

Richard Fuller MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Simon Blanchflower
Chief Executive Officer
East West Railway Company
By email

14th June 2021

Dear Mr Blanchflower,

I would like to invite you to visit some of the key points along the potential routes of East West Rail through my constituency of North East Bedfordshire. Although I was born in Bedford and have been MP for both the Bedford constituency and the North East Bedfordshire constituency, I have found my recent visits to the communities and land that may be affected by the route to have been extremely useful in helping me to visualise the impact. I think you will also find it useful.

As you will be aware there have been mounting concerns from some residents about aspects of the consultation and decision processes over the Bedford to Cambridge route. These concerns relate to actions of both Bedford Borough Council and the East West Rail Company. I am grateful to your colleague, Will Gallagher, for participating in meetings that I have arranged. This has helped resolve some issues, but other issues have also emerged. A crucial issue which has contributed to the "trust deficit" in this process relates to the changes in Cost Benefit calculations of Routes A – E between the start of the 2019 consultation process and the final report later that year.

I would like to request a meeting with your team to conduct an in-depth review of the calculations that informed the original (2019 consultation launch) cost-benefit calculations together with a step by step explanation of the changes in each element of costs and benefits (including back-up data) that led to the switch in order of the routes in the final 2019 report. I think a full transparency and understanding of these changes in thinking will go a long way in resolving issues that continue to worry many of my constituents.

I would be grateful if you could advise a date for when you might be able to join me for a visit in North East Bedfordshire and for the in-depth conversation with your colleague of the cost benefit calculations at your earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard Fuller".

Richard Fuller MP

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