



The Civic Society For Milton Keynes

EAST WEST RAIL CONSULTATION BLETCHLEY AND MARSTON VALE LINE

We fully support the proposed upgrading of the Bletchley and Marston Vale Line as an integral part of the development of the Oxford-Milton Keynes-Cambridge Arc.

We have provided comments upon the line as part of our recent submission to Milton Keynes Council as part of the public consultation upon the Supplementary Planning Document for the South East Milton Keynes Strategic Urban Extension, which are repeated below:

1. *We support the proposed relocation of Woburn Sands Railway Station but we think that more work needs to be done to understand the levels for the road as it crosses the railway line and how it will impact upon nearby buildings and access to the development land either side.*
2. *We believe that the decisions around each location should be based upon the best provision of connectivity to MK and the adjoining land for both residents and visitors alike. These are our views upon the questions posed by the consultation (from west to east):*
 - a. *V10 (Bow Brickhill Level Crossing): The V10 is a major point of entry into MK but, in Grid Road terms, it becomes a secondary route as it proceeds northwards due to it being single carriageway (albeit with dualling options) and intermittent roundabouts. The most logical bridge option was the one left by Milton Keynes Development Corporation (MKDC) which has now been severely compromised by the sale to Red Bull of the land that was reserved for the bridge approaches. All of the E-W Rail alternatives being investigated to determine their feasibility are clumsy and inelegant in the way that they would accommodate traffic entering and leaving MK. If a bridge is to be built, we would suggest that the original "MKDC alignment" is far superior and should be used for either a bridge or a tunnel. We appreciate that it requires strategic rethinking but we would see no reason why the Red Bull parking requirement could not be reallocated in the immediately adjoining area to the west of V10 with a suitable crossing to the main campus.*
 - b. *V11 (Browns Wood Level Crossing): In contrast to V10, V11 is the major road on the eastern side of MK and is dualled for the majority of its length (from H10-H6). We believe that this crossing is vital and that V11 should be extended as a dual carriageway across the railway line from H10 southwards to meet the new (H11) to be built as part of SEMK, thus providing an alternative to V10 and the Bow Brickhill Level Crossing. The new bridge should accommodate a redway (ie a shared path for cyclists and pedestrians).*
 - c. *Pony Level Crossing: This is an essential part of the movement network to connect MK to the Brickhill Woods. It would seem that an underpass is the most appropriate form of crossing but it would need to be designed to a broad width and with splayed ends to offer the maximum security for users. It should be designed of sufficient height that horseriders do not need to dismount to use it.*
 - d. *Woodleys Farm Level Crossing: Unless there is an occupational need to keep this open to accommodate the residents of the Farm, we would have no objection to it being closed as it would otherwise seem to offer no particular benefit to the residents of SEMK.*

- e. *Fisherman's Path Footpath Level Crossing: As with Woodleys Farm above, we have no objection to closure unless it is fulfilling a requirement of which we are unaware. We would, however, suggest that, if both this and the Woodley's Farm Crossing are to be closed, they should be replaced with a single pedestrian/redway crossing between the Pony Level Crossing and the new Woodleys Road bridge.*
 - f. *Woburn Sands Road Level Crossing: There is no easy solution to this crossing and the alternative road proposals all bring their own level of problems by diverting traffic into the existing streets of the town. We support the general principle of closing the level crossing but such a decision should only be taken against a full review of the way that traffic moves around the whole of the local area as far as Woburn and M1(J13) so that as much through traffic as possible is removed from the A5130 through Woburn Sands.*
 - g. *Woburn Sands Station: We support its relocation westwards into SEMK where it can have car park to enable travellers to use the train as a convenient alternative to travel into CMK and elsewhere.*
 - h. *There should be an additional crossing for the Woodleys Road west of Woburn Sands, as shown in the SPD.*
3. We have the following additional comments:
- a. By way of clarification of Point c above, the footpath approaches on both sides of should be straight and directly in line with the route through the underpass, to achieve clear through visibility and maximise personal safety.
 - b. By way of clarification of Point e above, any closure of the footpath (PRoW FP 002 Woburn Sands) should provide a new footpath that is incorporated in a new road bridge west of the proposed new Woburn Sands station, or in a footbridge connecting both sides of the station. This will enable pedestrian access to the station and the use of the current Footpath alignment for its full length between the west side of Woburn Sands and Wavendon village.
 - c. The opportunity should be taken to provide a high quality design for the pedestrian/cyclist footbridge adjacent to the Woburn Sands level-crossing to mark the northern entrance to the town.
 - d. We do not support the closure of the stations at Bow Brickhill and Fenny Stratford as they provide an important local function.
 - e. We are concerned about the apparent lack of importance of Milton Keynes Central station within the Proposals. We believe that there will be a significant demand for direct services to Cambridge and therefore services should be extended from Bletchley accordingly: we support the construction of the "chord" to link EW Rail to the West Coast Mainline.
 - f. We believe that the whole Oxford-Cambridge line should be electrified and we are concerned that this is not being pursued, particularly given the Government statements about climate change.

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By email to consultation@eastwestrail.co.uk