



**East of England**

**All Party Parliamentary Group**

**Co-Chairs: Jess Asato MP and Andrew Pakes MP**

**Vice-Chairs: Blake Stephenson MP & Marie Goldman MP**

20<sup>th</sup> February 2025

Dear Secretary of State for Transport, the Rt Hon Heidi Alexander MP, and Chief Secretary to the Treasury, the Rt Hon Darren Jones MP

### **Urgent need for Government commitment to progress Ely and Haughley junction improvements**

The Government's Plan for Change has made delivering economic growth across the UK its central mission. To achieve this, growth must be unlocked across every UK region. We are therefore writing to you to restate the six chief facts that make clear how upgrading Ely and Haughley rail junctions would directly contribute to the Government's ambition to grow the whole of the UK.

These schemes have been in the pipeline for decades with the case for them strengthening year on year. They are now restricting growth and the country's progress to cleaner, greener transport connections.

*We are now calling on Government to commit **in this Spending Review** to provide Network Rail with the funds to develop the Full Business Case for the Ely Area Capacity Enhancements, so it can be delivered as soon as possible with appropriate phasing, and to provide the relatively low level of funding needed to deliver the Haughley Junction upgrade.*

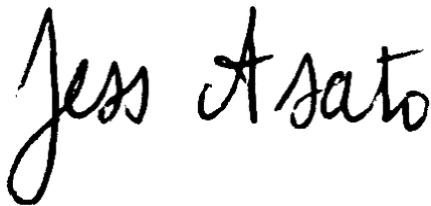
The case for this investment is clear. It would:

1. **Enable businesses from Land's End to John O'Groats:** Rail freight from the Port of Felixstowe primarily serves freight terminals in the Midlands, North and Scotland, with the greatest density of goods destinations being cities in the North of England. Unlocking this bottle-neck would increase international trade flows by enabling 2,900 extra freight services to and from the Port of Felixstowe every year, also releasing capacity on rail routes serving the growing Thames ports.
2. **Unlock sustainable homes growth:** It is anticipated that across the corridors which would see increased passenger services, there will need to be at least 310,000 new homes built by 2040. People in these new communities will be the talent for the high-skilled, high-growth sectors in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, Norfolk and Suffolk as well as in Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire and Essex.
3. **Relieve pressure on our stretched road network:** By increasing capacity and reducing bottlenecks, taking 98,000 HGVs off the road and stimulating 277,000 extra rail passenger journeys per year, it will reduce congestion by 5.6 million hours per year. Ely is also referenced in the strategies of Transport for London, Transport for the North and Midlands Connect reflecting the knock-on benefits to capacity in the wider rail and road network.

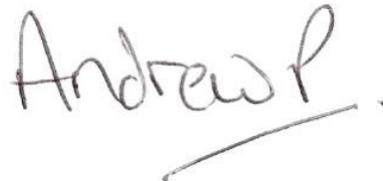
4. **Payback the investment 5-fold:** The scheme has a remarkably high benefit-cost ratio, returning £4.89 of benefits for every £1 invested. An additional £60m of wider economic benefits has already been identified within the Outline Business Case. However, this does not reflect fully the growth opportunities now centred on Cambridge and Peterborough, or the Freeports.
5. **Align with, and unlock, private sector investment:** Hundreds of millions of pounds have already been invested by the private sector in this trade corridor, including in new port capacity, vessels, rail rolling stock, inland rail terminals and logistics facilities. Only recently £130m has been invested from private sector levies to deepen the channel at the Port of Felixstowe. Public funding for Ely helps match and capture the full value of these prior investments, whilst also unlocking more in the future including upgraded rail freight terminal facilities and new bi-mode locomotives. But it needs clear signals from Government that rail freight capacity will be released.
6. **Deliver greener transport:** By supporting modal shift to rail, Ely will remove the need for 98,000 HGV journeys every year, and attract substantially more rail users as evidence of increased passenger frequencies across the East has already demonstrated. It would also reduce carbon emissions by 1.7m tonnes of CO2 over 60 years.

Delaying these projects further will delay national growth and productivity enhancements. We trust you will view these schemes positively as you determine the Spending Review.

Yours sincerely



**Jess Asato MP**  
Co-chair, East of England APPG



**Andrew Pakes MP**  
Co-chair, East of England APPG



**Marie Goldman MP**  
Vice Chair, East of England APPG



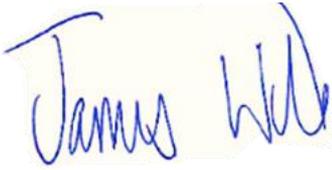
**Blake Stephenson MP**  
Vice Chair, East of England APPG



**Jack Abbott MP**  
East of England Missions Champion



**Alice Macdonald MP**  
East of England Missions Champion



**James Wild MP**  
Conservative MP for NW Norfolk



**Peter Prinsley MP**  
Labour MP for Bury St Edmunds and Stowmarket



**Ben Goldsborough MP**  
Labour MP for South Norfolk



**Patrick Spencer MP**  
Conservative MP for Central Suffolk & North Ipswich



**Jenny Riddell-Carpenter MP**  
Labour MP for Suffolk Coastal



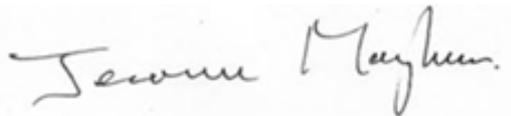
**Ian Sollom MP**  
Liberal Democrat MP for St Neots and Mid Cambridgeshire



**James Cartlidge MP**  
Conservative MP for South Suffolk



**Terry Jermy MP**  
Labour MP for South West Norfolk



**Jerome Mayhew MP**  
Conservative MP for Broadlands



**Adrian Ramsay MP**  
Green MP for Waveney Valley



**Charlotte Cane MP**  
Liberal Democrat MP for Ely and East Cambridgeshire



**George Freeman MP**  
Conservative MP for Mid Norfolk

**Agreed 18/2/25 by email. No e-signature**

**Bayo Alaba MP**  
**East of England Labour Business Champion**  
**and Labour MP for Southend East and Rochford**



**Rt Hon Richard Holden MP**  
**Conservative MP for Basildon & Billericay**



**Daisy Cooper MP**  
**Liberal Democrat MP for St Albans**



**Josh Dean MP**  
**Labour MP for Hertford and Stortford**



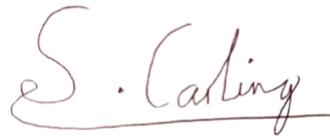
**Pippa Heylings MP**  
**Liberal Democrat MP for South Cambridgeshire**



**Steff Aquarone MP**  
**Liberal Democrat MP for North Norfolk**



**Victoria Collins MP**  
**Liberal Democrat MP for Harpenden & Berkhamsted**



**Sam Carling MP**  
**Labour MP for NW Cambridgeshire**



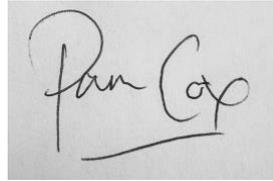
**Andrew Lewin MP**  
**Labour MP for Welwyn Hatfield**

**Agreed 20/2/25 by email. No e-signature**

**Clive Lewis MP**  
**Labour MP for Norwich South**



**Jen Craft MP**  
**Labour MP for Thurrock**



**Pam Cox MP**  
**Labour MP for Colchester**



*No e-signature but confirmed  
by email on 13/2*

**Rt Hon Lord Andrew Lansley CBE**

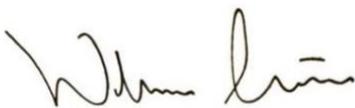
**Baroness Ros Scott of Needham Market**



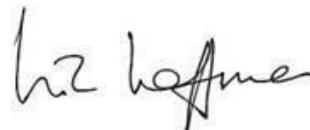
**Cllr Graham Butland**  
**Chair, the East of England LGA**



**Dr Nik Johnson,**  
**Mayor of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough**



**Will Quince**  
**Chair, Transport East**



**Cllr Liz Leffman, Chair, EEH**



**Charlotte Horobin**  
**Chambers East**



**Jade Uko**  
**Federation of Small Businesses**

**Richard Tunnicliffe**  
CBI East

**Biplab Rakshi**  
Chairman, England  
Institute of Directors, East of England

**Professor Jenny Higham**  
Vice-Chancellor and CEO  
University of Suffolk

**Prof David Maguire**  
President and Vice Chancellor  
University of East Anglia

**Roderick Watkins**  
Vice Chancellor, Anglian Ruskin University

**Cllr Kevin Bentley**  
Leader, Essex County Council

**Cllr. Matthew Hicks**  
Leader, Suffolk Country Council

**Cllr Alistair Beales**  
Leader of King's Lynn and  
West Norfolk Borough Council

**Cllr. Andrew Mellen**  
Leader, Mid Suffolk District Council

**Cllr. Cliff Waterman**  
Leader, West Suffolk Council

**Cllr. Caroline Topping**  
Leader, East Suffolk Council

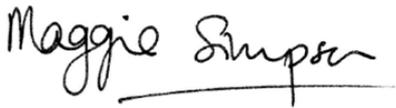
**Cllr. Deborah Saw**  
Leader, Babergh District Council



**Cllr. Neil MacDonal**  
**Leader, Ipswich Borough Council**



**Councillor Tim Adams**  
**Leader of North Norfolk District Council**



**Maggie Simpson**  
**Director General, The Rail Freight Group**



**Martin Beable**  
**Managing Director, Greater Anglia**



**John Dugmore**  
**Chief Executive,**  
**Suffolk Chamber of Commerce**



**Denise Rossiter**  
**Chief Executive,**  
**Essex Chambers of Commerce**



**Nova Fairbank**  
**Chief Executive,**  
**Norfolk Chambers of Commerce**



**Roz Bird**  
**Chief Executive Norwich Research Park**



**Julia Pyke**  
**Managing Director, Sizewell C**



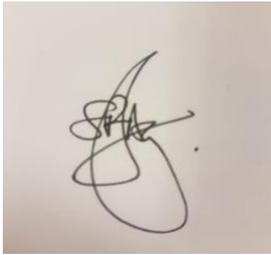
**Steve Beel**  
**Chief Executive, Freeport East**



**John Williams**  
**Executive Chairman, Maritime Transport**  
**Group**

**[Agreed 17/2 but no e-signature]**

**Dr. Nikos Savvas DL**  
**Chief Executive Officer, Eastern Education**



**Stuart Ager**  
**Vice President and Managing Director UK Limited**  
**Metro Supply Chain**



**Mark Thurston**  
**Chief Executive, Anglian Water Services**



**Paul Ager**  
**Divisional Port Manager,**  
**Associated British Ports**



**Jackie Sadek,**  
**Chair, UK Innovation Corridor**



**Tim Pasmore**  
**Suffolk Police & Crime Commissioner**



**Jonathan Fowler,**  
**Chief Operating Officer, London Stansted Airport**

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