

## Planning and Strategic Housing

Reply to: Andrew Thomson

Direct Line: (01993) [REDACTED]

Fax: (01993) [REDACTED]

E-mail: [REDACTED]



Environmental Services  
Operations Group 3  
Temple Quay House 2  
The Square  
Bristol, BSI 6PN

**Your Ref:**  
**Our Ref:**  
**Date:** 04 February 2025

Dear PINs,

### **RE: Planning Act 2008 (as amended) and The Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (the EIA Regulations) – Regulations 10 and 11**

### **Application by East West Railway Company Limited (the Applicant) for an Order granting Development Consent for the East West Rail (the Proposed Development)**

### **Scoping consultation and notification of the Applicant's contact details and duty to make available information to the Applicant if requested**

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the consultation on the applicant's Scoping Report and the opportunity to feed into the Scoping Opinion for this important project.

We recognise that the proposed new railway between Bedford and Cambridge has been designated as a project of national significance which means the Secretary of State for Transport for a Development Consent Order (DCO) will determine the application to build and operate the new railway between Bedford and Cambridge and additional upgrades between Oxford and Bedford.

We also recognise that because of the scale and nature of the proposed development that it will be regarded as EIA development.

While the East West Rail project presents numerous opportunities and benefits for the region, we believe that the following considerations should receive careful and thorough attention to minimise environmental impacts and ensure the well-being of local communities:

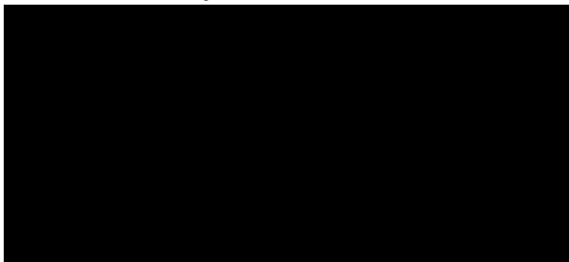
- **Passenger and Freight Travel:** We urge careful consideration of how passenger and freight services will be managed to ensure effective delivery.
- **Land Impact and Compensation:** Minimising the loss of land and addressing the impacts on landowners and homeowners is vital. Support, including fair compensation, should be provided where necessary.
- **Landscape Impact:** Given the region's rich landscape, we stress the importance of minimising the visual and physical impacts of the rail infrastructure, including any associated buildings.
- **Vegetation Loss:** The loss of vegetation should be minimised, and any unavoidable losses should be replaced wherever possible.
- **Biodiversity Enhancement:** The project should aim to exceed the statutory minimum of a 10% biodiversity net gain, enriching and improving the local ecosystem.

- **Archaeological Preservation:** The project should be mindful of potential archaeological sites along the route.
- **Environmental Impact:** Dust, light pollution, and other environmental impacts during both construction and operation should be carefully managed to minimise disruption.
- **Residential Amenity:** Consideration of the living conditions of residents along the route is essential, with efforts to minimise disturbance.
- **Sensitive to Historic Settlements:** Changes to areas with historic significance must be handled with care to preserve heritage.
- **Sustainable Building Practices:** The project should prioritise the use of local materials, renewable energy, and sustainable construction techniques to reduce its carbon footprint.
- **Waste Reduction:** Minimising waste during construction should be a priority.

To demonstrate that topics have not been overlooked, where topics are scoped out prior to submission of the application, the Environmental Statement should clearly explain the reasoning and justify the approach taken.

West Oxfordshire District Council is broadly in agreement with the Environmental Statement topic areas set out in the Scoping Report December 2024 and the identified areas of environmental impact, subject to the above matters being addressed.

Yours sincerely,



Andrew Thomson

Planning Policy Manager