

## **NEWS RELEASE**

Monday 28 January 2018

### **Communities urged to have their say on Cambridge-Oxford rail link**

Councillors are urging communities to have their say on proposed routes a new railway line between Cambridge and Oxford may take across South Cambridgeshire.

Leading Councillors have said the new railway link plays an important part in maintaining a thriving economy in South Cambridgeshire and will genuinely open up employment opportunities as Oxford can be reached in just 70 minutes on the train.

Routes for consultation published today (Monday 28 January) by East West Rail include options that could include a new station near Cambourne or Bassingbourn.

South Cambridgeshire District Council will be responding to the consultation after debating it at a Cabinet meeting on 6 March.

The Council wrote to the Government and promoters of the railway following a Council meeting in September to call on them to give the environment full and through consideration when selecting the route.

Councillors supported a motion in September that said that the railway line “presents us with an unprecedented opportunity to make positive contributions to net biodiversity and natural capital gains”.

At the time Councillors said that they fully support the railway line as it will be transformational to the regional economy, but want to see issues such as flood management, noise and air pollution and health taken into consideration from the start of the project, so they are fully considered when selecting the route.

They have also said that the route assessment must also be based on how it can support thousands of new jobs and homes already planned for the area in the Council’s Local Plan.

Councillors are urging people to make sure they have their say during the consultation and recognise that the information published raises a lot of questions they will be asking the

promoters on behalf of communities.

Cllr Aidan Van de Weyer, South Cambridgeshire District Council's Deputy Leader, said: "The new railway line is important to the area as we need genuine alternatives to the car to help people to get around for work and leisure. It also opens up a huge part of the country to our residents where no direct and fast public transport links have been available. The information published raises many questions for me, such as how the wide areas they have provided as potential routes will be narrowed down, what level crossings will be needed, will any roads need to be closed and where will stations be located?"

"We have a huge opportunity to deliver a fantastic transport link whilst also making sure that the route delivers a positive environmental legacy too. We want South Cambridgeshire to be green to its core and will be making sure the importance of the highest environmental standards is made crystal clear.

"We will be making sure the views of our communities are heard by responding to the consultation, but I want to urge everyone locally to have their say."

To find out more about the Cambridge to Oxford railway proposals and routes for consultation, visit <https://eastwestrail.co.uk/haveyoursay>

## **ENDS**

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