

BRICKHILL

PARISH COUNCIL



7th June 2021

Dear Sir or Madam,

Response by Brickhill Parish Council to EWR latest consultation

In order to prepare its response to the latest EWR consultation, Brickhill Parish Council undertook, over the last few weeks, a survey to ascertain the views of its residents. A total of 330 residents submitted responses and Brickhill Parish Council reviewed those results at a meeting on the 3rd June 2021 and have used them to form the basis of this response.

Opposition to Route E:

92% objected to the selection of Route E as they believe that it was based on a non-transparent consultation. 90% supported the decision of the Parish Council taken in March 2021 in agreeing to rescind its support for Routes D and E. 89% also responded with “no” to the statement “*EWR has stated that only Route E will deliver a railway which comes through Bedford Midland Station, is it important to you that this happens*”. The Parish Council cannot ignore the strength of opinion expressed through this survey. **In essence, no northern route is acceptable to our community.** It is important that this is stressed in our response; appendix 1 shows the strength of feeling within our Parish and would ask you to read these individual comments as you consider our response.

Which Alignment:

Should a northern route be **forced** onto the parish, then Brickhill Parish Council’s view is that alignment 1 is probably less damaging because it is further away from more residential areas and therefore less visually intrusive and may produce less noise. In our survey, 97% preferred this alignment. Following the ranking referred to in the EWR on-line form, then alignments 1, 2 and 6 would be most preferred with 8 and 9 least preferred. Alignments 8 or 9 would be least preferred because they would be hugely disruptive for our parish. There are particular concerns around alignment 9 with regards the proposed embankment and cutting.

During Construction:

The highest recorded areas of concern were:

- The impact on ancient woodland, nature and wildlife (92%)
- Noise from the construction site (89%)
- An ability to access the countryside beyond Brickhill while construction is taking place but also beyond construction (88%)
- More woodland to be planted between Woodlands Park and the railway (88%)

After Construction:

The highest recorded areas of concern were:

- Concerns about noise at night (92%)
- Access the countryside beyond Brickhill when the railway is in use (91%)
- Concerns at the prospect of freight trains (91%)
- Measures to enable wildlife to cross the railway safely are needed, for example badgers (86%)

There is serious concern that once the track has been laid, the residents of Brickhill will be cut off from accessing the other side and the open countryside beyond. Access to open countryside is an invaluable part of our rural fringe location, prized by the residents and visitors that come here. This has been reinforced during successive lockdowns due to COVID as people use this lovely green space daily for exercise, bringing mental health benefits to. There is real concern that the parish will end up split, with the only option for public access appearing to be either Hawk Drive to Carriage Drive, which is only a public footpath at one end leading to a private road at the other (Carriage Drive) or via Graze Hill itself. The bridleway situation will be very poor with only two bridleways, which do not actually connect with each other, one from the Clapham side and the other from Brickhill.

Over 80% of respondents thought that the line should be electrified from the start. We believe that an electrified route would be quieter, (to help mitigate the concerns of night noise 92%) but also more environmentally appropriate with reducing carbon emissions as a priority of the government.

The Parish Council would also like to put on record that Hawk Drive is not acceptable (87%) as an access route to the construction site, not least, because there are two schools actually located either side of it who use this route daily, nor the steep Graze Hill (80%) area further to the east. The Parish Council appreciates that EWR have not to date suggested these are being considered but felt it was important to get this message across in advance.

Thank you for taking time to consider our response.

Yours sincerely,



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Clerk
Brickhill Parish Council

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Appendix 1

Disclaimer: The views and opinion expressed below are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official policy of Brickhill Parish Council. Any content provided by parishioners are of their opinion and are not intended to malign any religion, ethnic group, club, organisation, company, individual or anyone or anything.

<p>I don't agree with the railway line to the North of Bedford at all. The southern area is already industrialised and plenty of warehousing and logistics hubs along the A421 through to Milton Keynes which would make good use of a freight lines. It makes so much more sense to build a railway line along the southern route and take advantage of the warehousing etc. Since COVID, companies are already giving up their office space and using hot desks to minimise the amount of people in the office. There will not be the need for commuter trains and rail travel is still a very expensive option in the UK. The countryside around Brickhill and Woodlands Park is the most scenic Bedford has to offer. It is madness to ruin it with a railway line.</p>
<p>I strongly oppose all routes north of Bedford, and only as a last resort back route alignment one.</p>
<p>I object to both options. I see no acceptable reason that this line has to come through Bedford Station to get to Cambridge. The southern routes would be less destructive to the environment and I believe will use more of an old route which can be brought back into use.</p>
<p>I do not see the need for the line to run north of Bedford. We have some lovely countryside, which I think is our duty to protect north of Bedford. We chose to live in woodlands park so we could be close to the open countryside with easy access and beautiful views. There are parts of Bedford that don't offer this, Wixams for example has a train line going in, so it would make sense to marry this up. There is no need for the train to stop at Bedford, it is already congested. It would make sense to have somewhere out of town to hop on. Please listen that there are many voices north of Bedford that do not want this on our doorstep. It would be interesting to see who was consulted in 2019 and how. Many north of Bedford were in favour as I am yet to meet one, 1. I certainly didn't know about the consultation.</p>
<p>The noise at any time will impact our family immensely. I choose woodlands for the parkland and views. I am heartbroken at this proposal.</p>
<p>The beautiful and peaceful countryside of Woodlands Park has been our special place during the pandemic. In built up areas it is particularly important to be able to access areas of countryside where it is possible to listen to the birds, watch the wildlife and drink in the scenery without the sound of traffic or, if this goes ahead, trains. In addition, I have a very elderly parent who lives at Anjulita Court, the care home just a few hundred metres from the proposed line, who will be massively impacted by a rail line hurtling past at all hours of the day and night. Life can be challenging enough for some of these elderly residents without adding to the trauma at the very end of their lives. Please reconsider !</p>
<p>This is not a fair consultation. We knew nothing about this now and we're not aware of the consultation in 2019. We need a fair consultation for the whole of Bedford.</p>
<p>This is absolutely disgusting how this has been allowed in through the back door, with no consultation with those living in affected area! I certainly do not want to live in an area so close to a train line, who is going to compensate us for this when our homes are worth less due to this train line?! Unbelievable how you think northern route is the best when there is more affordable option of upgrading existing route to south! As an asthmatic living so close to the affected construction area I am worried how the dust will affect my health & whether I will even be able to continue living in my home during this time! You are forcing this onto us, without any consideration to how this will affect us personally! With proposed access via Hawk drive, you equally have not considered children of this parish & how the dust & noise with affect their health & learning environment!</p>
<p>Far better for the line to serve Bedford Midland station and the Northern route is the only feasible option.</p>
<p>I was shocked to learn that the most costly of the routes route E was chosen. I feel strongly against route E due to cost but I am also very concerned about the pollution this will cause to the environment.</p>
<p>I cannot believe that EWR are going for the most expensive route E whilst causing the most damage to the environment. I was not even aware that there was a consultation.</p>
<p>The consultation was flawed and we were not even made aware of a consultation. I do not understand how why route E which was the most expensive route has been chosen - I propose a more cost effective southern route.</p>
<p>Route E should never have been promoted. This consultation should have taken place before Brickhill Parish Council wrote their letter of support. How dare they speak for members of the parish without informing and consulting us! (I am aware not all councillors were party to this blatant disregard of parishioners)</p>
<p>Route choice must be democratic and fair. We should press for a judicial review, in order to re-evaluate the preferred route choice and reopen options that pass to the south of Bedford. 'Central business district' locations are changing from traditional town centres to retail parks along transport corridors. A route following the A428 would align with this trend and better prepare Bedford for the future.</p>
<p>I do not support Route E. Our parish council are not acting in the best interests of our community. The EWR consultation was flawed, not transparent and should be rerun.</p>

I do not agree with either of the proposed alignments mentioned in this questionnaire. It looks to me like the 2019 consultation was poorly communicated within Bedford not only by EWR but also by our local councillors. The 1st I heard about this was February 2021!!!! With this in mind a re-consultation with ALL the facts would be the best way forward for the residents of Bedford.
I am not in favour of route E. Our parish council have failed to act in the best interests of our parish. The consultation has not been carried out in an open and transparent manner.
This should not be coming north plain and simple. The expense for this is ridiculous and not even needed.
There needs to be a review of the route e, it is not the cheapest - once the real costs of mitigation, environmental damage, earth movements, viaduct, cuttings are accurately coated. Environmental impacts haven't been fully investigated, how can this be the least affected?! Route e is not flatter than southern routes. Route e is longer. Route e is just wrong. There is no FACTUAL report that proves the route actually will be beneficial over what would be achieved from the south. Stand up for your residents and preserve the environment.
Having at long last found my perfect retirement home in Ladyslaude Court, I am dismayed at the prospect of years of noise and disruption while they build it. I am far from convinced that is needed at all. Covid has seriously affected commerce and industry and I believe there are other infrastructure considerations that should take priority. Improve what we already have
I do not agree with route e at all. This survey is tricking me to prefer an alignment. I have selected the one least impacting, but this is not me preferring it or agreeing with route e.
The reasons for my answers reflect my strong disagreement to Route E. There are such a great number of issues with this proposed route. It is a route that will not only impact on the environment, Ancient Woodland, Country Park. The route would be within metres of housing, children's play areas, the care home and residential homes. We have great countryside around this area and to use Mayor Hodgson's comment this would be a blight on the area. Not only would it be a blight, it would be detrimental to health. At a time when there are so many reports of people, particularly children, suffering from the impact of pollution this is the wrong route and every effort must be made for a re consultation.
All of the alignments of Route E would result in the destruction of our community assets and local health (especially mental health) benefits. Choosing any of them is a crime against Brickhill residents and the local environment. It is outrageous that some members of our own Brickhill Parish Council will stand by and watch Anjulita Court care home, our schools and forever homes, be blighted by noise and dangerous PM2.5 diesel particles. For the sake of Brickhill, please stop Route E!
If I had to choose a route alignment, I would choose Alignment 1.
Pls keep the railway line away from Renhold and Brickhill
We are so lucky in Brickhill (where I and my family have lived all our lives). Having access to the countryside is so important. St Thomas More and Scott Primary are on the most delightful sites. Any disruption to the children would be shameful. How long will the construction on the railway take???
This project is not needed and certainly not worth the destruction, it will cause.
Noise, impact on wildlife, the environment and disturbance to the country park are my main concerns with all alignments but particularly 8 & 9.
I DO NOT AGREE TO ROUTE E
Environmental and financial disaster.
No to this route - it is ridiculous. Environmentally and financially.
Noise both at night and at daytime is a major concern.
This route should not be coming through North Brickhill
I believe that route e should stopped and a completely open and honest rethink of the whole project.
As an asthma sufferer my greatest concern is the possibility of diesel trains and the impact that would have on air quality. Daytime noise is another big concern followed by night-time noise.
Ultimately, the consultation is flawed and we should be pushing for the original route B, which was cheaper, shorter and faster than route E
I believe that Brickhill Parish Council should recommend an alternative route using the existing alignment between Bedford and Blunham, before having any new line curving north east to Cambourne South, and then on to Cambridge. This could allow a new station to be built to serve the Riverfield Drive estate, companies on Barkers Lane, Priory Country Park and the Aspects Leisure Park.
Although I was not of voting age in 2019 - I am now. Considering what we are taught about the mechanics of democracy in school - this whole process seems to have bypassed any democratic rigour. I listened to people speak to councillors and was surprised that they did not listen.
Firstly, the line should not be built and secondly, if it can't be stopped, then it should be as far away from housing as possible.
The route should not go through Brickhill
I believe that route E decision is flawed and the decision should be reconsidered

I don't agree with a northern route, the southern route is a cheaper and better alternative.

I am against route E for many reasons and would like Brickhill Parish Council to rescind their support of Route E. I am not against the East/West rail project in general but believe that the route that is proposed is unacceptable and should be reconsidered to take into account all the new information that has since come to light since the original consultation in 2019 including costs, freight, diesel, disruption to the environment and demolition of homes. All alternative routes should be considered fully to ensure the correct decision is made as it will impact on generations to come and we must not get this wrong. I would like Brickhill Parish Council to respond to the EWR consultation to this effect. I have watched the parish council meetings and seen the strength of feeling against this route, the lack of consultation, and the parish council must therefore listen to this and represent their parishioners (even if that is different to the Borough Council's views). Below are some of my reasons for my decision which I will be including in my response to the EWR consultation. I have many concerns regarding the environment and how it will be adversely affected. This has not been studied enough and an environmental impact assessment has not been carried out. Without this how can the full impact of this be known. It is crucial that this is done as once our countryside is destroyed we will never get it back. Route E will require carving through unspoilt countryside and will have an irreversible and detrimental impact for wildlife, ancient woodland and endangered species. We must protect our countryside and make full and informed decisions. We also need to be sure that any mitigation measures that might be put in place along any of the routes are fit for purpose? Who will monitor the effects of the mitigation and for how long will they do it for? The building of the route will last for many years, causing noise and pollution and affect the areas around it. 2019 route selection consultation: I was not aware of this consultation as I did not receive any communication. I understand that a postcard was sent to residents, but I did not receive this, and many other residents did not receive it either. There was very limited promotion of the consultation in the news or on social media and so I along with many of my neighbours were unaware of it. This meant that there was inadequate consultation to gain feedback from people who would be affected. The limited number of responses (which were from along the whole of the route not just my area) should have highlighted that people were not aware of this. The numbers of people raising their concerns now show that there is a real concern from people whose houses, lives and the environment will be affected so badly. The information that was presented at the time of the consultation was not detailed enough and changed during the process. How were people able to make an informed decision without full and correct information? The maps that were provided were very poor and made it hard to understand who would be affected. Why weren't better quality maps provided? The costs for the routes changed which would have had an impact on how people responded (or did not respond) believing that route E would not have been a viable option. The consultation did not include freight, which is now clearly becoming evident that this will be the case. There is lack of clarity of how much freight and how often so how can an informed decision be made if this information is not clear and transparent so we understand it fully. 2021 consultation: The EWR consultation we are now being asked to complete does not have sufficient information for myself and others to make a decision. We do not have the full picture and the timescales to complete it are inadequate. There is such a lot of information to take in and with Covid restrictions it is limiting how much people can get involved. Not everyone has access to the Internet or social media and so are missing out on getting the full information which means that they will probably not be able to respond. Those without this access should not be disadvantaged because of it. I believe the deadline for the consultation should be extended after Covid restrictions are eased so that the public can engage fully with all the updated information for all possible routes. Finally, I have lived in Brickhill most of my life and love living here. I chose to live here as I am on the outskirts of the town so able to enjoy the countryside and also able to benefit from the town centre. I love walking and especially during the pandemic have enjoyed the peace and quiet and being in the fresh air. Many people have appreciated this during the last year and the benefits to people's wellbeing and mental health have been vital during these challenging times. It has been enlightening hearing others who say they also love living in Brickhill. Route E will be disastrous for the countryside, wildlife and people's enjoyment of it and all possible routes should be considered fully.

I don't care about alignments - there should not be a railway line coming through the beautiful countryside when a flatter, straighter and less destructive option is staring you in the face

I dislike both alignments since there are alternatives for southern routes which are less disruptive to the countryside. Alignments 1 /2 /6 (furthest away from Woodlands) would appear to be the lesser of two evils but my concern here is that infill housing will go a lot further north to the new line than it would if alignments 8/9 were chosen. Is there a plan for new housing alongside the route alignments? It would be useful to see that alongside the proposals.

Route option 1 - as this is the best of a bad bunch. Ideally NO Route E, but if it does happen then Route alignment 1 will have the least impact on Brickhill and woodland park.

I am responding because whilst I don't live in Brickhill now I use the areas in question and do not wish to see it destroyed.

Don't believe the line should be built, especially as Covid has substantially reduced the number of potential passengers because more people will now work from home.

<p>I not supportive of any of the proposed routes that come via the north of Bedford as I believe they will be more expensive and environmentally damaging than either re-instating the previous railway line that runs past Priory Park (or at least used in part) otherwise the railway could follow the A421 and join the train lines at the A6.</p>
<p>Route E will be the fastest route and will not impinge on businesses. Clapham and in particular Renhold are sparsely populated. I am a keen walker and have lived in Bedford all my life. I have never walked in Clapham nor do I know anyone who does. Bedford has a wealth of parks and the Embankment. There are too many people posting untrue statements on social media. We need this route for scientists, other academics, people having cancer treatment, students undertaking research etc. The new station in Midland Road will connect to the town which will be very good. This train line will create employment for the future for young people.</p>
<p>1) A comment in relation to the route going via Bedford Station is parking and congestion in the town. The station is already struggling with insufficient capacity at the moment and having additional train routes will increase the amount of travellers, and with the planned reduction in car parking will lead to serious capacity problems. What provision will be made for the additional car parking required? 2) Route E appears to be out of alignment with the direction of the line from MK to Cambridge and to divert the route north through Bedford and on through greenfield areas seems completely unnecessary, and a poor environmental decision, when there is a more direct and logical established route available through to Sandy, which would result in less disruption to land and homes. Taking one of the routes south of Bedford should be more financially viable as there would be less track length required and would benefit Sandy with increased access.</p>
<p>I feel that we have not been consulted properly, Brickhill parish council should not have supported route E as it is not in the best interests of the parish or the town. I strongly oppose to route E and the support for this route should be withdrawn with another route considered which would be better for the town.</p>
<p>I feel that this railway is neither needed nor wanted. It will churn up and ruin great swathes of the countryside from its start to finish and can be regarded as ecocide. It will ruin the lives of many residents along the route with pollution, vibrations and noise and I believe that as our elected representatives BPC should be taking a firm stand against its construction entirely.</p>
<p>I did not get any information in 2019. I DO NOT WANT ROUTE E AT ALL. For all of the above reasons. Most of all this will no attract any additional benefit to Bedford. Only freight potential from East to West.</p>
<p>I am strongly against route E, so both Brickhill alignments are not good options. A route south of Bedford would make more sense already using the flatter, transport corridor that already exists.</p>
<p>It is terrible that members of Brickhill Parish council supported a route that is not best for brickhill. Route E needs rejecting in its entirety.</p>
<p>The railway should go by another route - if we care about the future of our planet - it should be on the shortest route along the A421 corridor. The countryside is not a renewable resource!</p>
<p>I paid a premium to live here. That is going to ruin everything we treasure we enjoy here.</p>

I cannot vote for any route alignment as I am against route E. Not only for Brickhill Parish but for the surrounding villages and the impact this will have on the environment. It will change north Brickhill beyond recognition with added noise and pollution. An eyesore.
Route E must be contested. Alignment 1 is a must. I feel compelled to say that BPC initially failed to represent the residents views by supporting Route E.
I don't want any of the route alignments to run by Brickhill. If it's definitely going ahead the further away the better
The needless destruction of countryside and the negative impact this will have on the local environment and community. I have still not seen any concrete evidence this will railway will bring any significant economic benefits to the town.
Route E is a ridiculous waste of money and impact environmentally is non sensical. Re consider!
This survey is restrictive and insulting. No Northern route is acceptable and forcing us to choose one issue of concern when all are equally crucial to human and environmental well- being is manipulative and cynical.
As many have previously said we don't want this - when the world is in so much turmoil and debt you are proposing a new railway that no one along any of the routes want
Route E should never have been an option
We moved to Woodlands park largely because of its open spaces, its quietness etc. This was when the route was originally planned to go south Bedford. Now, I'm concerned about noise, land and wildlife disruption, not having access to the countryside, safety of my children, house value going down (worst case scenario not being able to sell at all!). I cant understand the persistence, given it will be the most costly, have the worst environmental impact and is most opposed.
Interesting there isn't a 'don't do it' option.
This train line should not be constructed, trains are not the future, if it had to come it must go south of Bedford.
I do not want any of the alignments suggested for north Bedford and would urge that the best route is for the existing rail lines to be used south of Bedford.
I would like to see the old route to Sandy reopened and used .This footpath exists and is an ideal path to follow. It would give a railway route to Sandy for a fraction of the cost anticipated for either of the proposed routes.
Neither route is good for Bedford. Why not reuse the old railway route to Sandy the path is still there. How much will be saved and people's lives less damaged. Also less damage to the environment.
Both route alignments in principle do not make sense. It would be better to skip the idea of using route E.
Route alignments should be least impactful to the environment and people's homes if needed at all. Given the impact of covid there is no need for a passenger line therefore the 'need' is solely freight which is on nobody's interest in Bedford and an alternative solution which is sustainable and environmentally friendly must be sought. The analysis process surrounding routes was non-transparent and is out dated due to the pandemic. The consultation process for residents was completely flawed and unethical, for this reason the whole project should cease and an independent review take place.
I do not want route E. Once built, the North Bedfordshire countryside is ruined by this railway if any of the route E options are chosen. All the items above are issues of concern. It is not necessary for the railway to come through the Bedford station. The town will be served just as well by this line with a station south of the town. Economically for the town the difference will be minimal, let alone the traffic chaos which will be created building route E and when completed.
I think if the railway HAS to come through Bedford station then it could follow the existing tracks as far as Oakley. It could then turn North towards Thurleigh. Having said that I am totally against the railway coming through Bedford station. I do not think the railway would bring benefits to the town. The way people travel to work and frequency has changed during the past 2 years and will probably continue to do so. If the railway is mainly for freight then it doesn't need to come through Bedford.
Route E should not have been chosen. As this affects Brickhill Parish, everyone from this area should have been consulted two years prior. This Route is not in the best interest of the community.
Route E should never of been chosen in the first place. We were never asked our views and this is not in our best interest. We also should have been consulted 2 years ago
In view of the size of the cutting, embankment, viaduct required, why not reinstate this on the original route of the track?
I do not support any routes in north Bedford due to impact on environment, beauty of countryside, wildlife and am disgusted that Hawk Drive where Scott Primary School is located was even considered as a work route. Absolutely appalling.
I would rather the railway proposal is shelved altogether it is not necessary or wanted
Day and night noise, freight and access to the country park and not destroying habitable areas for wildlife are all key for me

<p>As a resident of Brickhill Parish for nearly 27 years, I am appalled that the selection of Route E was completed in such an underhand way. I received no EWR generated postcard, no information regarding EWR from BBC Council, or the media...The Times and Citizen has only recently restarted. As a result of my disappointment, I cannot answer Q2. Like every Brickhill resident I know, I don't want any routes to be built to the north of Bedford. Why would any of us support the very expensive, massively negative impact this will have on our lives for such a prolonged period of time?</p>
<p>Alignments 1 and 2 would not be as bad but to go right around the Brickhill homes means a lot more noise and disruption than if the trains went on the other route, we will still get the noise etc but it would not be as bad. I am concerned about the badgers and the wildlife and also the access to the footpaths.</p>
<p>Why is route E an option compared to the southern routes, it makes no sense and the justifications I have heard to date simply do not stand up to questioning</p>
<p>Please leave our country side for future generations</p>
<p>I am not completely happy about the survey. It has been prepared as if the railway route (not alignment) is set in stone. The actual route should not be happening anywhere near Brickhill let alone Woodlands.</p>
<p>The whole idea is pointless, if its not going to carry passengers as well.</p>
<p>The options (alignments) proposed through the village of Ravensden, woodlands park, Brickhill and Clapham will have a devastating effect on the local community, landscape and environment. The proposals either way will have a devastating affect during and post construction with limited access through from woodlands park up the hills and across the fields (all on public bridleways). Spoiling the countryside with concrete viaducts, bridges and walkways is not why constituents moved to Brickhill. The residents in the old people's home moved for peace and tranquillity in their later years - that will be destroyed and will have a long-term effect on the potential to place future residents. The embankments proposed will be an eyesore and feel like a great wall/barrier has been erected around our estate. Not only that the environment has many rare species of flowers and wildlife, not only that ancient historical areas.</p>
<p>None of these routes should be considered as they are detrimental to our countryside and will allow the construction of thousands of houses. We are being pushed by BBC and the Mayor to accept routes that will allow mass construction</p>
<p>I do not recall being consulted on the route until now.</p>
<p>I do not agree with Route E or any of the alignments because there is a lack of transparency of information from EWR and the consultation process to date has been flawed; it appears to be the most complex (and therefore expensive) to navigate through the existing landscape and current infrastructure; huge environmental impact where the noise and dust pollution will be devastating for the Woodlands/Brickhill area and it destroys the rural countryside and wildlife.</p>
<p>The Hawk Drive to be used for the works is ridiculous as it has the school how on earth can that work it will be so dangerous</p>
<p>The route further away from Brickhill will cause less of an impact on woodlands park and Ravensden. Having a train line go straight through Ravensden cross roads would be awful and make traffic congestion a real problem in rush hours.</p>
<p>I don't want a train line running through woodlands park. We use the country park for recreation and having a line going past will ruin the access as well as the view and feel. Pollution will increase and it won't be the rural place we chose to live by.</p>
<p>Affecting the woodlands, nature will be destroyed. Noise and dust night and day.</p>
<p>I am strongly opposed to both of the routes proposed, which will be a blight on the landscape, ruin the beautiful countryside, and cause serious disruption to the peace and enjoyment of my property, and to the properties of my neighbours in Woodlands Park, and surrounding Brickhill.</p>
<p>Environmental impact. Pollution of freight train. Health impact (dust allergy).</p>
<p>I would support more woodland and expansion of the countryside but would worry it would attract wildlife to what would then be a dangerous area for them. I am concerned about children being able to get close to the tracks, when I moved here the safety of having so much countryside to explore for my young son as he grows up was attractive and now it is a worry that he may be able to get close to a railway line.</p>
<p>We are very much concerned about the level of noise and air pollution. The countryside that life in Woodlands Pars offers and have attracted us in a first place will literally disappear or change dramatically.</p>
<p>If I had to choose, it would be a definite no to both. Both have a serious environmental impact not just on the wildlife but also to climate change. Transportation of goods/materials are not an important and are far less important especially considering the current environmental issues that we have. No matter how many times people say that it would be good for the economy is only trying to fool others into thinking this is a great idea. The only thing that is important to the companies will be how much money they will make from this. Yet again greed is Winning over morals and integrity.</p>
<p>Railway is a terrible idea and nobody wants to use it to begin with. Also it's an awful economic decision and akin to having a money fight with a giant fire.</p>
<p>This is a huge area for wildlife and walking in the countryside. Too many bridleways and footpaths will be eliminated by the railway. Mental health will be effected by all who neighbour any part of the railway.</p>

<p>If they are going to build a train line I want it to be done as far away possible from the woods and avoid to disturb wild life on the area.</p>
<p>The alignments further away from Brickhill are preferable. I am in favour of the rail link. Brickhill on the whole is quiet. I feel the increase in noise needs to be kept to a minimum.</p>
<p>The railway will have a huge negative impact on the surround areas and wildlife as well as residents</p>
<p>I do not believe at all that the destruction of lovely countryside and decimation of wildlife is at necessary, there a are other routes which would do much less damage, if indeed we need an additional railway line at all</p>
<p>I love the peace and tranquility in Woodlands, that's why we moved here. This all seems so unfair.</p>
<p>I do not want any of the northern route alignments at all. They would be too destructive to the countryside and the natural environment north of Bedford. The Old Varsity Line route should be used as it is flat and shorter and there has been very little development on the original track-bed.</p>
<p>I am concerned about the impact on the Environment, wildlife etc. I am also concerned about the impact on the value of my property having brought off plan from new with no warning a railway was going to be built nearby. We brought this property to be outside of the town centre and easy access to the country park and surrounding fields to walk and aid a healthy lifestyle. I am also concerned about the need for this railway connection when apparently the 2017 leaflets (nobody seems to have seen) were based prior to the pandemic and the vast majority of organisations are advocating increasing working from home (including my employer) In view of this I think that the purpose of the railway against cost and disruption should be reviewed.</p>
<p>To put a railway through a notably gradient topographic landscape on any of the alignments, rather than the shallow land south of Bedford is absolute madness.</p>
<p>I am not happy about having our beautiful countryside decimated and the impact it will have on local wildlife.</p>
<p>All discussed route alignments in this survey make no sense economically, practically or environmentally. There is a strongly viable route through Bedford via the A421, and to align the railway infrastructure with that would have much less impact on the environment and ancient woodland, as well as having the advantage of following an already more prepared route in terms of cuttings and infrastructure. The cost associated with a completely new route through a hilly part of Bedfordshire does not appear to have been accurately assessed. Worst of all is the affect on an already congested area of Bedford - the road infrastructure around Bedford Modern and Shakespeare Road will not be able to cope with the increased volume - it already struggles as it is one of very few practical routes for commuting outside of Bedford. The prospective increased business to Bedford is unlikely to hit the projected volumes as the station is too far away from Bedford town to attract visitors. St Johns station is much closer if that is a priority for the town. The routes described in this survey are far more likely to drive people away from Bedford as the destruction of countryside and the traffic issues caused will ensure that Bedford becomes an undesirable place to live and a difficult one to commute from. The railway line does not provide any practical commuting options for the main east-west hub of Milton Keynes, so will be of zero benefit to a majority of Bedford commuters. This will also be true of the surrounding villages, all of which will suffer hugely from any of the routes described above, leading to devalued housing and a general reduction of Bedford and the surrounding residential areas.</p>
<p>Stupid idea! Best would be to follow Bedford bypass from a Wixhams station. People will enjoy taking their money out of Bedford to spend in Cambridge and Oxford. People will live in cheaper housing in Bedford whilst working in Cambridge and Oxford, again taking money out whilst putting more strain on local services</p>
<p>We have lived in Woodlands Park for 11 years, with the country park and peace being a major factor in choosing our house. We were never advised of railway implications when we purchased. And we feel this will massively affect the valuation on our house in the future</p>
<p>The first consultation was flawed it that options weren't evaluated equally or fairly. Options to reuse existing previous rail infrastructure were ignored. There has been no traffic modelling or assessment of the impact to air quality if the new lines go through Midland Road Station. The loss of homes is being downplayed by BBC, and councillors are ignoring the genuine concerns of the community. If Option E is the final route, I hope not, noise and pollution mitigation measures would be needed, not just vegetation screening which does not reduce noise or pollution.</p>
<p>Route e is happening. No doubt about it. So working on that assumption route 1, 2 or 6 need to be selected. Its the best of a bad situation. Feel free to speak to me if needed :)</p>
<p>I moved from town to a peaceful area opposite open countryside in 2019 following a severe brain injury which left me suffering extreme headaches. I'm concerned about the noise disturbing my sleep and health. The proposed train line wasn't declared in my searches when I purchased my house at the end of 2019.</p>
<p>I have no preference on route alignment as I do not agree with Route E ar all due to the impact on surrounding countryside, wildlife and environment.</p>
<p>Not against a railway but it needs to be done in the least damaging way possible to both residents and wildlife, as well as the lovely once green views we have in Brickhill. Worried about the noise impact this will have on my once quiet street as well as the fact we could have an increased flood risk damaging the house and making house prices fall. Electrification would lessen the noise and this should be done straight away to reduce costs.</p>

I really think the best solution would be to go south of the town to avoid all of the above. I cannot understand how this route will benefit anybody. It is the most ridiculous plan I have ever seen.
All of the above - the railway is a complete waste of money and a complete and utter travesty
1,2,6 of course is the best route for Brickhill and Woodland park. For us this means - less noise - mainly/hopefully be out of sight. - further away from the houses. - Better for the country Park. Route 8,9 will create 15m wall pretty much wrapping itself around the whole of the country Park, which will have a big impact of the local area as it will be right in your face. Not only a train, but one sitting high in the sky.
Can't believe this is allowed to happen ripping through the beautiful countryside destroying the views, wildlife, peace and quiet of the area. It is dangerous to the schools, wildlife and local residents, 100mph trains 24 hours a day including freight- it will ruin all our lives, not to mention noise, dust, pollution, traffic implications during construction... viaducts and tunnels mentioned sounds ludicrous and expensive. Cannot see any positives to this route at all. Residents have not been told enough information on route E and further consultation is required- this should have been laid out years ago. Residents of Brickhill need to be fully aware.
I still cannot see how any of these routes are suitable. The destruction to the wildlife is frightening and the damage to beautiful open countryside is unacceptable. Not to mention the noise, pollution and constant disruption from the moment the works start through to when the trains start using the tracks.
I'd prefer for the route not to come through Brickhill. I don't personally see the need for the railway line, but I don't want it to impact the reason I bought in woodlands park, being close to the fields and enjoying a walk right through.
I dont want any of these alignments in route e. I don't want route e. Please get EWR to look again
Route e is wrong. The benefits are, as Cllr said in 2019 "pie in the sky". Get it reversed
No route E
Do not wish to have route E at all, no alignment. Re-consult with residents correctly and stop with the rubbish of postcards that were not sent to Brickhill, posting on media sites that no one follows
I am against any alignment in route E
I don't want route e at all. The whole process is corrupt and was not fairly consulted on. Selecting an alignment is impossible on route that should never have been pushed
NO ROUTE E. NO EAST WEST RAILWAY AT ALL. CANCEL IT WASTE OF MONEY
Route E is bad news for Brickhill, especially the prospect of massive freight loads being shipped to the Covanta incinerator. I foresee huge areas of the countryside being built over with housing etc.
I do not want a railway line through the beautiful countryside. NO TO ROUTE E
Where is it proposed construction traffic access the site - I presume NOT Avon Drive, Tyne Crescent, Ashmead Road and through the country park?
Route 8&9 would have a devastating impact.
These questions are very ambiguous- route E is not the right route for all the above reasons and Brickhill is not a flat route. I'm aghast that our council is pushing this through without a fair consultation
We need to have access to all the data that apparently clearly demonstrates the economic benefits to Bedford from the Northern vs Southern routes. Only then can we compare this theoretical benefit to the known environmental damage that this project will cause. Personally I do not believe this project will provide the economic benefits predicted and instead will just drive noisy diesel freight through Bedford to the East coast as well as encouraging people to shop outside of the area in Cambridge or Oxford.
There should be NO route E and a southern route should be adopted which is more feasible and less impactful for all of the reasons listed above
This is nonsense: if the rail is for passengers, it should be going where there might be some: south of Bedford. If the rail is for freight, it should be going where the gradients don't restrict its function: south of Bedford. Rail is a costly, high-density transport system, not a 'first step' in trying to tempt builders into a new area that has no roads, no schools - barely any public services at all. This is a huge fiscal risk, wasting our money and causing major damage to the area due to the size of cuttings and embankments which, again, are not necessary south of Bedford. A note on statement 10 below: while EWR agrees that a route that goes through Bedford station is a route that goes through Bedford station, EWR have categorically stated that this is not their preferred route; Route B is their preference due to lower journey times, lower installation cost, lower running cost, lower long-term environmental impact, more housing opportunities, positive BCR under medium to good conditions (route E never achieves BCR parity, even under perfect conditions), a higher chance of private investment. Their information is available in their copious documentation but hidden in the 'facts' sections at the back rather than 'opinions' marketing at the front.
I disagree strongly with the route E choice. It is going to destroy so much green belt land, wildlife habits. It will also blight the lives of so many people in north Beds villages.
Strongly object to route E
I am VERY angry about the prospect of ANY route passing near Brickhill and I am STRONGLY opposed to any railway running near the green belt, ancient forest and villages of northern Bedford

It's the worst possible route destroying woodland and too close to the houses. I am very angry. Residents were not consulted!
I do not support any route if the railway heading north through Brickhill. This should follow the south route and not north.
We were not consulted on this. Why does it not follow the route that is still in existence from years ago through Bedford. I object to the route selection as I believe it was based on non-transparent consultation.
I believe the whole project is flawed from a technical, business case, physic health aspect, environmental and a mental health perspective.
I don't agree with any of the alignments and believe this project will be a white elephant. Passenger numbers are not going to increase especially since Covid.
I don't agree that any of the northern options are the right route. I'm distraught that until this year I was unaware of the impact. I live on woodlands park close to the country park and walk around this twice a day. I moved here because of the access to the countryside and the quiet area. I will have no choice but to leave my home of nearly 14 years, where I had intended to live well into my retirement. I can not see how the upheaval to Bedford town benefits the residents. It will take people away to shop elsewhere, and 438 jobs don't make it worthwhile. It destroys the identity of Bedford and I will move away from Bedford. I am finding the thought of this is affecting my mental well-being. I was shocked with the behaviour of the parish council and feel this survey is too late, and doesn't ask the right questions.
The alignment should not be closest to existing housing estate (Woodlands estates) The noise, pollution and dust from the trainline will have a direct impact on peoples lives and effect peoples health. The countryside around Brickhill will be ruined and the impact on wildlife will be massive. This should never have got this far that we are now having to fight to prevent this from happening. There was a complete lack of communication from EWR with all Brickhill residents and routes. We must prevent our countryside therefore lines 1,2 & 6 would be better suited to residents. We do not & need the noise and disruption from the building of this line to have an impact on local residents if it is built on 8 & 9.
The case for a route South of Bedford is overwhelming on several counts. Economics, Journey times, Pollution, Environmental to name a few.
I do not support any route if the railway heading north through Brickhill. This should follow the south route and not north.
I think all of the route alignments currently being discussed will irrevocably spoil some of the most untouched natural environment around Bedford.
NO NORTH ROUTE AT ALL. NO EWR HERE! I cannot believe that our elected Parish Council have written off Brickhill and especially Woodlands Park for what will bring very little benefit to Bedford. Do you seriously think anyone from Cambridge/Milton Keynes is going to come and spend money in Bedford? Hospitality and retail businesses in Bedford are going to suffer as a direct result of this as people from Bedford flock out of town on the train. Then there is the environmental damage for very little environmental gain - destroying ancient woodland and planting new trees that will not help absorb carbon dioxide for at least 15yrs when we kind of need that doing now. I am absolutely furious that Bedford seems wedded to this Victorian solution to a 21st century transport problem that, frankly, post-Covid will not be there. The government has already received reports from experts such as Peter Hendy to say that commuting is expected to reduce drastically in the coming years.
ROUTE E SHOULD NOT BE CHOSEN AS IT IS COMPLETELY INAPPROPRIATE AND WILL BE A DISASTER FOR THE SURROUNDING AREA INCLUDING WOODLANDS PARK
The rail route should be scrapped altogether. We don't want it and don't need it
This train line is neither needed nor wanted. There will be marginal if any benefit to woodlands park and yet it bears the brunt of the blight and nuisance.
I think this is the wrong choice of route, pure and simple. I strongly believe the consultation process for this choice was flawed, and that resident's opinions were not properly considered. I also believe the problems (especially environmental) this will cause far outweigh any potential very long-term benefits.
Unable to answer as consider route 'E' is the wrong choice for Bedford. The reasons have been outlined to the parish council many times. There are better alternative routes available. I also consider that this questionnaire is flawed in that it does not give an option when answering to state that you are not in agreement with route 'E' at all. I do not want to choose between the options in question '2' as I am not in favour of either. This makes ticking any of the following boxes impossible.
Neither of the routes alignments make sense for the people of Brickhill. Obviously if it has to go ahead then we want minimum impact possible however as we were not consulted on the original choice, and there has been more information made available now, the entire route alignment should be reconsidered.