

East West Rail  
Non-Statutory Consultation

land@eastwestrail.co.uk

24 January 2025

Dear Sir/Madam,

**Representations made by Cambridge Biomedical Campus (CBC) to the East West Rail Public Consultation for the Proposed Rail Link between Oxford and Cambridge**

I am writing to you on behalf of the partners of the Cambridge Biomedical Campus (CBC), as the chair of the CBC Travel and Transport Group (TTG). We welcome the opportunity to comment upon the proposed East West Rail development which is strategically important to the CBC and will enhance access to the Campus, supporting growth, and sustainable development, as well as connectivity across the region.

**About the Cambridge Biomedical Campus**

The Campus has grown considerably in recent years and the organisations on the site reflect the strength of healthcare and life sciences in Cambridge:

- Healthcare and the NHS: Cambridge University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, Royal Papworth Hospital NHS Foundation Trust and Cambridgeshire and Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust
- Education: The Deakin Centre and Cambridge Academy for Science and Technology
- University & Research Institutes: University of Cambridge School of Clinical Medicine – housed in multiple buildings across the CBC and comprising twelve Academic Departments, four Research Institutes and five Medical Research Council (MRC) units, The Medical Research Council Laboratory of Molecular Biology (MRC LMB), Cancer Research UK Cambridge Institute, Heart and Lung Research Institute and Addenbrooke's Centre for Clinical Investigation
- Industry & Expansion: AstraZeneca Strategic R&D Centre, GlaxoSmithKline's (GSK) Experimental Medicine and Clinical Pharmacology Unit, Abcam Headquarters and ideaSpace – a co-working community of start-ups

As the largest employment site in Cambridge – the CBC is focused on ensuring patients benefit from the Campus' world-leading research. The international nature of the collaborations cut across traditional boundaries to allow us to work together on care, research and training. Our success is based on everyone's willingness to unite to exert a powerful global influence as the Campus attracts world class companies, investment, and talent to Cambridge with the aim of improving healthcare and knowledge.

With world-leading academic and industry scientists on the same site as the teaching hospitals of the University of Cambridge, the Campus is the optimum environment for the rapid and effective translation of research into routine clinical practice.

As the cost of healthcare is set to increase as the demand from an ageing population soars, we are set to develop the treatments of the future also creating the next generation of UK life sciences companies. We have the foundations in place to generate the ideas, products, and revenue to deliver the future success of the UK's flourishing life sciences industry.

The Campus will therefore continue to grow, creating jobs and bringing investment to Cambridge but we do this in collaboration with the city and its residents. Our achievements and success reflect the endeavour, persistence and brilliance of the people who live and work here.

As of today, there are 22,000 researchers, industry employees and clinicians are all working on the site, estimated to increase to 40,000 over the next 20-30 years. Investment in the Campus over the past three years totals more than £750m, with more to come with the new Cambridge Children's Hospital and Cancer Research Hospital due to

commence building soon. Our vision for 2050 can be found via the following link: [Cambridge Biomedical Campus Vision 2050](#)

### **The CBC understanding of the consultation:**

East West Rail Company ('EWR Co') have produced a non-statutory consultation document to obtain feedback on the early designs and options of the EWR programme. The document describes the infrastructure proposals for EWR, the new railway link that would connect Oxford to Cambridge, through Milton Keynes and Bedford.

The proposed Bedford to Cambridge section of East West Rail, known as Connection Stage 3, has been designated as a project of national significance and therefore an application will be submitted to the Secretary of State for Transport for a Development Consent Order (DCO). This consultation comes at the pre-application stage and a Statutory Consultation is planned for later in 2025 prior to a DCO Examination in 2026.

The new railway link will provide direct benefit to businesses by increasing employee catchments and enabling new relationships to be fostered between and within sectors. These potential benefits are particularly true for CBC and partner organisations.

CBC is a globally renowned hub for life sciences and one of the key project aims is to bring together the life science and research and development ecosystems of Oxford and Cambridge allowing further collaboration to be realised. The CBC ecosystem fully endorses this objective.

Connection Stage 3 of the project relates to the new section of railway being proposed between Bedford and Cambridge, with new stations at Tempsford and Cambourne, and upgrades to stations in Bedford and Cambridge. An opportunity for a new station to the East of Cambridge is also outlined.

### **The CBC response to the consultation:**

Given the strategic objectives of the project, the CBC supports the progression of the East West Rail (EWR) proposals and welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback on the latest updates. The CBC recognise the strategic importance of the railway to the Greater Cambridge area and onwards to Bedford, Milton Keynes, and Oxford, whilst also noting the specific benefits EWR will bring to the campus.

#### In relation to connectivity, sustainable and active travel:

Development of the railway will enable mass transit movements by sustainable modes and have a significant beneficial impact in extending the travel to work area for Cambridge. The potential for opening the opportunity for CBC partners to recruit employees from new housing corridors is welcomed. The plan would not only see benefits for the CBC campus but support the more general growth of the Greater Cambridge area, allowing the 'travel to work' area to expand. The proposal would also offer opportunities for connectivity with other innovation centres, laboratory, research and healthcare facilities located along the route.

The CBC is keen to ensure that East West Rail is developed in collaboration and integrated with local sustainable modes of transport to maximise the first/last mile opportunities to support maximum uptake of the services along the corridor.

The CBC considers that, with the planning for future statutory consultation, collaboration between East West Rail and the Greater Cambridge Partnership, Cambridgeshire County Council and bus operators should take place to identify design solutions for seamless travel across multi modes. This is of particular importance to the campus at key interchange points such as Cambourne Station and Cambridge South.

#### Regarding operational aspects of the new service and additional stations:

The CBC is pleased to see plans coming forward for new stations at both Cambourne and Tempsford. The Campus would suggest exploring options for stations at either Comberton or Hauxton, as we know from current employee data, that approximately 3000 campus staff live in that area.

The campus is pleased to see the plans (creating a turnback in Cherry Hinton) offering potential for a future Cambridge East Station. This would benefit the campus and enable cross-city mass transit movement, as well as serving planned residential growth.

The CBC believe that all stations should be designed as fully accessible. The provision of step-free access, lifts and accessible toilets as well as a changing places facilities and potential retail would be strongly supported by the CBC as the detail of station design comes forward. Access to the CBC, for all, along with reliability and consistency of services is of high importance and these will enable many to travel sustainably.

It is suggested that station facilities should provide secure, high quality and sufficient cycle and scooter parking, encouraging those who travel to use rail to do so sustainably where possible. Provision should consider those with specially adapted cycles and cargo bikes or trailers, both in terms of parking, and options to travel on the train. Facilities should be included for the secure parking of motorcycles and scooters. Locker facilities for cycle helmets and pannier bags would also be advantageous.

Regarding impact upon the environment, and biodiversity:

The CBC understands that regarding impact upon ecology and biodiversity, there is a policy with the scheme for an increased net gain, and of this the campus is supportive. The CBC is aware of the significant environmental impact which will be felt in some areas where new track is to be installed, in particular the biodiversity loss and habitat fragmentation. The Campus is keen to be reassured with environmental impact assessments and solutions to minimise ecological disruption during construction.

The CBC also understands that some work carried out to facilitate the construction of the Cambridge South Station may need remediation to support East West Rail. The Campus would strongly advise alignment of works to mitigate impact on the disruption and the public purse.

The campus is keen to understand how the line may be used for freight. There are several routes which use the existing lines, and we are keen to know how this will interact with passenger services and impact upon our local community, particularly should these services operate out of hours. The CBC is concerned that by the nature of the ambition to improve access along new housing corridors, the movement of significant freight traffic would not create appealing communities.

Electrification of services on the new line is essential from an environmental perspective and the CBC is aware of proposals coming forward for that. The CBC urges EWR Co. to give further detail in that regard before the phase of statutory consultation. The detail is critical in relation to the proximity of the tracks to the CBC campus. There are significant concerns in relation to the electromagnetic fields and vibration which could disrupt or give flawed results in the complex scientific research being undertaken in buildings on the Campus. The CBC would be looking for discussion and assurances regarding mitigation of this issue as the proposal comes forward, which could include items such as speed of traffic, weight and mass, volume, and so forth.

In relation to disruption during construction, potential alignment with other schemes, and ongoing operation:

Given that campus operates 24 hours per day, seven days per week, any disruption to the travel network could have implications for services. The CBC strongly encourages East West Rail to carefully consider ways to minimise disruption with this in mind. The CBC would be pleased to work with East West Rail and partners on this matter.

There is concern, from the perspective of new railways being established, that blue light routes and links between communities are not severed. The CBC would be happy to have further conversation with East West Rail to review routes and proposals. There is concern about what implications may come forward in terms of impact on surrounding villages as the detail of the scheme is developed.

Closer to the campus, the CBC is concerned to read that the A1134 Long Road bridge would need to be rebuilt as part of the scheme. There has been recent suggestion that a temporary bridge may be installed. As a key route into the campus this will cause considerable disruption and impact upon access to the campus, and the CBC is keen to understand further the implications.

There is concern in relation to the potential impact upon the DNA cycle route during construction and ask that it is minimised as it is a heavily used route, from the south, for access to the Campus and beyond. Furthermore, we note ongoing interactions between EWR and GCP to coordinate plans for the DNA cycle route and extend our support to securing the best possible outcome for this important active travel artery into the campus.

The CBC is concerned to hear that some of its partner organisations may be subject to compulsory purchase orders, or design is being progressed which would significantly impact on their ability to operate and do business. The CBC is conscious that it makes up part of the wider Cambridgeshire life sciences ecosystem and as such is keen to support, via collaboration, a resolution. The CBC is aware that partner organisations are also in the process of submitting their individual responses. Partner organisations have met to agree overall support for the EWR Co scheme, but mindful that individual organisations may face particular challenges. We are supportive of working together to find mutually acceptable design solutions.

In relation to engagement with local communities

As representatives of numerous anchor institutions within the local community, CBC works with local people to understand the impact the Campus has on the surrounding area and its employees, visitors and residents. Whilst we recognise that there are different views represented within the public, it is important to CBC that the local community is effectively engaged by EWR to understand and minimise negative impact on them.

**Summary:**

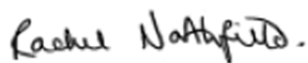
The CBC welcomes the positive intentions of the East West Rail proposals and believes the route will provide a vital link in connecting the campus with new housing corridors and beyond. The CBC can see that by improving access from East to West across the country, there will be encouragement for businesses growing, improved connectivity, a significant reduction in travel times and encouragement for investment supporting the local economy.

The CBC looks forward to working with EWR Co in the future to resolve issues raised, in advance of statutory consultation and are keen to continue to contribute positively to further evolution of the plan, with opportunity to discuss the unique challenges faced by the Campus.

The CBC welcomes and supports the principle of joined up planning with other transport infrastructure schemes such as with the Cambridge and Peterborough Combined Authority, Cambridgeshire County Council, the GCP and strongly encourages this to ensure collaborative working to minimise disruption for the Campus and our neighbours.

I would of course, be very happy to arrange to discuss any of these matters further and provide any other additional information which would be helpful.

Yours faithfully,



**Rachel Northfield**  
**Chair of the CBC Travel and Transport Group**

**cc. Nick Kirby, CBC Ltd Managing Director**

