



Spending Review 2025 submission

Summary

This submission from England's Economic Heartland sub-national transport body sets out the key transport requirements needed to support the Government's priority Oxford-Cambridge Growth Corridor.

Improved connectivity is pivotal to the economic success of the Corridor. This submission sets out priorities for investment required to maximise the opportunity of East West Rail and the region. Priorities have been identified through our evidence base and agreed by our Board of elected local and combined authority leaders.

- **Maximising the benefits of East West Rail:** ensuring East West Rail is integrated into the wider transport system and delivering the best possible economic, social and environmental outcomes for the region. This includes door-to-door connectivity to stations and installing digital and active travel ('Varsity Way') infrastructure. There are opportunities to improve rail connectivity further with additional quick wins, including delivery of the Aylesbury-Milton Keynes link and services from Oxford to Bristol (a quick, low-cost scheme).
- **Upgrading Ely Junction:** Transforming the way goods are transported from Felixstowe to the Midlands and North, removing 100,000 lorries from the road network.
- **Bus and mass rapid transit funding:** Enabling a regional bus network which integrates into East West Rail. Funding to progress MRT schemes within the region.
- **Progressing interventions in the Oxford-Cambridge Roads Connectivity Study:** The National Highways study identified key priority areas for intervention which must be progressed.
- **Appropriate levels of local transport funding** for local authorities during the transition to strategic authorities; and to enable **EEH to continue its work** on behalf of the region.

Introduction

England's Economic Heartland (EEH) is the sub-national transport body stretching from Swindon and Oxfordshire through to Hertfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. Our geography covers the entirety of the '**Oxford-Cambridge Growth Corridor**' recently announced by the Chancellor.

As highlighted by the Chancellor, the region offers huge economic potential for the UK's economic growth prospects. It is widely acknowledged that improving connectivity within the region is the key enabler in achieving this.

EEH's Strategic Transport Leadership Board brings together the elected leaders and cabinet members from each of our 13 local transport and combined authorities.

As well as our local and combined authorities, we are a trusted partner of National Highways, Network Rail and the East West Railway Company. In 2024/25, recognising the importance of collaboration across the private and public sectors, EEH deepened its relationships with key economic bodies in our region: the Oxford to Cambridge Science Supercluster Board and Universities Group. The strength of EEH's partnerships are a key part of our ability to leverage delivery towards the Government's missions.

As the Oxford-Cambridge Science Supercluster's recent Public First report makes clear, the Oxford-Milton Keynes-Cambridge corridor represents one of the world's most influential regions for science and technology. With the right investment and the necessary policy reforms, the region could double its growth trajectory, however "reaching that ambition would mean focusing on the policies that can provide the largest return on investment – this starts with East West Rail as the connecting tissue within the region".

Our own research, conducted by Cambridge Econometrics, reiterates the huge potential of the region. It shows that of the seven sub-national transport body areas which cover the entirety of England outside of London, the EEH region is ranked first for:

- Economic growth
- Jobs growth
- Population growth
- Exporting intensity
- Foreign investment
- Concentration of R&D jobs
- Patent filings

There are 183 established 'innovation clusters' (as defined by the [Department for Science, Innovation and Technology](#)) located throughout the EEH region, hosting 15,900-plus knowledge intensive firms. Thirty-three of these clusters, including those associated with med-tech, robotics, data, artificial intelligence, pharmaceuticals, quantum physics and food-tech, are ranked within the 10 biggest in the UK for their specialism – these clusters are located in Oxfordshire, Milton Keynes, Hertfordshire and Cambridgeshire.

However, the analysis found that the region as a whole is now less productive than the rest of England, whereas 20 years ago it was more productive. Emissions from transport are also higher than average. There are widespread issues with congestion and limited public transport services which are acting as barriers to future growth.

The region's 'polycentric geography', with a mix of relatively small cities, market towns and a large rural population (around 35% of the region's population live in small market towns and rural hinterlands, significantly above the national average), results in a diverse range of transport needs, opportunities and challenges.

In addition, the Heartland's central location within England results in many strategic journeys being made through the region, particularly on the many radial road and rail routes between the south, the Midlands and north. The performance of these routes is vital for the freight and logistics sector and the health of the UK economy.

Supporting the Government's economic ambitions for the region by adding value to existing investment

The EEH Strategic Transport Leadership Board has agreed priority strategic regional transport interventions which builds upon the Government's existing investments and commitment to the Oxford-Cambridge Growth Corridor, unlocking significant additional economic growth opportunities.

These interventions can be progressed through development and planning stages, and in some cases, delivered within the multiyear window of the upcoming Spending Review. Therefore, a mixture of revenue and capital funding is requested.

Many of the interventions below add significant value to existing investment, most notably, by maximising the benefits of East West Rail to as many people and businesses within the region and beyond it.

Likewise, investment in schemes such as Ely Junction will support ambitious growth plans in and around Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, while also benefiting the economies of the Midlands and North by ensuring the smooth passage of goods to these places by rail freight.

Our work on roads also supports Government's ambitions for the growth corridor. DfT previously funded National Highways' Oxford to Cambridge Connectivity Roads Study, providing a ready-to-go evidence base for targeted investment in our strategically-important roads. To support the ambitions of the growth corridor, the study's recommendations now need to be further developed and progressed.

Maximising the benefits of East West Rail

As one of the biggest rail infrastructure projects being built in the UK, and the 'connecting tissue' for the growth corridor, it is critical that the scheme delivers a positive and lasting future for the economy, communities and environment: providing renewed confidence that the UK can successfully deliver major infrastructure projects which provide significant, transformational benefits.

With the right planning and investment, East West Rail can be a catalyst for supercharging inward investment, business expansion, skills and jobs; sustainable housing growth, digital connectivity; tourism; and quality of the environment. All vital ingredients of a successful 'growth corridor' which delivers for the UK.

But, importantly, the opportunities of East West Rail need not be limited to those communities and businesses on the route itself. Improving connectivity to and from stations has been shown to have the potential to open East West Rail to a further 305,000 existing homes within 20 minutes of stations by widening the catchment of beneficiaries, further increasing patronage and farebox revenue. This means improving bus and active travel connectivity to stations, while comparatively small improvements to the wider rail network can transform access to East West Rail and the growth corridor from further afield. This includes other regional population and economic centres such as Swindon, Aylesbury, Northampton, Wellingborough and Luton; and beyond to places such as Bristol, West Midlands, Ipswich and Norwich.

"Legacy" funding

Releasing the first wave of the £15 million in East West Rail "legacy" funding first announced at the 2023 Spring Budget, will allow EEH and regional partners such as the Supercluster Board and Arc Universities Group to start to plan for maximising the scheme's benefits. This includes opportunities around wider door-to-door connectivity, biodiversity net gain and tourism (led by EEH), alongside economic (Supercluster Board) and skills (Universities Group). The Spending Review should protect this funding stream, as small future allocations to this work will progress activity and unlock far greater benefits from East West Rail than just delivering the infrastructure itself.

Door to door funding

Dedicated funding is required to enable local authorities to plan and deliver improvements to station connectivity outside of the 'red line' boundary of East West

Rail stations (supporting delivery of the East West Railway Company's door-to-door strategy).

The Oxford-Cambridge Science Supercluster's Public First report estimates that through delivery of East West Rail, 374,000 homes will be within 10 minutes of an East West Rail station and adds: "Highlighting the opportunity of excellent first and last mile connectivity, an additional 305,000 homes are within 20 minutes of these stations."

Dedicated door-to-door funding for local and combined authorities will enable work which ensures that there are high quality connections by public and sustainable transport to and from stations, maximising the catchment of people and businesses who can benefit from East West Rail's delivery.

Funding for planning and delivery of East West Rail door-to-door connectivity (including bus and active travel) is required urgently for authorities in Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes, where East West Rail is due to open this year; for Central Bedfordshire and Bedford, where there is the ambition for the line to be operating by 2030; and for Cambridgeshire, where the ambition for the line to be operating by mid-2030s. A lesson learnt from the opening of the Oxford-Milton Keynes section this year is the earlier planning can commence on door-to-door, the better the outcome.

Our local partners also have ambitious plans for ensuring East West Rail acts as a catalyst for regeneration and station-led economic growth, including with improvements to Oxford, Bletchley (the 'eastern entrance') and Bedford stations. These stations act as important interchange hubs for East West Rail. Similarly, there are stations with strong connectivity into East West Rail, such as Luton, Swindon and Stevenage, for which our partners have ambitious plans to redevelop as a catalyst for regeneration and growth. Funding to advance these projects will again maximise the benefits that East West Rail will realise for the local and regional economy, and provide demonstrable benefits to the communities they serve.

The proposed new station at Tempsford could offer a significant opportunity for station-led place-making. It is vital that the East West Railway Company and national Government work closely with Central Bedfordshire Council and regional partners such as EEH to ensure that delivery of the station and any associated growth opportunities is accompanied by necessary infrastructure and services to enable sustainable access and ensure that the impact on existing communities is mitigated.

Connectivity into East West Rail

Our work has identified opportunities to extend the benefits and opportunities of East West Rail to additional parts of the country, increasing passenger numbers and unlocking resultant economic growth opportunities both within our region and beyond

it. Doing so facilitates the creation of an 'East West Main Line' which will transform the UK rail network.

Northampton-Milton Keynes-Aylesbury-High Wycombe-Old Oak Common rail corridor:

By harnessing delivery of East West Rail between Oxford and Milton Keynes, a significant opportunity could be unlocked to deliver a new rail corridor between Northampton, Milton Keynes, Aylesbury, High Wycombe and Old Oak Common that better connects important economic centres, and assets (eg, Silverstone, Bletchley Park and Pinewood) and maximises the investment in the Elizabeth Line to (an expanded) Heathrow Airport, Slough and Reading.

It has been estimated that within catchments of stations along the route between Northampton and south Bucks there is currently a population of 1.3 million, 78,000 businesses generating 678,000 jobs, and an economy worth £50bn. This is only expected to grow further given the dynamic nature of the economy in the corridor and plans for new homes.

Realising this new corridor requires incremental upgrades to existing infrastructure and track paths, rather than wholesale new routes. This includes delivery of the Aylesbury-Milton Keynes link (which was part of the Transport and Works Act Order for the initial phase of East West Rail).

For a town of its size (90,000 population), Aylesbury's connectivity by rail is notably poor – akin to a 'cul de sac' where the only option is to travel southwards into London, with no direct northern, western, or eastern connectivity. This is compounded by it having one of the poorest performing parts of the region's road networks, as highlighted in National Highway's Oxford-Cambridge roads study (see below).

The Aylesbury-Milton Keynes link is vital to support current and future growth in and around Aylesbury and the wider area. The growth of Aylesbury and north Buckinghamshire includes nearly 20,000 new homes planned for delivery by 2033 (including 16,207 new homes in Aylesbury). Site allocation in the local plan was shaped with the fair expectation that the rail link would be delivered: it was only in 2021, eight years into the local plan, that the link was removed from the first phase of East West Rail construction work. The result of this decision is large scale housing being developed without the infrastructure to support it and a lack of trust from the public that Government can support housing delivery in the way it is needed. The Government's new standard method for Local Housing Need increases Buckinghamshire's annual figure by nearly 50% to 4,319.

For the Spending Review, we recommend that Network Rail be given revenue funding to fully develop a solution for delivering the Aylesbury-Milton Keynes link within as a

shorter-time period as possible (so that it can be delivered in tandem with the works on the next phases of East West Rail to Bedford and Cambridge). The work should consider this within the context of the wider Northampton-Old Oak Common corridor and the opportunities this presents at a regional and national level.

For more information see the '[Global Britain Rail](#)' booklet on EEH's website.

Bletchley North-East chord

Currently, direct East West Rail services east of Milton Keynes to Bedford and Cambridge are not possible. This risks the city centre of one of the UK's most dynamic and fastest growing new cities not being fully integrated within the East West Rail route.

To facilitate a through route for East West Rail to Milton Keynes Central, and alleviate rail capacity constraints between Bletchley and Milton Keynes, a north-east chord is required, with supporting capacity enhancements at Milton Keynes Central Station (integral to the proposal is the addition of a further track of main line between Bletchley and Milton Keynes Central and the creation of new platform capacity at Milton Keynes Central). The delivery of the chord and additional track would likely compound the benefits by providing for a range of additional passenger and freight connections, and contributing to centring Milton Keynes as a focal point for the West Coast South and East West Rail networks.

For the Spending Review, we recommend that Network Rail be given revenue funding to fully develop the Bletchley-Milton Keynes Northern Connection and North-East chord proposal.

Oxford-Swindon-Bath-Bristol services: A 'quick win' with big benefits

A 'quick win' opportunity has arisen to introduce hourly rail services which will link Oxford to Swindon, Bath and Bristol – a corridor with prominent clusters of knowledge-intensive sectors highlighted within the Industrial Strategy.

The new service, which could be introduced within the next 12 months, would deliver journeys between Bristol and Oxford in under an hour and a quarter, and between Swindon and Oxford in just over half an hour.

Onward connectivity from Swindon, Bath and Bristol to Milton Keynes and (eventually) Bedford and Cambridge would be possible via a simple interchange at Oxford. Network Rail analysis shows the proposals have a positive benefit-cost ratio of above four.

No capital investment is required. The anticipated operational cost is in the low (single-figure) millions of pounds per year. For the purposes of the Spending Review, a

commitment by DfT to fund this amount is required (with the expectation that the service is likely to generate more revenue than it will cost).

For more information see [‘The case for reinstating Oxford-Swindon-Bath-Bristol rail services’ booklet](#) on EEH’s website.

‘Eastern Section’: Services east of Cambridge

Slow and infrequent, or indirect rail services from Cambridge to Norwich, Ipswich and Colchester limit East West Rail's transformative potential to major economic hubs in the East of England.

For the purpose of the Spending Review, the East West Rail Eastern Section Board (a partnership of local authorities with the rail industry and sub-group of the East West Main Line Partnership) is seeking revenue funding to develop the Strategic Outline Business Case for a focused, evidenced pipeline of incremental rail investment to unlock new homes, attract inward investment, enable access to high-skilled jobs and improve productivity across the East of England. This will support the growth ambitions of the fast-growing Cambridge and Peterborough.

It is worth noting that upgrading **Ely Junction** (see below) is key to realising improved connectivity between Cambridge and Norwich (while improvements to Haughley supports Cambridge-Ipswich).

Digital connectivity

EEH secured funding to enable digital fibre to be installed along the Bicester-Bletchley section of East West Rail while it was under construction – considerably cheaper than retrofitting.

Following this, the England’s Connected Heartland consortium won funding to trial 5G connectivity along this section of the route, significantly enhancing onboard and lineside digital connectivity (including within rural locations and to farms, unlocking opportunities for the use of 5G-enabled agri-tech).

For the Spending Review, we recommend that the overall budget for future phases of East West Rail to Bedford and Cambridge includes provision for appropriate digital infrastructure to ensure passengers receive a consistent, high quality and productive onboard experience, and to enable additional rural businesses and communities to access high quality digital services. For more information see <https://englandsconnectedheartland.co.uk/>

Varsity Way

There is an opportunity for a landmark active travel corridor between Oxford, Milton Keynes and Cambridge, following a significant portion of the East West Rail route. The 'Varsity Way' would act as a catalyst for active travel improvements elsewhere in the region, provide access to green spaces (including in areas likely to undergo significant housing growth) and support becoming an iconic tourist destination in its own right.

The Varsity Way is largely based on an existing National Cycle Network routes, parts of which require upgrading. EEH is working with Sustrans on progressing proposals for the Varsity Way.

A commitment within the Spending Review to fund development of the scheme (and its phased delivery) would complement Government concurrent investment in East West Rail. For more information see EEH's report '[Introducing the Varsity Way](#)' on the EEH website.

Upgrading Ely Junction

Limited capacity at Ely and Haughley junctions is a constraint on the UK rail freight system and economic growth, acting as a barrier to meeting increased demand for freight paths on routes to and from the UK's industrial heartlands in the Midlands and North.

According to Network Rail, upgrading Ely would facilitate 2,900 extra freight services operating to and from Felixstowe p.a: removing 98,000 HGV journeys; reducing road congestion by 5.6 million hours (making Ely an integrated, rail-based solution to improving road capacity), and cutting carbon emissions by 1.7 million tonnes over 60 years.

It would improve passenger connectivity with new hourly services between Ipswich and Peterborough (one of the UK's fastest growing cities) and new half-hourly King's Cross-Ely-King's Lynn services. In doing so, it improves rail services and reduces road congestion in Cambridgeshire – one of the government's key focuses for growth – and beyond. Ely is fundamental to helping address the disparity in provision between the north and south of Cambridgeshire: passenger service enhancements at Whittlesea, March and Manea cannot happen without these improvements. Ely and Haughley are also key for enabling improved rail services from Cambridge to Norwich and Ipswich, maximising the strategic value of East West Rail.

Ely has a high BCR of 4.89. The scheme is pivotal to Department for Transport meeting its targets for increasing mode shift to rail freight. Rail freight can lever private

investment, but for this to happen certainty is required on infrastructure delivery. Both schemes have high levels of support from MPs, local and combined authorities, freight industry, freeports, business, and the public. Four of England's seven sub-national transport bodies reference Ely's importance in their strategies.

For the Spending Review, we recommend that funding is released now to Network Rail, so that detailed planning for Ely's delivery can commence. Haughley is a 'quick win' requiring capital funding of around £20-£30 million: construction could start within this Spending Review period and is important for fully realising Ely's benefits.

See our information booklet [Keeping Trade on Track](#) for more information.

Bus and mass rapid transit

Bus journeys often represent the only realistic means of public transport for people living in many different parts of our region. Ensuring service levels are firstly protected, and then grown is critical to our economy, alongside the social and environmental wellbeing of our communities.

Improvements to bus services are a comparatively simple, quick and affordable means of delivering improvements to connectivity which unlock economic opportunities.

Our evidence and analysis has shown that there is a significant potential market for improved inter-urban, cross-boundary journeys, which, if realised, would support the sustainability of the wider sector.

Bus funding and the regional bus network

We recommend the Spending Review make provision for stable, multiyear bus funding to local and combined authorities to plan for and support improvements to bus services. This will build on funding announced last year. The funding should be flexible to authorities' needs (ie, the split between capital and revenue funding).

EEH has completed the first phase of work to identify a pan regional bus network between Swindon and Oxford through to Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. This is a major opportunity that would complement investment in and integration with East West Rail. It can only be realised if funding to support buses is prioritised.

We also ask that the fare cap initiative is protected.

Mass rapid transit

Several of our local authority partners, including Milton Keynes, Hertfordshire and Cambridgeshire are developing ambitious mass rapid transit schemes for their places. Cheaper and easier to deliver than heavy rail solutions, MRT in these areas will integrate

into the wider transport system and will maximise the value of investment in East West Rail (for example, Hertfordshire's HERT proposals run east-west along the south of the EEH region, connecting into main lines served by East West Rail to its north).

However, funding to progress MRT often falls 'through the gap' due to it not being covered by roads or rail funding. Dedicated support and funding from Government is required to advance these schemes – potentially to the point where they can then attract private sector investment.

For the purpose of the Spending Review, we recommend that mass rapid transit schemes in the region receive appropriate revenue funding which enables them to further develop the proposals into investable propositions.

Targeted investment in roads

Targeted investment in our strategically-important roads will unlock and support economic and housing growth opportunities across our region.

Roads funding should be considered not just for the Strategic Road Network but also the Major Road Network, a critical part of the UK road network.

In 2022 EEH and Department of Transport sponsored a major study of the Oxford-Cambridge region's roads by National Highways. The OxCam road connectivity study identified priority interventions to ensure strategically-important roads continue to support economic growth.

For the Spending Review, we recommend that revenue funding is allocated to National Highways to develop the interventions, which vary in scale, cost and delivery.

By securing development funding through the Spending Review the region would be in a much stronger position to explore all funding routes for delivery, including the Roads Investment Programme but also via National Wealth Fund or other private sector investment opportunities.

The schemes/ areas identified by the study to be taken forward for further development were:

- A1 (specifically Sandy to Biggleswade, though there is a need for wider improvements between Huntingdon and Biggleswade, between which Tempsford is located)
- M1 Junction 13 (Central Bedfordshire)
- A1139 (Peterborough)
- A6/ A421 (Bedford)
- Aylesbury

- A605 (south of Peterborough)
- A43 Corby and Broughton
- A14 J33-J36 (Cambridgeshire)
- A421 (A43 to M1 J13)
- A141/A142 (Cambridgeshire)
- A43/ A5 roundabout (Milton Keynes)
- A5 Old Stratford and Kelly's Kitchen roundabouts (Milton Keynes)
- A5 Hockliffe (Central Bedfordshire)
- Bicester
- A507 (Central Bedfordshire)

More information on the road study is available in our [Board paper](#).

The Spending Review should allocate funding for the planning and delivery of the current RIS programme and pipeline. This includes pipeline schemes A404 corridor (Buckinghamshire); A34 (Oxfordshire); A47/A1101 Elm Road Junction (Cambridgeshire); and M11 Junction 13 (Cambridgeshire).

We also recommend that the Spending Review allocates funding to progress Major Road Network projects in the region to next stage of business case process. Many of these schemes are also referenced above, but in addition include:

- A10 Broxbourne and Ely to Cambridge
- Vauxhall Way (Luton Airport)
- A509 Isham Bypass

Funding allocations

Local and combined authorities

It is vital that the long-term funding which benefits the strategically-important road network and our railways is matched by long-term settlements for local transport.

EEH understands that integrated settlements for new strategic authorities will be announced within a later Spending Review. These settlements must provide stable, long-term certainty. In the meantime, there is a need for the next Spending Review to ensure that during any transition period, funding for local authorities is certain, consistent and of a level which enables authorities to continue to plan for deliver improvements in the short-term.

Equally, our partners at Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority require greater capacity funding to drive growth and inward investment as well as the resources to make timely key investments which can unlock opportunities.

Local and combined authority funding is particularly relevant for our region, in the context of the Oxford-Cambridge Growth Corridor, where the arrival of East West Rail and acceleration of economic growth plans will place additional pressures on local and combined authorities to plan for and deliver improved connectivity, alongside responding to the decarbonisation ambitions likely to be set out in forthcoming local transport plan guidance and within the National Integrated Transport Strategy.

England's Economic Heartland

Established in 2016, EEH plays a leading role in the planning and delivery of transport connectivity in the region.

EEH works with local and combined authorities across the region, tailoring our approach to individual circumstances and structures. For example, we work to ensure EEH's tools and expertise are supporting the development of local transport (and connectivity) plans, reducing duplication of effort, sharing sources of data and evidence and supporting innovative approaches. In other examples, EEH is focusing on specific areas of interest to both local partners and the government, such as providing advice and guidance on options for future bus reform models.

Going forwards in the context of local government reform, EEH will play an important role as a 'devolution partner'. As referenced within the Devolution white paper, sub-national transport bodies can work across multiple strategic authority areas to ensure that pan-regional collaboration and prioritisation takes place. The renewed focus on the Oxford-Cambridge Growth Corridor (for which strategic transport infrastructure is such a pivotal consideration) makes this role even more important.

A multiyear settlement will give EEH certainty and allow us to work towards producing an ambitious five-year plan, taking us into a new phase of partnership and impact between 2025-2030.

Connecting Economies and North Cotswold Line

Work by EEH and its partners has identified a number of strategic interventions along various geographic corridors within our region. Many of these schemes are relatively small in scale and represent low cost, 'quick wins' which could be progressed and even delivered within the Spending Review window.

The strategic narrative for these schemes are detailed in our Connecting Economies brochures for the following corridors:

- [Luton-Bedfordshire-Corby](#)
- [Peterborough-Northampton-Oxford](#)
- [EEH South \(Hertfordshire-Bedfordshire-Buckinghamshire\)](#)

- [Northampton-Buckinghamshire-Thames Valley](#)
- [Swindon-Didcot-Oxford](#)
- [Cambridgeshire and Peterborough](#)
- [Milton Keynes](#)

North Cotswold Line

The North Cotswold corridor has core strengths in science and technology, manufacturing, defence and agritech, higher education and tourism. However, the North Cotswold Line's potential to sustainably support economic and housing growth (indicative annual housing need along the corridor has increase by 80%) is limited by its current hourly service between Oxford and Worcester (with services extending to Great Malvern and Hereford in some hours).

Increasing this frequency to every 30 minutes between Oxford and Worcester, while also offering new hourly services to Droitwich Spa, Kidderminster and Stourbridge, would be transformational. It can be achieved relatively simply, requiring less than 10 miles of track doubling together with additional platforms at two stations. The combination of East West Rail and an improved North Cotswold Line would be a gamechanger for the UK rail network, enabling journeys from the West Midlands right through to the east of England, within just a single, simple interchange at Oxford. For more information see [Improving the North Cotswold Line on](#) the EEH website.

For the Spending Review, we recommend that funding is provided to the North Cotswold Task Force (a consortium of local authorities including Oxfordshire and Worcestershire county councils) to progress the scheme to Outline Business Case (OBC). This work will consider how private sector funding can be leveraged for the project.