Transport East Briefing

Date: 7 February 2025
Subject: Transport East Spending Review Submission
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Overview

The contents of Transport East's Spending Review phase 2 submissions.

1. Context/ Background

The Government asked for submissions to the Spending Review phase 2 through an online form managed by His Majesty's Treasury. The form requested a 250 summary with the opportunity to attach one supporting document.

Transport East made two submissions directly and informed the contents of a third.
Direct submissions:

- Transport East specific submission outlining the main financial and infstructure asks on behalf of our partners and the region.
- A submission on behalf of the East West Rail Eastern Section Board, of which we provide the secretariat requesting specific support for the next phase of development work to improve East West Rail connections east of Cambridge.

Contributed to submission:

- The submission made by the Ely Taskforce seeking funding support for the development of the Ely Area Capacity Enhancement schemen and the delivery of Haughley Junction rail improvements.

Supportive material was provided for each submission which can be found at transporteast.gov.uk

2. Transport East 250 word submission

Transport East is the STB for Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock. It is a partnership of local authorities and business representatives, part-funded by the DfT with a formal remit to advise government on the region's transport investment priorities.

The East powers, feeds, and supplies the UK. Offshore wind farms power the equivalent of 32% of all UK homes; it supplies 15% of England's total farmland, and 50% of the UK's containerised goods move through the region. We have 120,000 new homes planned in the next 5 years. The UK's growth and prosperity is reliant on a thriving East.

Transport connections are a constraint. Evidence from the NIC shows we are the worst region for inter-urban connectivity in England.

To enable the East we need:

- Government to change how funding is provided to help local authorities deliver for local people and businesses. Our authorities are seeking long-term funding allocations to support integrated, multi-modal schemes and plans.
- Funding to enable local authorities and national agencies to deliver infrastructure needed to realise improved journeys for local people, new homes, and economic growth and productivity.
- Pipeline development support for the next tranche of vitally important infrastructure.

Key schemes to be delivered over the SR period include:

- Ely and Haughley rail upgrades
- Rail enhancements between Clacton - Colchester, Ipswich - Peterborough/ Cambridge, and serving Stansted airport
- MRN schemes: A12 East of Ipswich, A10 West Winch, Army & Navy in Chelmsford, Norwich Western Link
- SRN schemes: A47 Thickthorn junction, A12 J19-J25

3. East West Rail Eastern Section 250 submission

There is a window of opportunity to maximise the impact of East West Rail and transform the economy of the East of England with rail-led growth.

The East of England contributes over £163 billion annually to the UK economy.

Despite its strengths, there are parts of the region where transport infrastructure is holding back potential for growth and improved productivity.

With East West Rail planned to reach Cambridge in the mid-2030s, now is the time to plan for how the wider region’s economy could be transformed through onward rail connections. Supporting the government’s ambitions for the Oxford-Cambridge Growth Corridor and building on current strengths of life sciences around Cambridge, the International Gateways of Suffolk and Essex and the agri-tech sector in Norfolk.

Despite its transformative potential, the current East West Rail proposals do not fully address connectivity challenges in the east of the country. Slow and infrequent, or indirect rail services from Cambridge to Norwich, Ipswich and Colchester reduce East West Rail's appeal for future commuters, leisure, and business travellers at local and regional levels.

The East West Rail Eastern Section Board (a partnership of committed local authorities with the rail industry and sub-group of the East West Rail Main Line Partnership, supported by Transport East) is seeking 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, reduce transport emissions, and improve productivity across the East.