



**Pippa Heylings MP**  
Member of Parliament for South Cambridgeshire  
House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA

Rt Hon Heidi Alexander MP  
Secretary of State for Transport  
Department for Transport  
33 Horseferry Rd  
London  
SW1P 4DR

**1 April 2025**

Dear Secretary of State,

**Re: Invitation to Discuss East West Rail Concerns in South Cambridgeshire**

In light of the Chancellor's commitment to East West Rail both in the autumn statement and in her speech on the 29th January, I would like to take this opportunity to invite you to visit my constituency of South Cambridgeshire, home to Europe's largest biomedical centre and host to the last leg of the Oxford to Cambridge route.

This large infrastructure project is causing deep anxiety and concern for a large number of my constituents in the villages and places along and at the end of the route which is currently undergoing the non-statutory consultation.

The situation has not been helped by the fact that under the last Government, East West Rail and the Government itself, caused outrage and frustration in South Cambridgeshire with its failure to genuinely engage with local residents. They were perceived to have a total disregard for local concerns including damaging environmental impacts and the loss of vital connectivity between villages. The resentment, mistrust and local resistance to the proposed railway was further exacerbated by the 'stop-start' positions of members of the previous Government together with different local Conservative MPs advocating for different routes to be selected. Eventually, the Conservative government publicly declared a preferred route, that of the southern approach. This is the same route that is now currently the subject of the non-statutory consultation.

I have been somewhat reassured by the more open and transparent approach being taken by the new CEO of East West Rail.

However, whilst constituents have engaged constructively with the consultation, many still have questions regarding i) the robustness of the business case for EWR and ii) the evidence on which the government has selected the southern route as the preferred option. In fact, many still question whether this is indeed the government's preferred route or whether there is still the possibility for a change. This uncertainty is unhelpful in many ways and is the cause of distress, too. Given the history of mistrust, it is not enough for people to hear from East West Rail that this is the government's preferred route.

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I believe your visit to the constituency would be much appreciated and I also invite you to meet with local representatives at both Parish and Council level to explain the government's rationale for the business case for the project and the choice of a preferred southern route.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Pippa', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

**Pippa Heylings MP**  
Member of Parliament for South Cambridgeshire