

Breakdown from a layman's point of view

1. Reinstate triangle anew at St John's for optimal operational flexibility
2. New level crossing at Cardington Road – dual carriage way could be made single lane from Longholme Roundabout and fan out to dual after crossing as one lane is an access slip for Tesco anyway.
3. Relay and upgrade 3 River Great Ouse Bridges.
4. Raise A421 Bypass with an underpass for the twin track railway.
5. Slew Cycle track/Sustrans to circumvent the railway corridor.
6. New route crossing River Great Ouse twice to avoid Willington Village encroachments and Danes Camp Wildlife area. This could either be straight on an angle from old trackbed east of A421 bypass and either an 'S' bend back out and curve to the southern alignment of River Great Ouse south and parallel to Barford Road or a gentler bend to cross the River Great Ouse in any case south of Willington Lake and curving to align the Barford Road.
7. New level crossing over Barford Road (Blunham section) to follow the course of River basin on embankment (to avoid flooding).
8. Cross Great River Ouse again and curve round to cross on height, the A1 around the northern arc of Station Road Tempsford, approaching the ECML from the south-east contrast the current route north of Bedford which will approach at north-westerly axis contra to going off towards Cambourne.
9. The problem apart from bridging the Great River Ouse several times, is the ribbon development at both A1, Tempsford Road and Station Road Tempsford. North of that is clear flat open countryside, but on a flood plain. Ideal for a railway flying junction and freight depot or sidings for example rather than infill development. Getting the balance between landscape, ecology and deployment is critical, albeit there will always be some nimbies.
10. A finishing point is that passenger services can still service Bedford Midland.

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Fig 1 (below) shows landscape corridor from edge of Bedford to ECML north of Tempsford/South of Little Barford. Clear flat land, few gradients. Contrast north of Bedford orbital. In distance our route is shorter, quicker and probably less cost, contrast the northern route.

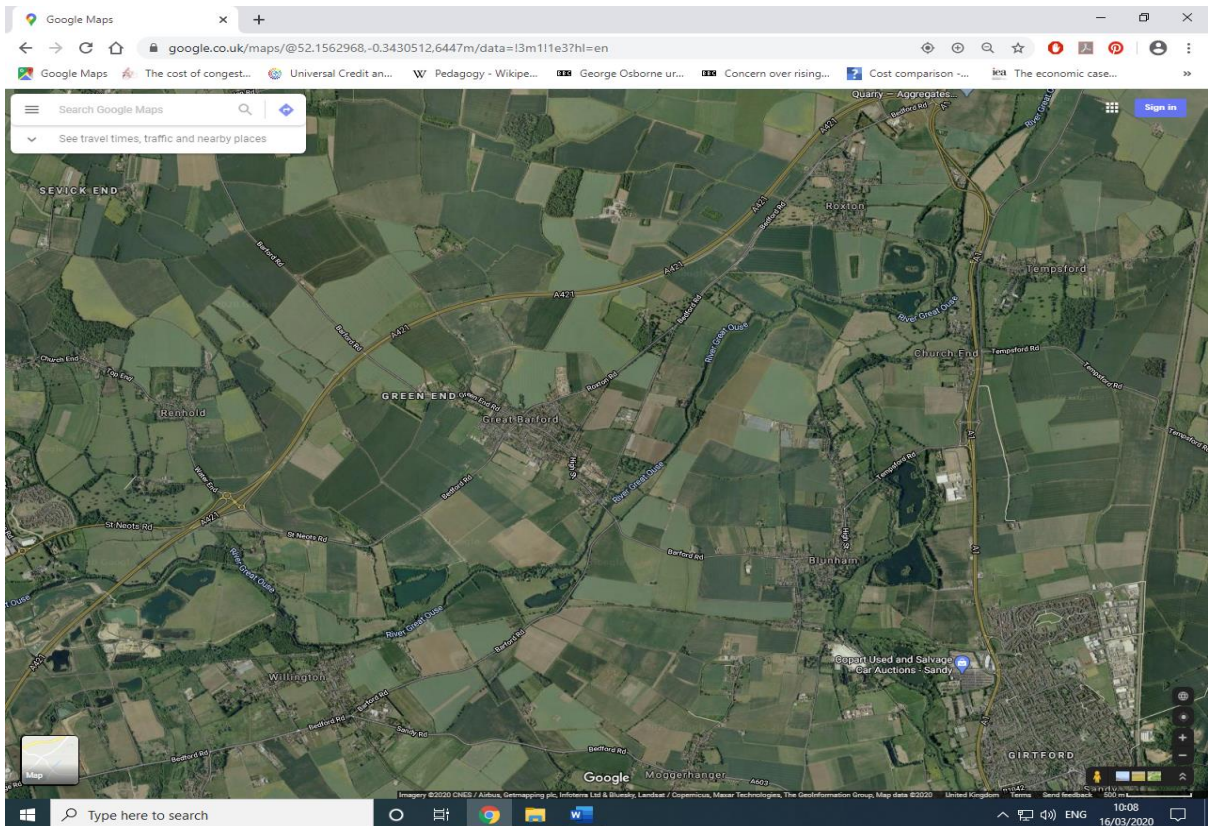


Fig 2 My crude diagram which should be studied further, worked up and the two options and whether a new station or junction for more diverse services can be weighed in the balance. I have no problem east of ECML, even if it is passenger only, optimal reach from ECML to Bedford and Oxford corridors is a key prize worth aiming for. A station and the northern route kill that potential stone dead in my view.

