

Our proposals

We are currently assessing the impact of the increase in passenger numbers that the additional East West Rail services will bring to Bicester Village station. Potential improvements to the station could include:

- Options to expand the parking facilities at the station, together with options to encourage access to the station via sustainable modes, such as walking and cycling
- Improvements to the local highway networks to deal with the expected increase in traffic accessing the station
- Station upgrades to improve the customer experience.

Our considerations

We are considering the following as we work on the next stage of the design:

- What additional facilities may be needed to support the increase in passenger numbers at Bicester Village station
- Whether we need any more land than is currently used by the railway
- How an increase in road traffic and car journeys to the station might affect parking at the stations and in surrounding roads
- Whether additional lighting may be needed at the station where new infrastructure is added (such as the provision of more car parking) to improve safety and security, and any potential impact on surrounding areas
- How the environmental impact of any changes at the station can be minimised.

Further details on our proposals and the factors we are considering can be found in the Technical Report.

If you think there are any other factors that we should consider then please let us know. You will be able to comment on more detailed designs at our next consultation.

London Road, Bicester

Why do we need to do something?

East West Rail would increase train services for people in Bicester, providing more connections to more destinations. The frequency of trains passing through the level crossing at London Road near Bicester Village station would increase. This means the existing level crossing could be closed for up to 50 minutes in every hour.

London Road provides an important link for local traffic between the south east area of Bicester and the rest of the town and serves as an important route for local bus services. It is one of only three roads that cross the railway in Bicester, the other two being the A41 to the west and the A4421 to the east, which are located on the edge of the town.

We appreciate that increased closure of the level crossing would be very disruptive to all those using London Road, the surrounding area and could potentially affect those living, working and visiting Bicester. That's why we are investigating a number of options to improve access across the railway.



Bicester London Road

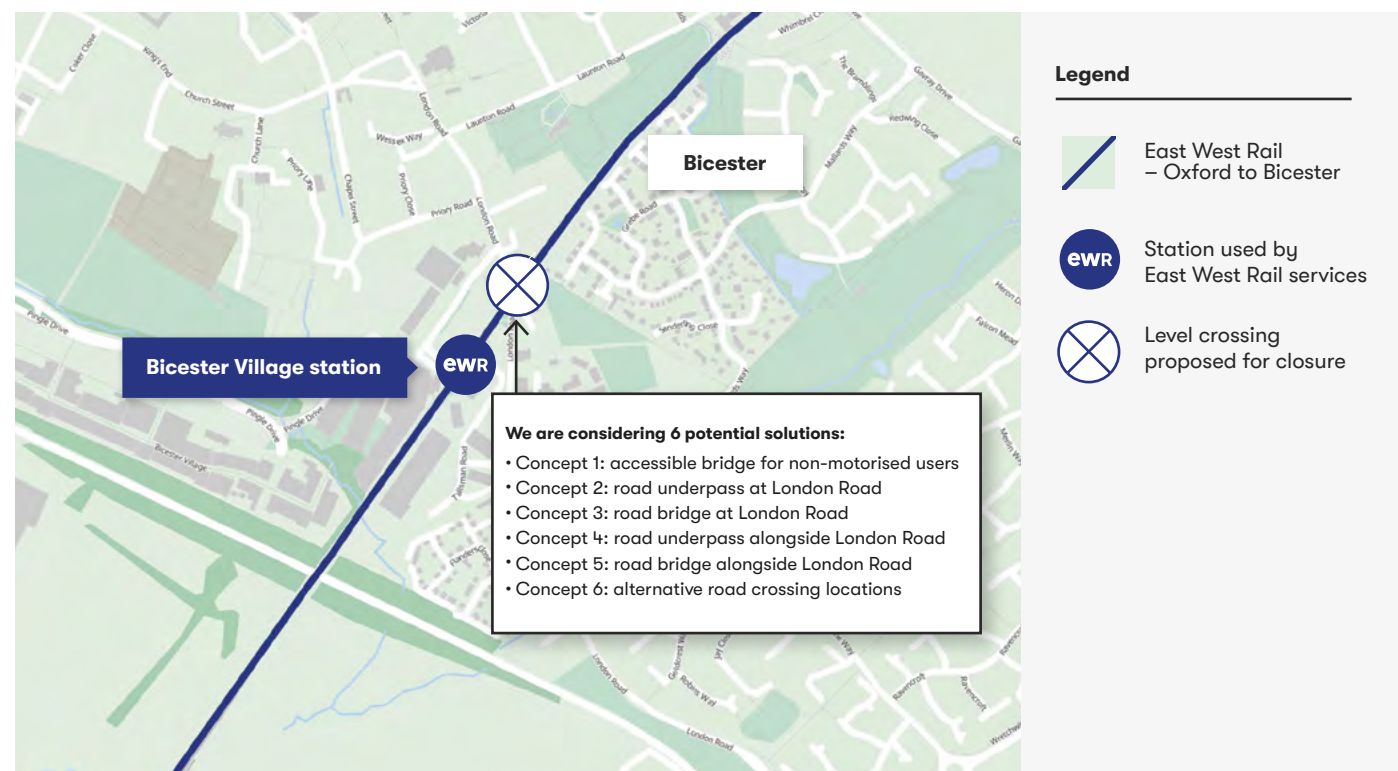
Options under consideration

We are considering six potential solutions and are seeking your feedback on these to help inform the development of our proposals. All the concepts involve the closure of the London Road level crossing but provide various alternative routes. The options we are considering are:

- **Concept 1:** accessible bridge for non-motorised users
- **Concept 2:** road underpass at London Road
- **Concept 3:** road bridge at London Road
- **Concept 4:** road underpass alongside London Road
- **Concept 5:** road bridge alongside London Road
- **Concept 6:** alternative road crossing locations.

Further information about the current use of the crossing, potential options for a bridge, and studies previously undertaken for the London Road level crossing can be found in the Technical Report.

Figure: London Road level crossing location

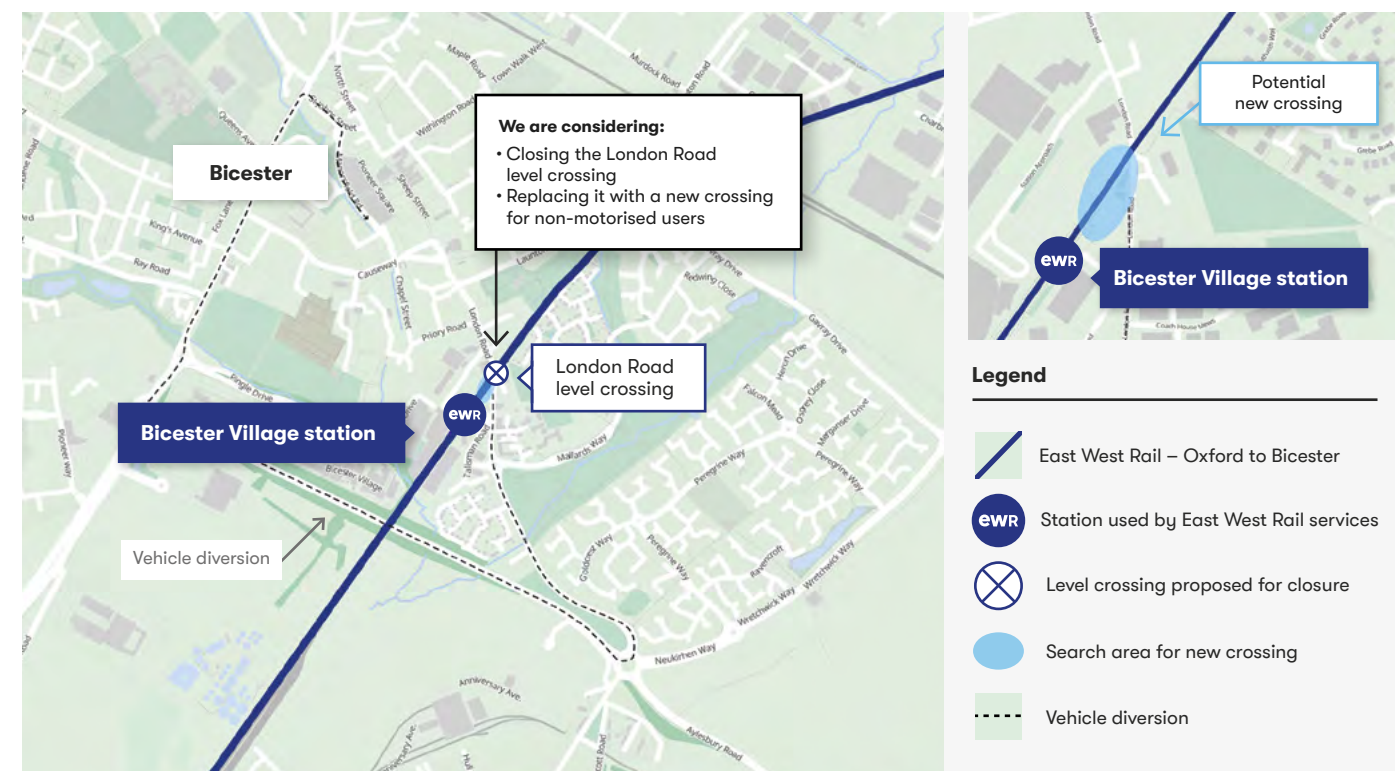


Concept 1: accessible bridge for non-motorised users

This would close the London Road level crossing and not provide an alternative road crossing for vehicles. A fully accessible bridge crossing of the railway for non-motorised users, including pedestrians and cyclists, would be provided and this could facilitate a pedestrian zone around the crossing area.

This would mean that vehicles that currently use London Road would be diverted around the south of Bicester via the A41 and Oxford Road, Kings End and Queens Avenue to reach the centre of Bicester.

Figure: Concept 1: accessible bridge for non-motorised users

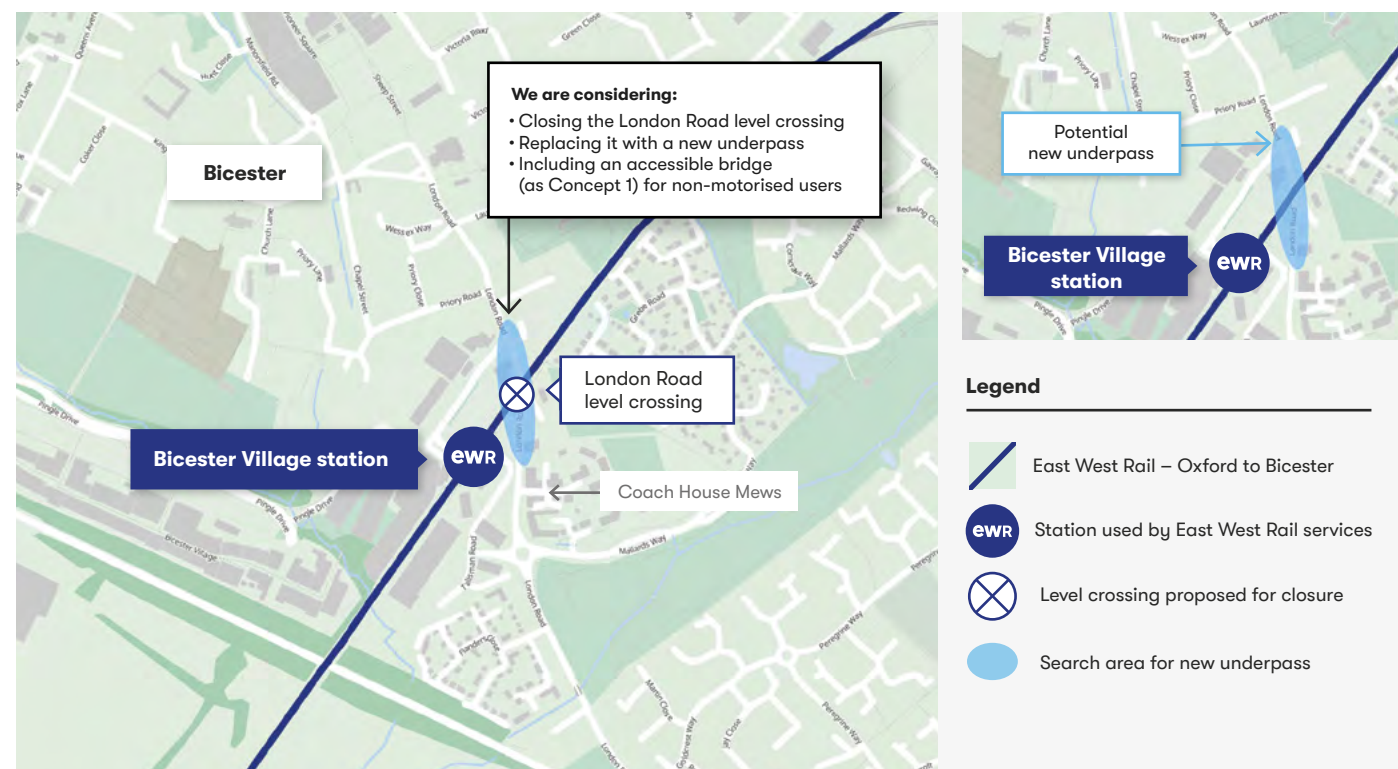


Concept 2: road underpass at London Road

This solution would provide an underpass of approximately 300m under the location of the existing level crossing. The underpass would provide access for both vehicles and pedestrians. However, we understand that this length of underpass may not be an attractive route for pedestrians, so at the next stage of design we would consider alternative pedestrian routes in addition to the underpass.

Construction of the underpass would require lowering of the existing London Road by around 5-6m and means the existing access into Westholme Court and the access road to Alchester Terrace (south of the existing crossing) could not be maintained. Alternative access points to these premises would have to be located elsewhere. Access to Coach House Mews, Station Approach, Priory Road and Garth Court could be retained.

Figure: Concept 2: road underpass

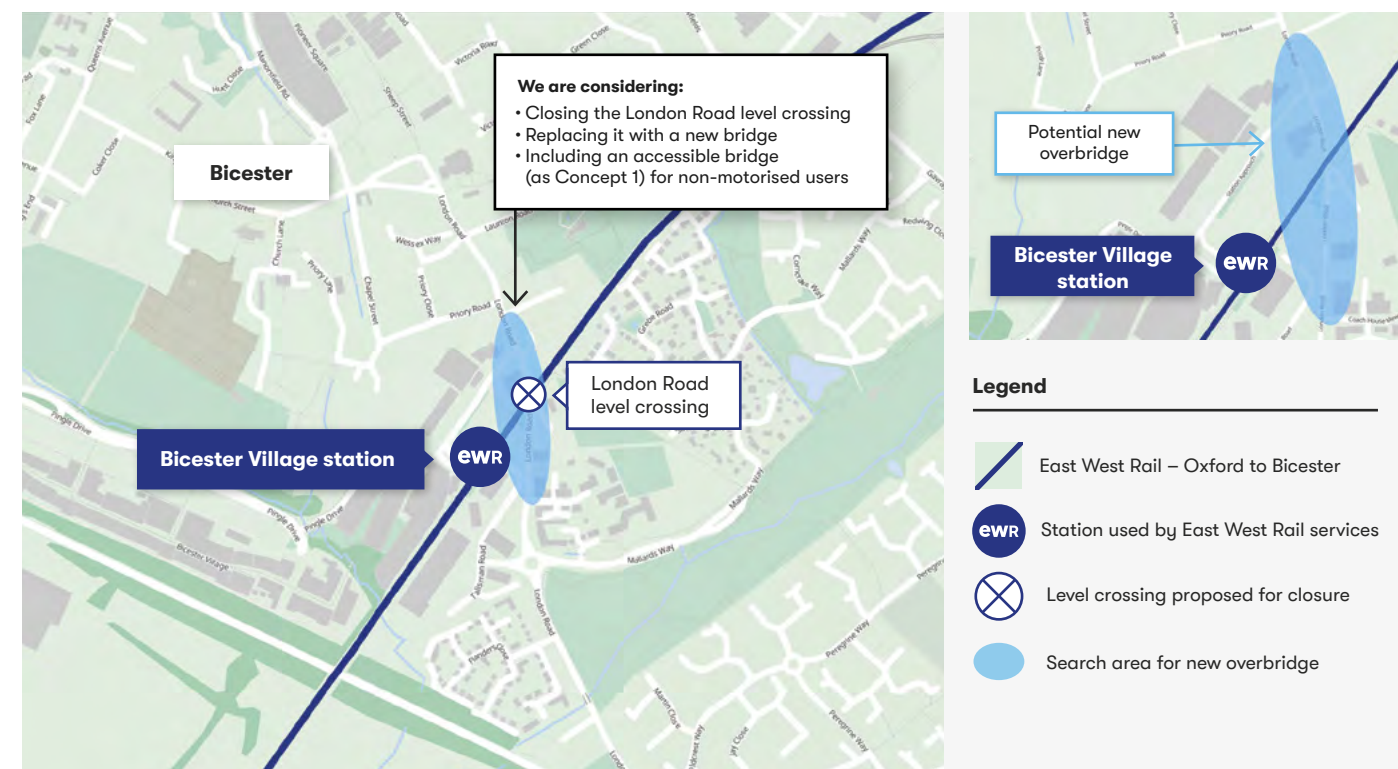


Concept 3: road bridge at London Road on the existing road

This concept would require a bridge that would allow the road to pass over the railway along the route of the existing London Road.

This has been considered as part of previous studies that are described in the Technical Report (section 6.5). Construction of this solution would be very challenging. This is because there is limited potential available space around London Road to construct a new bridge due to the proximity of neighbouring properties. If a bridge were to be built in this location it would be difficult to meet the usual road design standards to enable a 30mph speed limit and would be likely to require a number of properties to be demolished.

Figure: Concept 3: road bridge

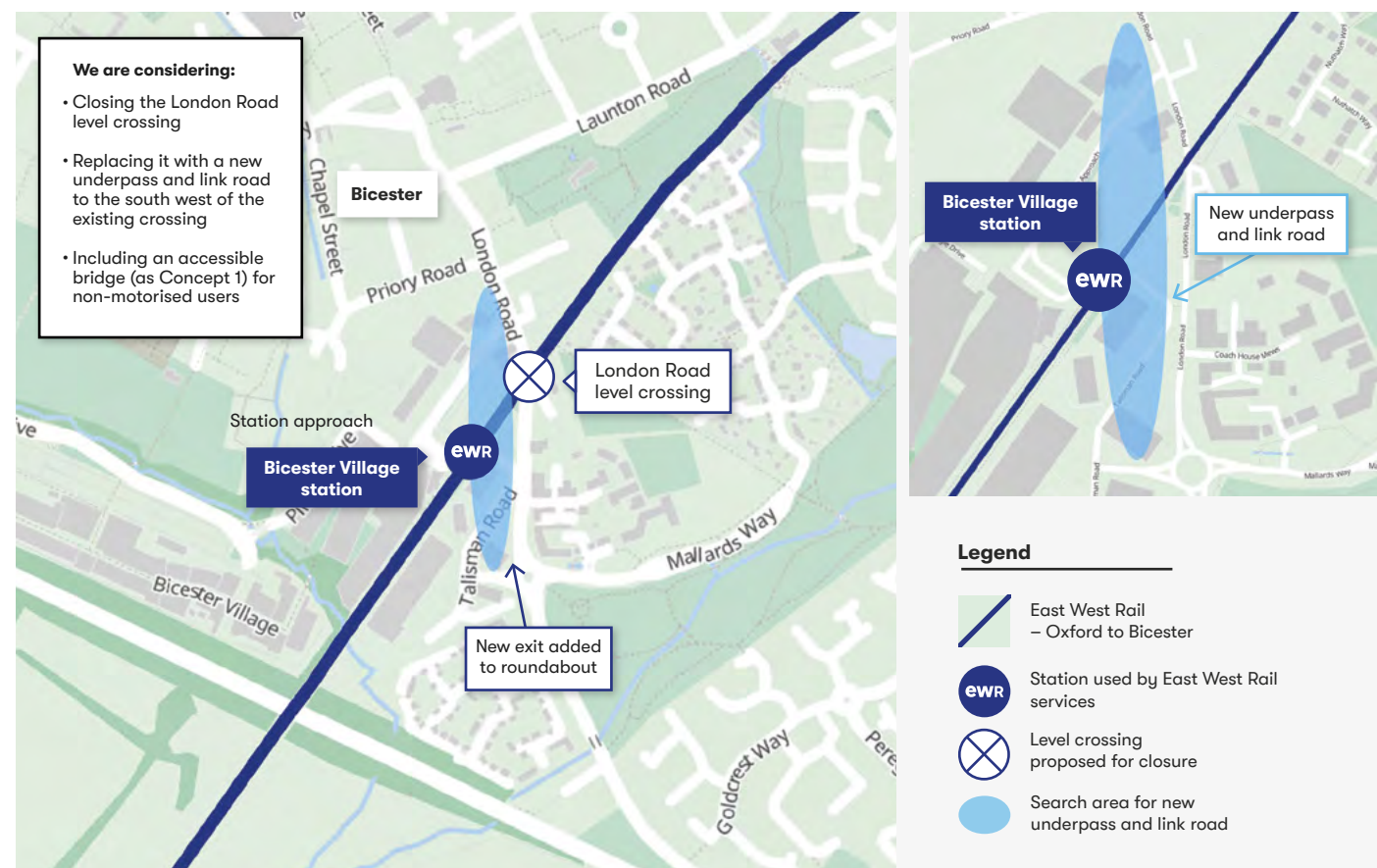


Concept 4: road underpass for London Road along a different route

This concept would provide a new underpass for London Road to the south west of the existing level crossing. The underpass would provide access for both vehicles and pedestrians. However, we understand that this length of underpass may not be an attractive route for pedestrians, so at the next stage of design we would consider alternative pedestrian routes in addition to the underpass.

A new exit would be added to the Talisman roundabout for the London Road underpass. Station Approach and Priory Road would join the underpass via a new road close to their existing locations. The existing London Road would be retained to maintain the existing utilities (gas, electricity and water services) in the road but there would be no access across the railway at this point.

Figure: Concept 4: road underpass alternative route

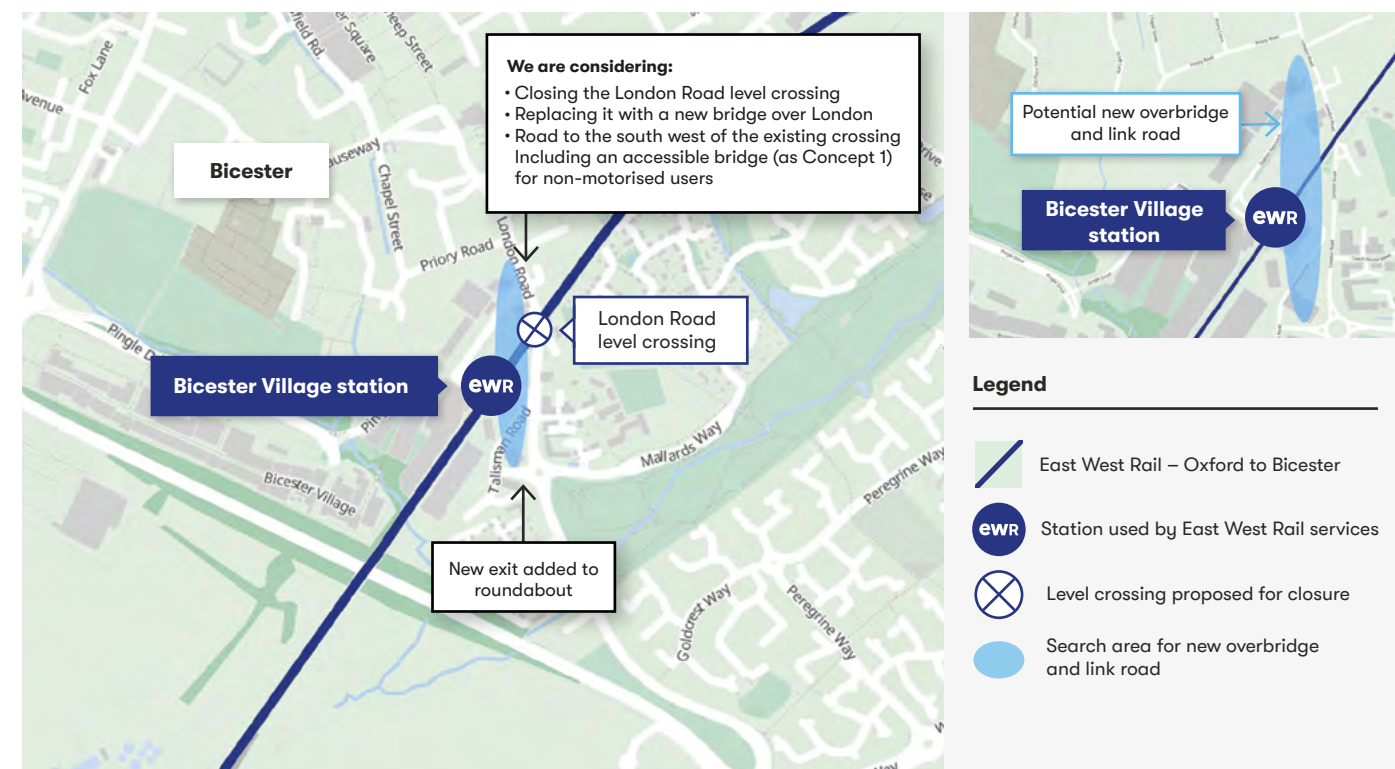


Concept 5: road bridge for London Road along a different route

This option would provide a new bridge over London Road to the south west of the existing level crossing. Given the built-up nature of the area there is little potential available space so it is likely that if a bridge were to be provided in this location, it would be difficult to meet the usual road design standards to enable a 30mph speed limit and is likely to require a number of properties to be demolished.

As with Concept 4 a new exit would be added to the Talisman roundabout for a route via the London Road bridge. Station Approach and Priory Road would join the bridge and the new road close to their existing locations. The existing London Road would be retained to maintain the existing utilities in the road but there would be no access across the railway at this point.

Figure: Concept 5: road bridge alternative route



Concept 6: alternative road crossing locations

We have also considered solutions involving new crossings of the railway located to the west or east of the existing London Road level crossing. These would require traffic to be diverted either:

- Between London Road and the A41, or
- Between London Road and the A4421 (Charbridge Lane).

New crossings to the west would be more challenging because of the developments that have taken place at Bicester Village shopping centre and railway station since they were examined by Network Rail. All the potential options in this area would require a substantial number of properties to be demolished and reconfiguration of the shopping centre facilities, railway station and the Talisman buildings complex.

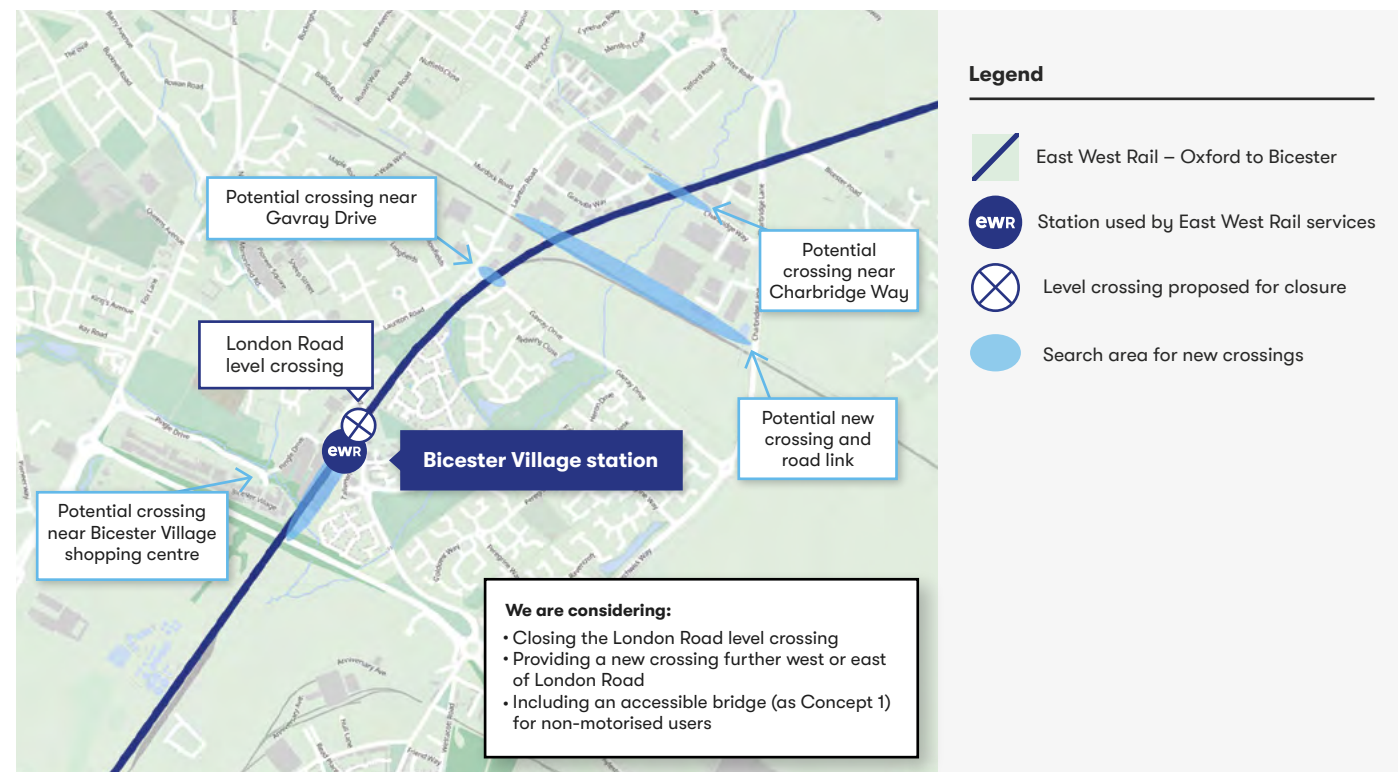
New crossings to the east could include a new bridge over the railway at Gavray Drive, with a new road parallel to the London to Birmingham railway line, or further north at Charbridge Way.

Our considerations at the next stage of design

We have carried out a preliminary assessment of these concepts taking into account the following factors: benefits to road users and pedestrians, capital costs, operating costs and potential environmental impacts including access locally. These are shown on the following page.

Details of this preliminary assessment can be found in the Technical Report. We know that all of these options are likely to affect amenity of residents and other users of the area. We will use your response to this consultation to inform our detailed assessment and decision making.

Figure: Concept 6: alternative road crossing locations



London Road Assessment Factors

Assessment factors	Concept 1	Concept 2	Concept 3
<p>Transport user benefits – primarily in respect of the impact on road users</p>	<p>The ability of the A41 and other local roads to accommodate an increase in traffic arising from the termination of London Road at the railway, and any additional measures required.</p> <p>Measures required to accommodate traffic requiring access to Bicester Village station from the south east, including car parking and drop-off facilities on the eastern side of the railway.</p>	<p>The means of construction of the underpass are to be confirmed, the most economical construction methodology would necessitate the removal of the tracks for excavation and construction of the underpass to occur. This would result in prolonged closure of the operational railway.</p> <p>London Road would have to be closed for the duration of the works (which could be up to 2 years), causing severance between communities in the short and medium term.</p>	<p>London Road would have to be closed for the duration of the works (which could be up to 2 years), causing severance between communities in the short and medium term.</p> <p>The speed of the new London Road would have to be reduced to 30mph.</p>

Concept 4	Concept 5	Concept 6
<p>The means of construction of the underpass are to be confirmed. The most economical construction methodology would necessitate the removal of the tracks for excavation and construction of the underpass to occur. This would result in prolonged closure of the operational railway.</p> <p>This option would not require the closure of London Road for the same amount of time as concepts 2 and 3.</p>	<p>The speed of the road would have to be reduced to 30mph.</p>	<p>The disbenefits of longer journeys for road users would need to balance against the benefits to EWR. Measures to mitigate additional highway congestion may need to be implemented.</p>

Table: London Road Assessment Factors

Assessment Factors	Concept 1	Concept 2	Concept 3
Capital costs	Concept 1 would have the lowest capital costs.	<p>Concept 2 would have a high capital cost due to the nature of constructing a tunnel.</p> <p>London Road is a major thoroughfare for utility apparatus due to it being one of the few existing corridors where utilities can cross the railway in Bicester. Implementation of an underpass is likely to result in significant conflicts with existing electric, gas, water, sewer and telecoms apparatus which may require diversion prior to commencement of the main works. This adds to cost and engineering complexity.</p>	This option would be less costly than an underpass, but more costly than concepts 1 and 6. This option would have a similar cost to concept 5.
Operating costs – in particular for the underpass options	Concept 1 would have the lowest operating costs.	Concept 2 would be costly to operate and maintain because of the likely drainage requirements.	
Environmental impacts and opportunities – including the potential severance effects and the extent to which these can be mitigated	The impact of severance on the local community in south east Bicester and whether an additional road route, with a crossing over the railway, is required (and indeed viable) to the north east of London Road.	<p>The groundwater table is relatively high in this location and an underpass would be prone to flood risk, which means that a pumping system would be likely to be required.</p> <p>Impact to property may be substantial with access severed to Westholme Court and the access road to Alchester Terrace; access to these would have to be re-provided with alternative routes yet to be identified.</p>	<p>Impact to property may be substantial with access severed to Westholme Court and the access road to Alchester Terrace; access to these would have to be re-provided with alternative routes yet to be identified. Buildings in close proximity to the carriageway may need to be demolished during the works.</p> <p>Environmental impacts such as noise and visual impact are likely to be greater than the other non-overbridge Concepts.</p>

Concept 4	Concept 5	Concept 6
<p>Concept 2 would have a high capital cost due to the nature of constructing a tunnel.</p> <p>Concept 4 would avoid the costs associated with the existing utilities on London Road.</p>	This option would be less costly than an underpass, but more costly than concepts 1 and 6. This option would have a similar cost to concept 3.	This concept would have lower capital costs than concepts 2, 3, 4 and 5. It would be more costly than concept 1.
Concept 4 would be costly to operate and maintain because of the likely drainage requirements.		
<p>Environmental impacts for properties to the west of London Road would be substantially increased, as several buildings will directly clash with the proposed infrastructure.</p> <p>Impacts on the recently upgraded Bicester Village railway station are also likely to be more significant.</p>	<p>Buildings in close proximity to the carriageway may need to be demolished during the works.</p> <p>Environmental impacts such as noise and visual impact are likely to be greater than the other non-overbridge concepts.</p>	<p>Potential impacts on residential and commercial properties.</p> <p>There are likely to be further environmental impacts for each of the new crossings proposed.</p>

Share your views

7. What do you think is important to consider when developing our proposals for the railway in the Oxford to Bicester area? In particular we would like to know about:

- Anything we should consider in relation to our proposals for Oxford station
- Your views on our proposals for Oxford Parkway and Bicester Village stations
- Anything we should consider about the level crossing at London Road in Bicester and the options we are considering.

8. Please rank your preference for the proposed concepts for the level crossing at London Road in Bicester:

Concept 1: accessible bridge for non-motorised users

Concept 2: road underpass at London Road (online)

Concept 3: road bridge at London Road (online)

Concept 4: road underpass alongside London Road (offline)

Concept 5: road bridge alongside London Road (offline)

Concept 6: alternative road crossing locations.

9. Please tell us why you have ranked the proposed concepts above and provide any other comments.

Do you have any alternative suggestions?

You can share your thoughts with us on this question by filling in our online feedback form at www.eastwestrail.co.uk/feedback. You can also send us your views by emailing us at consultation@eastwestrail.co.uk or writing to us at **Freepost EAST WEST RAIL.**

Alternatively, you can request a paper copy of the feedback form to be sent to you by:

- Ordering it online at www.eastwestrail.co.uk/documents
- Emailing us at contact@eastwestrail.co.uk
- Calling us on **0330 134 0067.**



Oxford station