**DRAFT CONSULTATION RESPONSE - ISLIP PARISH COUNCIL**

**East West Rail Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping Report**

Following our review of the Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping Report and consultation with village residents, Islip Parish Council wishes to raise several significant concerns about the proposed works affecting our parish and requests these be fully incorporated into the scope of the Environmental Impact Assessment.

1. **CONFIRMED WORKS AND IMPACTS**

The Environmental Impact Assessment (Section 3.1.2, page 25) confirms substantial works planned for Islip including rail corridor widening, new passing loops, footbridge replacements, and overhead line equipment installation. Each element of these works will significantly affect our historic village and its residents.

Our location in the open landscape of the Cherwell and Ray river floodplains makes Islip particularly vulnerable to visual changes. The assessment (Section 2.6.2, page 22) acknowledges that any new structures will be highly visible across this setting. The Environmental Impact Assessment must therefore include detailed visual impact assessments from key viewpoints within and around the conservation area, including seasonal variations and night-time impacts from any proposed lighting.

The noise assessment (Section 6.8.3-6.8.4, pages 111-112) identifies multiple sources that will affect our community, including construction activity, increased train movements, and noise from trains using the new passing loops. The cumulative effect of these noise sources requires careful consideration and mitigation.

The proposed works will significantly affect community movement and access. Changes to public rights of way, combined with construction traffic and potential community separation, will impact daily life in our village. The combined effects of noise, visual changes, dust and traffic during construction require comprehensive management plans.

Our position between the Cherwell and Ray rivers makes wildlife impact a key concern. The assessment (Section 6.10.8, pages 119-120) identifies risks to existing habitats, wildlife movement patterns, and local species from both construction and ongoing operations. The protection of these natural corridors is crucial to maintaining our local environment.

1. **TRACTION UNIT CONCERNS**

Of particular concern to our community is the proposed traction unit. This industrial structure would be a significant addition to our conservation area. Its scale would be unprecedented in our village setting, being more than twice the height of existing boundary features. Our residents have raised serious concerns about its impact on the conservation area, residential amenity, and access arrangements..

I**NFORMATION REQUESTED**

Given these impacts, we require detailed information about:

1. **Construction Management**

We seek comprehensive details regarding construction timelines and traffic management plans. The parish council needs to understand how disruption to village life will be minimised during the works period, particularly regarding construction traffic routes and hours of operation.

1. **Infrastructure Changes**

The parish requires full information about the replacement footbridge designs, including closure periods and alternative access arrangements during construction. The impact on public rights of way must be clearly detailed, along with proposals for maintaining community connectivity throughout the works.

1. **Environmental Protection**

Given our sensitive location, we need specific information about measures to protect our river corridors, local wildlife habitats, and the general village environment during both construction and operation phases. This should include detailed ecological surveys and proposed mitigation measures.

1. **Traction Unit Proposal**

Regarding the proposed traction unit, we specifically require:

1. A detailed justification for locating this substantial structure within our conservation area, including consideration of alternative locations. The impact of a 4-meter high industrial structure on the character of our historic village requires particularly careful consideration.
2. A comprehensive visual impact assessment demonstrating how this structure would affect the conservation area and nearby properties, particularly given our open landscape setting.
3. Full details of associated infrastructure requirements, including power supply arrangements and any additional structures or works needed.
4. Clear information about construction and maintenance access arrangements, given our narrow roads and limited access points.
5. A detailed assessment of impacts on neighbouring properties, with particular attention to vulnerable residents who may be significantly affected by this development.
6. Proposed mitigation measures to minimise the impact on both the conservation area and residential amenity.
7. **ONGOING ENGAGEMENT**

The Parish Council requests regular updates throughout the development of these proposals and involvement in discussions about detailed design and mitigation measures. Our community's concerns must be properly addressed before any works commence.

We trust these points will be fully considered in the Environmental Impact Assessment process.