EIA Scoping consultation request issued by the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) on 2 January 2025 for the East West Rail Development Consent Order (DCO).

The Council is identified as a ‘consultation body’ as defined in the Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009 (as

amended) and has therefore been consulted prior to PINS adopting its Scoping Opinion. The deadline for consultation responses is 31 January 2025.

EIA Scoping Report

The Applicant commissioned an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Scoping Report, dated 5 December 2024, in accordance with Regulations 10 and 11 of the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017.

The Council has reviewed the EIA Scoping Report and has provided technical comments as detailed in Table 1 of Appendix A appended to this letter.

The Council has identified key areas for further dialogue with the Applicant to shape the scope of the EIA and ensure comprehensive identification and assessment of the proposal's impacts. These areas include, but are not limited to:

- **Approach to powering the trains:** Assessing the differential impacts of discontinuous electrification versus full electrification on the railway structures, mitigation requirements and landscape.
- **Access and connectivity:** Addressing the social, economic and environment effects of the railway on existing communities and in particular, its future relationship with the completed/expanded Bourn/Cambourne area, in order to fully assess opportunities and identify mitigation requirements (e.g., ensuring suitable access provision and door-to-door connections are provided to the new Cambourne station for communities south of the A428).
- **Biodiversity impacts:** Assessing the impact of the A428 Cut and Cover Tunnel design on biodiversity and the wider landscape. A need for comprehensive surveys and a requirement for scoping on further surveys.
- **Combined effects:** Evaluating the interface with other committed development and infrastructure projects and existing planned mitigation, as well as related projects (e.g. A428 upgrade, Cambourne to Cambridge busway, Cambridge South Railway Station and strategic growth sites [Bourn Airfield, North East Cambridge, Cambridge East] etc.).
- **Construction disruption:** Assessing the potentially significant disruption to villages life and community facilities (including access to schools) during the construction phase, whilst drawing upon lessons learnt from other major infrastructure projects (e.g., HS2). Additionally, concerns raised regarding the wider socio-economic, environmental and economic effects on the impacts of travel to work patterns, particularly disruption to routes throughout the construction phase.

- **Design and landscape/visual impact:** The assessment of the effects of decisions on the detailed design, including the vertical alignment of the railway, including embankment heights, cutting lengths/depths, and potential for extended tunnel lengths, having regard to the design and impact of the railway and key structures on landscape, wildlife, and visual amenity. This includes a comparative assessment needed of the construction, landscape and visual impacts of cut-and-cover versus bored tunnel options.
- **Environmental baseline:** Further information and data required to fully assess environmental impacts of the scheme.
- **Freight:** Analysing the impact of introducing and intensifying freight traffic on residential amenity, for communities located close to existing and new rail lines focusing on noise, vibration, and air quality impacts from diesel-powered trains.
- **Landscape mitigation:** The identification and assessment of options for landscape mitigation and the creation of new landscape to manage economic, social and ecological impacts.
- **Road and path closures:** Understanding the implications of temporary and permanent road and path closures, new structures, and interactions with local routes on community and social cohesion.
- **Scope of DCO:** Considering the exclusion of a new station at Cambridge East from the current scope, and the resulting unaddressed impacts and opportunities.

The comments provided are made on a without prejudice basis and having regard to the material provided. The Council reserves the right to offer further comments on the scope of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) in future submissions. This includes, but is not limited to, feedback on the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) and other instances where insufficient information may have led to certain impacts being excluded from consideration. In such cases, the Council retains the right to challenge the adequacy of the EIA Scoping.

If you have any queries regarding this submission or require any further information, please contact nsips@greatercambridgeplanning.org

Yours sincerely

SS Kelly

Stephen Kelly

Director of Planning & Economic Development

On behalf of South Cambridgeshire District Council

cc. Liz Watts (Chief Executive)

Enclosures

Appendix A: Consultation response on EIA Scoping Report (South Cambridgeshire District Council)