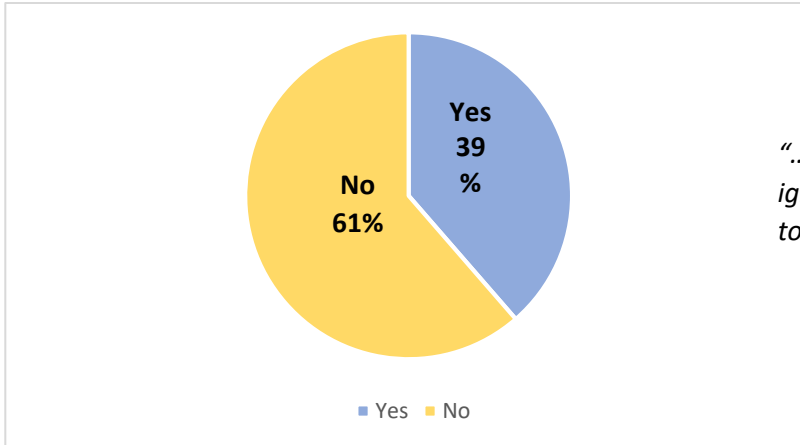


Elsworth Says No to Station and New Town north of A428

Every household should have received a copy of a consultative document from East West Rail (EWR) on its developing plans for the Oxford to Cambridge rail link. A questionnaire was subsequently delivered throughout the village in which the Parish Council drew attention to potential impacts on Elsworth and sought views on the proposals made by EWR and by developers for a new town north of the A428.

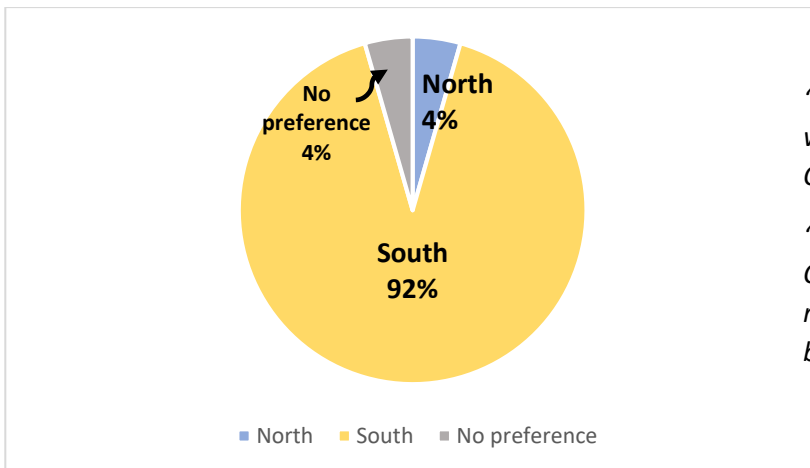
The PC would now like to share with you the outcomes from that questionnaire.

Q1. Do you support a railway station for Cambourne?



"...we feel that our needs and wishes are ignored at the expense of the growing town of Cambourne."

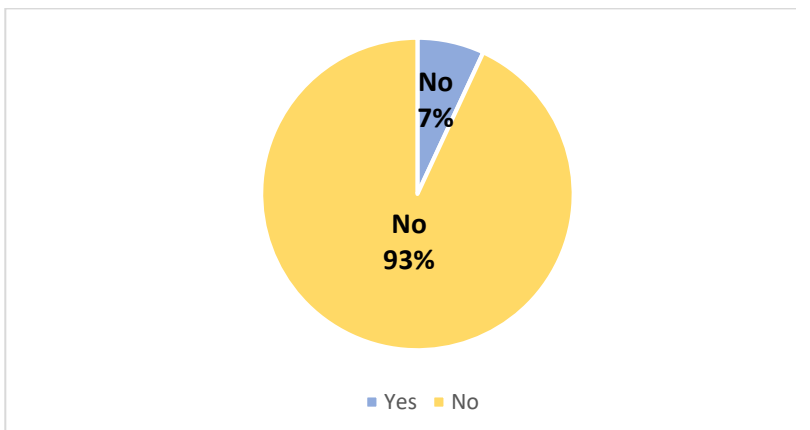
Q2. Where should the station be sited?



"It makes sense to have the station within walking distance of existing homes in Cambourne...."

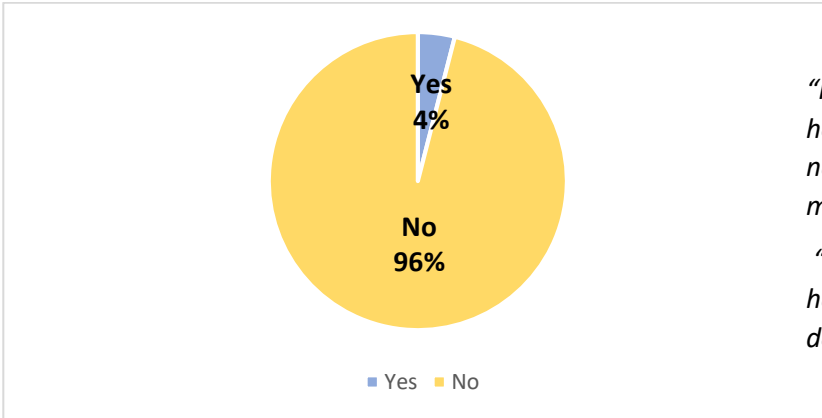
"With all the new housing being built in Cambourne South and West the obvious route has to be to the south. It's a no brainer really...."

Q3. Would you support a station for Cambourne if it meant an increase in traffic through the village?



"...there will continue to be a strong incentive for people to drive to a station. A major problem here will be the minor rural roads, particularly if a station for Cambourne north of the A428 is chosen and the dangers that will be posed to pedestrians in villages with very narrow footpaths or no footpaths."

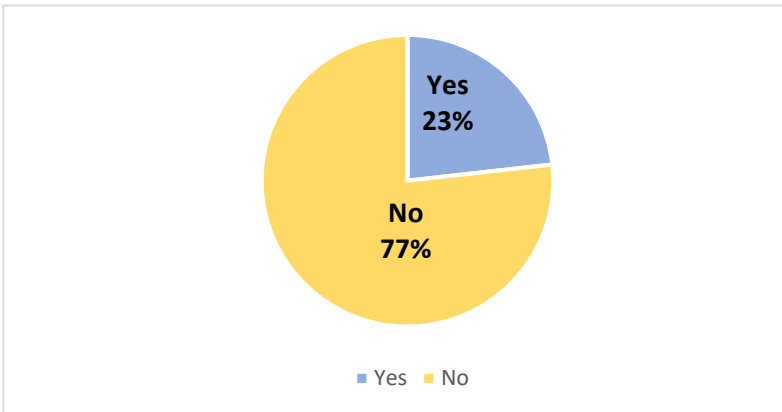
Q4. Would you support the housing development north of the A428 as shown on Map 2?



“Please don’t allow any unnecessary housing to destroy our rural landscape and natural habitats, which are so vital for maintaining biodiversity.”

“...this area of South Cambridgeshire has had more than it’s fair share of new developments.”

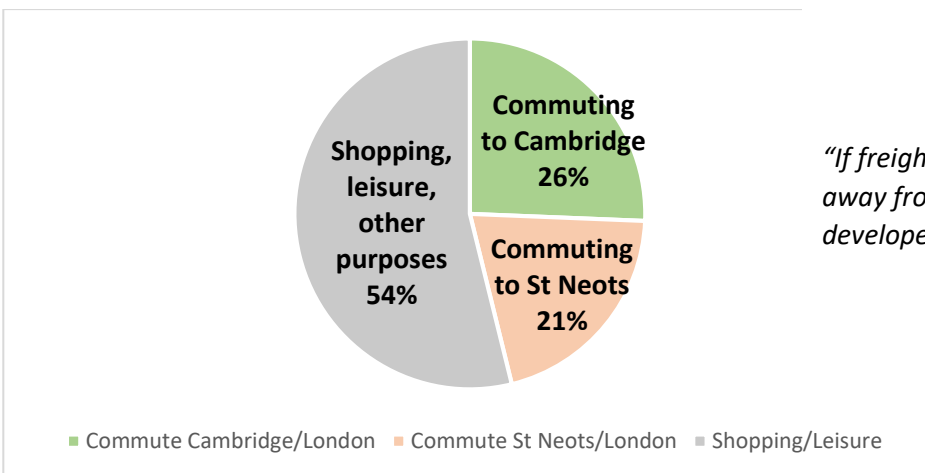
Q5. If a station is built, would you be likely to use it?



“I don’t see why people would travel to Cambridge or London by either proposed EWR route from Cambourne – far easier to use P&R or drive to St Neots and quicker”.

“Improve bus services instead”.

Q6. If yes, please indicate what for?



“If freight is a prime object, a line well away from housing should be developed.”

So what conclusions might be drawn from the responses to the questionnaire?

- There is some recognition of the obvious benefit a station nearby might bring, but overwhelmingly villagers want the station to be south of the A428.
- If the station were north of the A428, there is a clear appreciation of the potential for increased traffic flows from vehicles going to and from the station and to and from the very large housing development that is proposed.

- Opposition to that new town is also overwhelming citing the impact on the environment, ecology of the area and the irreversible change that it would bring to the character of the area.
- It would appear that, wherever it is located, a station might not be regularly used by significant numbers of parishioners. Clearly for many travel to Cambridge or St Neots by alternative means would be preferred. Apart from carrying freight the rationale for the railway is to enhance commuting, yet many comments referred to the impact covid was having on working practices, while it is known that numbers of people living in Elsworth do not work in Cambridge or London, but work from home or elsewhere which would not be served by the railway. Doubts were also expressed about the viability of the proposals and the suggestion made that a reappraisal of the schemes for connecting Cambourne and Cambridge was needed.

Finally, there was a palpable sense of anger in many of the comments made:

“This proposed development, railway and all the infrastructure with it will cause a huge increase in traffic, noise pollution, light pollution and massive environmental damage...destruction of greenfield land, woodland, SSSIs and the impact on RSPB Hope Farm. Enough is enough.”

“We do not wish to be an extension of Cambourne...We do not wish more housing. We do not want more cars. We do not support this idea at all.”

A summary version of this feedback will be posted to the facebook page Elsworth & District Forum.