

## Appendix B - BCN Wildlife Trust’s Comments on the East West Rail Route Consultation in Bedfordshire only (from Bedford running eastwards to county border with Cambridgeshire)

Information about bats have been provided by Bedfordshire Bat Group.

Route	Response	Bedford to Sandy comments
A	Object – impossible to avoid directly impacting the Greensand Ridge NIA and key woodlands in that area. Other main concern is running the track between Sandy Warren SSSI and Biggleswade Common CWS. I would prefer the route east of A1 to follow route B or E running in a north west direction but avoiding complex of ancient woodland and parkland northeast of Everton and	<p>It is difficult to ascertain from the map the exact location of the route but along the Bedford to Sandy section the route is narrow and following its projected trajectory it would consume College Wood County Wildlife Site (CWS) and remove a significant proportion of Sheerhatch Wood CWS. Both woodlands are recognised as ancient Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodlands (NERC Act, 2006 priority habitat) which sit at the north-east end of the Greensand Ridge Nature Improvement Area (NIA). This track will harm the coherency of the ecological network as well as directly impacting these sites. However, if this route is selected as the final route, and we would strongly oppose this, EWR should look for opportunities to make significant improvements to the ecological network of the Greensand Ridge NIA in terms of enlarging and enhancing existing wildlife assets and increasing the ecological connectivity between them.</p> <p>Barbastelle bats (<i>Barbastella barbastellus</i>) are known to roost in Highlands Farm woodland just to the south of the proposed track and to the west of the village of Northill. The bats commute due north through Sheerhatch Wood up into Moggerhanger to forage. Siting a proposed track here would place a significant barrier to the movement of this species, which is protected in the UK under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981; Priority Species under the UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework; European Protected Species under Annex IV of the European Habitats Directive; Listed as Near Threatened on the global IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.</p> <p>We are concerned about the biodiversity impact of the proposed route further east where the ‘EWR track runs between Sandy Warren SSSI and Biggleswade Common CWS’ (East West Rail Bedford to Cambridge Route Option Consultation Technical Report January 2019). The narrow band of Priority habitats between these statutory and non-statutory sites contains two CWS called Sandy Disused Railway (Lowland Dry Acidic Grassland NERC Act, 2006 priority habitat) and Sandy Meadow CWS. These sites will be directly impacted by siting the track here. The habitats in this area are an important part of the ecological network within the Greensand Ridge NIA and running a track through this area will create a substantial barrier to this network. This area also provides a key foraging location for Serotine bats (<i>Eptesicus serotinus</i>) (protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981. European Protected Species under Annex IV of the European Habitats Directive), which are an uncommon species in the county. A track in this location could impact this protected species.</p>

	Greensand Ridge NIA.	<p>In addition to the main concerns highlighted above, there are other Habitats and Species of Principle Importance, which may be impacted by EWR. A number of statutory and non-statutory sites, following examination on the maps provided, are located within close proximity to the proposed EWR track and may be impacted. These are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kempston Hardwick Pit CWS</li> <li>Elstow Pit CWS</li> <li>Home Wood CWS</li> <li>Warren Villas CWS</li> <li>River Ivel and Hiz CWS</li> <li>Sandy Warren SSSI</li> <li>Biggleswade Common CWS</li> <li>Sutton Fen and Wood CWS</li> </ul>
B	Least damaging route – could move the route to avoid the key sites highlighted and the Greensand Ridge NIA.	<p>It is difficult to ascertain from the map the exact location of the route but along the initial section, the route narrows at a point to the west of Moggerhanger village and this will, on its present trajectory, directly impact an ancient woodland called Bottom Wood CWS containing Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodlands (NERC Act, 2006 priority habitat).</p> <p>We are concerned about the biodiversity impact of the proposed route further east where the EWR track runs north of the village of Everton. At this point, the route starts to narrow and there is a complex of CWS and habitats including ancient Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland (NERC Act, 2006 priority habitat) and Wood Pastures and Parkland (NERC Act, 2006 priority habitat). The CWS are Foxhole Wood, White Wood, Woodbury Sinks CWS and Woodbury Moats and Spinney CWS. These sites sit at the north-east end of the Greensand Ridge NIA. This track will harm the coherency of the ecological network as well as directly impacting these sites. However, if this route is selected as the final route, EWR should look for opportunities to make significant improvements to the ecological network of the Greensand Ridge NIA in terms of enlarging and enhancing existing wildlife assets and increasing the ecological connectivity between them.</p> <p>In addition to the main concerns highlighted above, there are other Habitats and Species of Principle Importance, which may be impacted by EWR. A number of statutory and non-statutory sites, following examination of the maps provided, are located within close proximity to the proposed EWR track and may be impacted. These are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kempston Hardwick Pit CWS</li> <li>Elstow Pit CWS</li> <li>Moggerhanger Park CWS</li> <li>Zwetsloots Pits CWS</li> <li>South Mills Pits CWS</li> </ul>

		River Ivel and Hiz CWS
C	Object – could avoid Bottom Wood by moving the track. Main concern is running the track between Sandy Warren SSSI and Biggleswade Common CWS. I would prefer the route east of A1 to follow route B or E running in a north west direction but avoiding complex of ancient woodland and parkland northeast of Everton and Greensand Ridge NIA.	<p>It is difficult to ascertain from the map the exact location of the route but along the initial section, the route narrows at a point to the west of Moggerhanger village and this will, on its present trajectory, directly impact an ancient woodland called Bottom Wood CWS containing Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodlands (NERC Act, 2006 priority habitat).</p> <p>We are concerned about the biodiversity impact of the proposed route further east where the ‘EWR track runs between Sandy Warren SSSI and Biggleswade Common CWS’ (East West Rail Bedford to Cambridge Route Option Consultation Technical Report January 2019). The narrow band of Priority habitats between these statutory and non-statutory sites contains two CWS called Sandy Disused Railway (Lowland Dry Acidic Grassland NERC Act, 2006 priority habitat) and Sandy Meadow CWS. These sites will be directly impacted by siting the track here. The habitats in this area are an important part of the ecological network within the Greensand Ridge NIA and running a track through this area will create a substantial barrier to this network. However, if this route is selected as the final route, and we would strongly oppose this, EWR should look for opportunities to make significant improvements to the ecological network of the Greensand Ridge NIA in terms of enlarging and enhancing existing wildlife assets and increasing the ecological connectivity between them. This area also provides a key foraging location for Serotine bats (<i>Eptesicus serotinus</i>) (protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981. European Protected Species under Annex IV of the European Habitats Directive), which are an uncommon species in the county. A track in this location could affect this protected species.</p> <p>In addition to the main concerns highlighted above, there are other Habitats and Species of Principle Importance, which may be impacted by EWR. A number of statutory and non-statutory sites, following examination of the maps provided, are located within close proximity to the proposed EWR track and may be impacted. These are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kempston Hardwick Pit CWS</li> <li>Elstow Pit CWS</li> <li>Moggerhanger Park CWS</li> <li>River Ivel and Hiz CWS</li> <li>Zwetsloot Pits CWS</li> <li>Waterloo Thorns CWS</li> <li>Warren Villas CWS</li> <li>Sandy Warren SSSI</li> <li>Biggleswade Common CWS</li> <li>Sutton Fen and Wood CWS</li> </ul>

<p>D</p>	<p>Object – route would harm coherency of a number of ecological networks north of Bedford as well as directly affecting a number of key sites. I would prefer route from Bedford to Sandy to follow modified version of route B or C. Other main concern is running the track between Sandy Warren SSSI and Biggleswade Common CWS. I would prefer the route east of A1 to follow route B or E running in a north west direction but avoiding complex of ancient woodland and parkland</p>	<p>It is difficult to ascertain from the map the exact location of the route but along the initial section, the route narrows at a point to the east of Clapham village and this will, on its present trajectory, directly impact an ancient woodland called Claphampark Wood CWS containing Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodlands (NERC Act, 2006 priority habitat). This woodland is part of a wider recognised ecological network along the northern fringe of Bedford containing the Renhold brook valley and other Priority and ancient woods and hedgerows (Rebuilding Biodiversity in Bedford Borough, Bedfordshire and Luton Biodiversity Partnership report, January 2009). This track will harm the coherency of this ecological network as well as directly affecting Claphampark Wood CWS.</p> <p>We are concerned about the biodiversity impact of the proposed route further east where the EWR track runs south of the village of Colesden. The precise location of the route is difficult to clarify from the map but it appears to extend directly through an area containing a complex of ancient woodlands that will be directly affected by siting the track here. These are Palaceyard Wood CWS and Lady Wood CWS. Both contain Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland (NERC Act, 2006 priority habitat). These woodlands are part of a wider recognised ecological network known as the northwestern woodlands. This contains a broad swathe of relatively high clay plateau containing some very significant ancient woodlands and a scatter of small grasslands, showing similarities to some of the lowland calcareous grasslands of the Chilterns (Rebuilding Biodiversity in Bedford Borough, Bedfordshire and Luton Biodiversity Partnership report, January 2009). This track will harm the coherency of this ecological network as well as directly affecting these woodlands.</p> <p>We would oppose selecting route E but if this was to become the chosen route, EWR should look for opportunities to enlarge and enhance existing wildlife assets, strengthen the coherency of the ecological networks in this area, and look to improve the connectivity between them.</p> <p>We are concerned about the biodiversity impact of the proposed route further east where the ‘EWR track runs between Sandy Warren SSSI and Biggleswade Common CWS’ (East West Rail Bedford to Cambridge Route Option Consultation Technical Report January 2019). The narrow band of Priority habitats between these statutory and non-statutory sites contains two CWS called Sandy Disused Railway (Lowland Dry Acidic Grassland NERC Act, 2006 priority habitat) and Sandy Meadow CWS. These sites will be directly impacted by siting the track here. The habitats in this area are an important part of the ecological network within the Greensand Ridge NIA and running a track through this area will create a substantial barrier to this network. However, if this route is selected as the final route, and we would strongly oppose this, EWR should look for opportunities to make significant improvements to the ecological network of the Greensand Ridge NIA in terms of enlarging and enhancing existing wildlife assets and increasing the ecological connectivity between them. This area also provides a key foraging location for Serotine bats (<i>Eptesicus serotinus</i>) (protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981. European Protected Species under Annex IV of the</p>
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	<p>northeast of Everton and Greensand Ridge NIA.</p>	<p>European Habitats Directive), which are an uncommon species in the county. A track in this location could affect this protected species.</p> <p>In addition to the main concerns highlighted above, there are other Habitats and Species of Principle Importance, which may be impacted by EWR. A number of statutory and non-statutory sites, following examination of the maps provided, are located within close proximity to the proposed EWR track and may be impacted. These are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cleat Hill CWS</li> <li>Mowsbury Hill CWS</li> <li>High Farm Meadow CWS</li> <li>Birchfield Farm Meadows CWS</li> <li>River Ivel and Hiz CWS</li> <li>Waterloo Thorns CWS</li> <li>Warren Villas CWS</li> <li>Sandy Warren SSSI</li> <li>Biggleswade Common CWS</li> <li>Sutton Fen and Wood CWS</li> </ul>
<p>E</p>	<p>Object - could move the route to avoid Claphampark wood but would harm coherency of a number of ecological networks north of Bedford. I would prefer route from Bedford to Sandy to follow modified version of route B or C. Also, concerned</p>	<p>It is difficult to ascertain from the map the exact location of the route but along the initial section, the route narrows at a point to the east of Clapham village and this will, on its present trajectory, directly impact an ancient woodland called Claphampark Wood CWS containing Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodlands (NERC Act, 2006 priority habitat). This woodland is part of a wider recognised ecological network along the northern fringe of Bedford containing the Renhold brook valley and other Priority and ancient woods and hedgerows (Rebuilding Biodiversity in Bedford Borough, Bedfordshire and Luton Biodiversity Partnership report, January 2009). This track will harm the coherency of this ecological network as well as directly affecting Claphampark Wood CWS.</p> <p>Other than the narrowing of the route east of Clapham village, overall this route has a much wider footprint than route D and therefore we cannot comment further, at this time, on additional sites that may be directly impacted. We are concerned, however, about the impact of this route on the north-western woodland ecological network, which extends across the breadth of the county and would be directly affected in the area south of Colesden village. This contains a broad swathe of relatively high clay plateau containing some very significant ancient woodlands and a scatter of small Priority grasslands amongst an arable landscape (Rebuilding Biodiversity in Bedford Borough, Bedfordshire and Luton Biodiversity Partnership report, January 2009). This track will harm the coherency of this ecological network and the potential to link to other ecological networks in the area.</p>

	<p>about wider footprint of this route where additional sites may be impacted but we cannot comment on these presently.</p> <p>The current course of the route east of A1 is the least damaging option.</p>	<p>We would oppose selecting route E but if this was to become the chosen route, EWR should look for opportunities to enlarge and enhance existing wildlife assets, strengthen the coherency of the ecological networks in this area, and look to improve the connectivity between them.</p> <p>In addition to the main concerns highlighted above, there are other Habitats and Species of Principle Importance, which may be impacted by EWR. A number of statutory and non-statutory sites, following examination of the maps provided, are located within close proximity to the proposed EWR track and may be impacted. These are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cleat Hill CWS</li> <li>Mowsbury Hill CWS</li> <li>High Farm Meadow CWS</li> <li>Palaceyard Wood CWS</li> <li>Lady Wood CWS</li> <li>Birchfield Farm Meadows CWS</li> <li>Great and Little Early Groves CWS</li> <li>Begwary Brook Pits CWS and Wildlife Trust Nature Reserve</li> <li>River Ivel and Hiz CWS</li> <li>Sir Johns Wood CWS</li> </ul>
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