

UPDATE 11 FEBRUARY FROM MEETING WITH PARISH COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES AND CAMBRIDGE APPROACHES

Ben Banks and Isabel Robinson attended an online meeting with Parish Council representatives from Cambourne to Shelford on Thursday 11 February. Presentations were made by Cambridge Approaches, Sebastian Kindersley and various Cambridge Approaches (CA) working group members.

The main reason to get all the parishes together was to endorse a letter written to the Department of Transport. The wording is as follows:

We, the undersigned, request that the Department for Transport ensures that the proposal for a northern route for the Central Section of the East West Rail, such as that proposed by CamBedRailRoad with widespread support amongst residents of South Cambridgeshire, is fairly evaluated at the same time and to the same degree as alternative routes proposed by East West Rail Company.

This is an important step to try and get both southern and northern approaches fairly evaluated, which has not happened thus far. The petition, as set up by CamBedRailRoad, has now nearly 6,750 signatures. This also pushes for the fair evaluation for the northern approach. If you haven't signed it yet please do. **The aim is to get over 10,000 people to sign it.**

<https://www.change.org/p/secretary-of-state-for-transport-northern-rail-route-should-be-evaluated-equally-alongside-ewr-s-current-proposals-d7bd2f1f-7675-41de-b072-161074cfdeef>

Cambridge Approaches and Sebastian Kindersley made compelling presentations to not only question the worthiness of the southern approach, but to endorse the northern route in terms of housing (existing and future), wildlife, environment, cost and being more suitable for passengers and freight. Most of this has been stated before, but to refresh your memory take a look at Sebastian Kindersley's presentation from November 2020:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IOj1A5H0kIY&feature=youtu.be>

Update from Anthony Browne MP

Anthony Browne MP has published a letter to residents on 5th February. He states:

'My aim is to ensure that both the northern and southern options are properly considered and consulted on. This will not only ensure that the best decision can be made, but also that the public can have confidence in the process.'

To view the whole letter, see:

<https://www.anthonybrowne.org/sites/www.anthonybrowne.org/files/2021-02/East%20West%20Rail%20Letter%20re%20northern%20approach%20Feb%202021%20%28dear%20resident%29.pdf?fbclid=IwAR2xw3nGTWZ-4iuvb4hWllfQoMGucVQPz0Krx6K11WoPBJ40HYTPQ2aE3l>

See also his local campaigning page: <https://www.anthonybrowne.org/east-west-rail>

This is promising. He is also setting up various meetings with local MPs for a unified response and Ministers for Housing and Rail to highlight the issues.

Cambridge Approaches Presentations

Cambridge Approaches has been in contact with various organisations to gather support - Natural England, Campaign for the Protection for Rural England, Wildlife Trusts. All agree that the northern

approach will have less environmental impact than the southern approach. They also question why a Strategic Environmental Assessment hasn't been performed. Hopefully the petition (as mentioned above) will be circulated to the Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Northamptonshire Wildlife Trusts' members (c.34,000) and the 10,000 goal will be reached.

Stephen Watterson (PC of Eversden, legal advisor to CA)

Leigh Day has been appointed by CA. The firm was involved in the 2019 consultation and the subsequent decision to avoid Bassingbourn. The aim is to look forward and take action rather than back at 'flawed' previous decisions.

Annabel Sykes (resident of Great Shelford, part of the CA working group). She has compiled a comprehensive list of various actions that all of us can do to make sure our voice is still heard at EWR. She likened her list of objectives to an annoying mosquito round the head of EWR.

These include the following:

- Freedom of information request for a list, map or results of environmental studies in your area/postcode/parish
- Request for evidence of consultation letter in 2019 (did everyone in the parish get the letter?)
- Ask why permissive footpaths are not on the EWR interactive map [footpaths are on it, but they have omitted permissive paths].
- Submit questions or comments to the community hub <https://communityhub.eastwestrail.co.uk/>
The more comments - the more they know we exist. Tell your story of the village, community assets, environmental issues, transport infrastructure.

We all now await the next phase of consultation from EWR. Potential routes could be published in the next month or so. However, there are plenty of things we can all do in the meantime:-

- Write to Anthony Browne MP, South Cambridgeshire: anthony.browne.mp@parliament.uk
- Write to Daniel Zeichner MP, Cambridge (the residents of Cambridge City won't be very happy if freight is rumbling through the night): daniel@danielzeichner.co.uk
- Write to Lucy Frazer MP, South East Cambridgeshire: lucy.frazer.mp@parliament.uk (some of her constituency could be affected by the northern approach - but they may welcome it?)
- Hound EWR: eastwestrail.co.uk
- Write to Bridget Smith (leader of South Cambs District Council: Cllr.bridgetsmith@scambs.gov.uk
- Write to Grant Shapps MP (Secretary of State for Transport): shapps@parliament.uk
- Write to Robert Jenrick MP (Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government): robert.jenrick.mp@parliament.uk
- Write to Mayor James Palmer (Mayor of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough: james.palmer@cambridgeshirepeterborough-ca.gov.uk

Isabel