

# **BUILDING BETTER CONNECTIONS**

**The business imperative  
for East West Rail**



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## Definitions

**East West Rail:** Throughout this report, 'East West Rail' refers to the project between Oxford and Cambridge, including the link to Aylesbury. This section is under the remit of the East West Railway Company. Its completion unlocks the opportunity for an east-west main line from Norfolk and Suffolk to Bristol and South Wales.

**The region:** References to 'the region' refer to the England's Economic Heartland sub-national transport body region which covers the entirety of the East West Rail project within the scope of the East West Railway Company. The EEH region contains the following transport authorities: Bedford, Buckinghamshire, Cambridgeshire, Central Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire, Luton, Milton Keynes, North Northamptonshire, Oxfordshire, Peterborough, Swindon and West Northamptonshire.

# FOREWORD BY THE CHAIR OF EAST WEST MAIN LINE PARTNERSHIP



**EAST WEST RAIL IS BRITAIN'S MOST EXCITING INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT AND IS VITAL FOR THE UK'S LONG-TERM ECONOMIC FUTURE. IT WILL TRANSFORM RAIL TRAVEL IN THE REGION AND BEYOND, SIGNIFICANTLY BOOSTING CONNECTIVITY AND BRINGING FASTER JOURNEY TIMES. IN DOING SO, IT WILL PLAY A FUNDAMENTAL ROLE IN ENABLING THE REGION'S POTENTIAL FOR OUR RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES, AND THE WIDER UK ECONOMY.**

The construction work on East West Rail between Oxford and Milton Keynes is well underway and due to open by 2025. This brochure shares the perspectives of business leaders about why they believe it is vital to deliver East West Rail in full to Cambridge (including the link to Aylesbury) at the earliest opportunity. With insight from some of the region's leading businesses, including KPMG and AstraZeneca, this report makes the case for East West Rail and outlines why the project is important to the UK's economic success.

East West Rail, delivered in full, is a key enabler in better connecting businesses and sectors to the people, communities and skills that we have across the region. By transforming labour markets and making it physically easier for our clusters of innovation to collaborate with one another, East West Rail will ensure this region becomes more than the sum of its individual parts: a globally renowned economic area which fuels UK prosperity.

East West Rail has strong support from local authorities and its delivery is a priority for England's Economic Heartland, the region's sub-national transport body. The East West Main Line Partnership, which is led by local authorities and local enterprise partnerships, has existed for more than 25 years and made the original case for the scheme.

With insight from a range of sectors, from finance to the pharmaceutical industry, this report creates a single, concise source of information on the East West Rail project, its importance to the business community and why it is key to driving economic growth in the region and wider UK.

I have always been impressed by the ability of business and government to come together at vital moments to overcome our shared challenges, deliver on jobs, and work at pace to support the economy. In East West Rail, we have a fantastic opportunity to continue this tradition, driving economic growth with world-leading innovation at its core. From this report, we hope that the government will take the opportunity to confirm its commitment to East West Rail and to supporting the growth of one of the country's key engines for growth.

Councillor Steven Broadbent  
Chair of the East West Main Line Partnership  
Cabinet member for transportation, Buckinghamshire Council

Autumn 2022

# INTRODUCTION: TIME TO CONNECT

East West Rail will transform the economic potential of our region and make the UK future ready by connecting and inspiring our businesses today and for decades to come. The global winners of the future will be the nations that scale their capabilities ahead of their competition. East West Rail will create a new, connected economic landscape locally and nationally and become an integral part of the conditions needed to maintain the UK's position as a world class place to do business.

By connecting businesses and communities, East West Rail will deliver economic growth, create access to skills and talent, and attract greater inward investment to the UK. Greater connectivity will make the region a world class place to do business – now and in the future. The increased supply of skilled labour will make the region more competitive while improving connections between our science and technology clusters will encourage even greater collaboration and fuel innovation.

Building the section between Oxford and Cambridge also unlocks opportunities for an East West Main Line, extending the opportunity of East West Rail to places such as Ipswich and Norwich to the east; Swindon, Bristol and South Wales to the west; Reading and Southampton to the south; and Northampton, Peterborough and the Midlands to the north. In doing so, it will support new business markets – such as a life sciences triangle between Norwich, Cambridge and Ipswich, as well as development along the Norwich to Cambridge tech corridor.

East West Rail delivers on the promise of global Britain and levelling up the nation. It will increase labour supply, reduce cost pressure for businesses, and create the opportunity for higher wage growth across the supply chain. The government has set a clear ambition to deliver economic recovery and growth across the UK. In East West Rail, it has an infrastructure project which could be truly transformational, unlocking the potential of Britain's world class capabilities in science and technology innovation.



## 1 Delivering economic growth and innovation

The region already makes an important contribution to the national economy, with a GVA of £168 billion in 2019. East West Rail can play a part in contributing both to its continued growth – and to national economic objectives.

By functioning as a single, integrated economic area, East West Rail will unite the region's globally competitive clusters and link knowledge-intensive areas that, together, can deliver greater economic growth. With two thirds of the most powerful businesses of the future yet to be created, we need to ensure the UK is ready to create and scale the fast growth businesses of the future.

The region is a net contributor to the Treasury that delivers nine per cent of the UK's total GVA. The region could deliver greater economic growth, but it needs East West Rail to create the conditions that will make it a world class place to do business. Currently, congestion and unreliable journey times are putting the brakes on the region's economy, leading to productivity levels below the national average. Productivity across the region (measured as GVA per hour worked) is around 2% lower than the national average, with Oxford, Bedford and Cambridge all at least 8% below the national average. In addition, businesses are struggling to find the commercial space they need to grow: it has been estimated that office stock equivalent to the total stock in Reading will be required in the region up to 2050.

East West Rail will boost productivity by creating faster connections between people and businesses across the region and unlock sustainable locations for business growth.

East West Rail will also create greater connections between the region's world class science and technology parks and laboratories. The region is unique in its access to world-class education and academic research. The universities of Oxford and Cambridge continue to be ranked among the top three in the world. Milton Keynes is home to the Open University – the largest university in the UK – while there are plans for a new undergraduate university located near the city's railway station specialising in technology, engineering and science. Cranfield University is the UK's largest provider of master's-level graduates in engineering with specialisms including energy and power, aerospace and defence and security. The region's universities are finding solutions to global challenges, including the COVID-19 vaccine and green technology. The potent combination of innovation in higher education and commercial enterprise is a tried and tested formula for success. If we can deliver better connections between businesses and academia, we can unleash the region's potential as a world-leading innovation zone.



## 2 Connecting skills and talent

East West Rail will connect businesses to skills. The need for access to talent came across strongly during our interviews with business leaders. One of these businesses, a rocket propulsion firm based in Central Bedfordshire, said a lack of access to skills is currently putting a block on expansion. East West Rail will be “a game changer” giving the firm far easier access to labour markets in Cambridge and Milton Keynes.

The region has the potential to compete with the world's top performing economic areas – and is already home to more than one in 10 of the UK's knowledge sector jobs. With a shortage of skills across all areas of the economy, East West Rail will provide long term access to the best skills in the world.

East West Rail is about connecting people and places. We know that access to talent is one of the most important factors in the relocation decision-making process of global organisations. We have an opportunity to attract companies from around the world.

But we can only do this if we create the right conditions for businesses to access talent from the region. Doing this will create an innovation culture in a relatively dispersed economy as well as creating jobs for thousands. Moreover, it will address the skills shortage that employers are facing across the UK. In this way, East West Rail will level up areas, regionally and nationally, and guarantee long term access to the best skills in the world.

East West Rail will unlock a unique combination of skills and talent by connecting knowledge centres such as Oxford and Cambridge. The powerful partnerships that result are not only of benefit to businesses in the region – but also to the many scaling businesses around the world that are searching for their next location to invest in. In this way, East West Rail will future proof the nation, capitalise on our academic strengths and boost the UK's competitive advantage.

## 3 Boosting global investment to the UK

East West Rail has the potential to be an exemplar for Global Britain. The number of businesses in the region grew by more than 28 percent between 2013 and 2019, ahead of the UK average of 25.4 percent. Three of the cities identified in The Centre for Cities' Fast Growth Cities group – Cambridge, Milton Keynes and Oxford – are located directly on East West Rail, and the remaining three cities – Norwich, Peterborough and Swindon – could be part of an expanded 'East West Main Line'. They are identified as some of 'the most successful and innovative places in the UK'. If we invest in infrastructure now, we will supercharge these already fast-growing places by providing global and local investors with the confidence to invest in them.

East West Rail will unlock better connectivity to a number of airports, including Luton and Stansted, both among the five busiest airports in the UK. Luton is one of Europe's largest private aviation hubs and has an enterprise zone specialising in aerospace and advanced manufacturing, while Stansted is currently looking to expand services to Boston and San Francisco to connect investors to the region's life science and tech scale-ups.

East West Rail is about ensuring the UK can compete with the rest of the world and attract global investment that delivers tax revenue that can be invested across the UK. We know that when international businesses choose

not to invest in the innovation hubs of places such as Cambridge or Oxford, they rarely reallocate investment to other regions of the UK. Instead, they often take their investment to rival business districts such as Berlin or San Francisco.

Currently, too many investors are looking beyond the region and, ultimately, beyond the UK because they are not satisfied by existing transport infrastructure. We have to create the infrastructure that enables the global life science companies and fast-growing tech start-ups to choose to expand into the region above other global locations.

East West Rail will demonstrate to people and businesses around the world that the Government is delivering the infrastructure that will lead global Britain into its next chapter. By building East West Rail, we can realise the full potential of the region by attracting businesses that would have significant economic impact across the country, create job opportunities and contribute to UK prosperity.

East West Rail will enable businesses to access greater skills and talent. It will create new business communities. It will generate greater overseas investment and, ultimately, stronger economic growth. That's why businesses and local authorities are calling for East West Rail to be delivered.

**“East West Rail will create a hub of innovation and an exchange of resources and ideas that will attract the inward investment we need to grow. This is a crucial infrastructure project for the region.”**



Andreas Hohmann, Managing Director,  
Total Carbide (Westcott Venture Park)



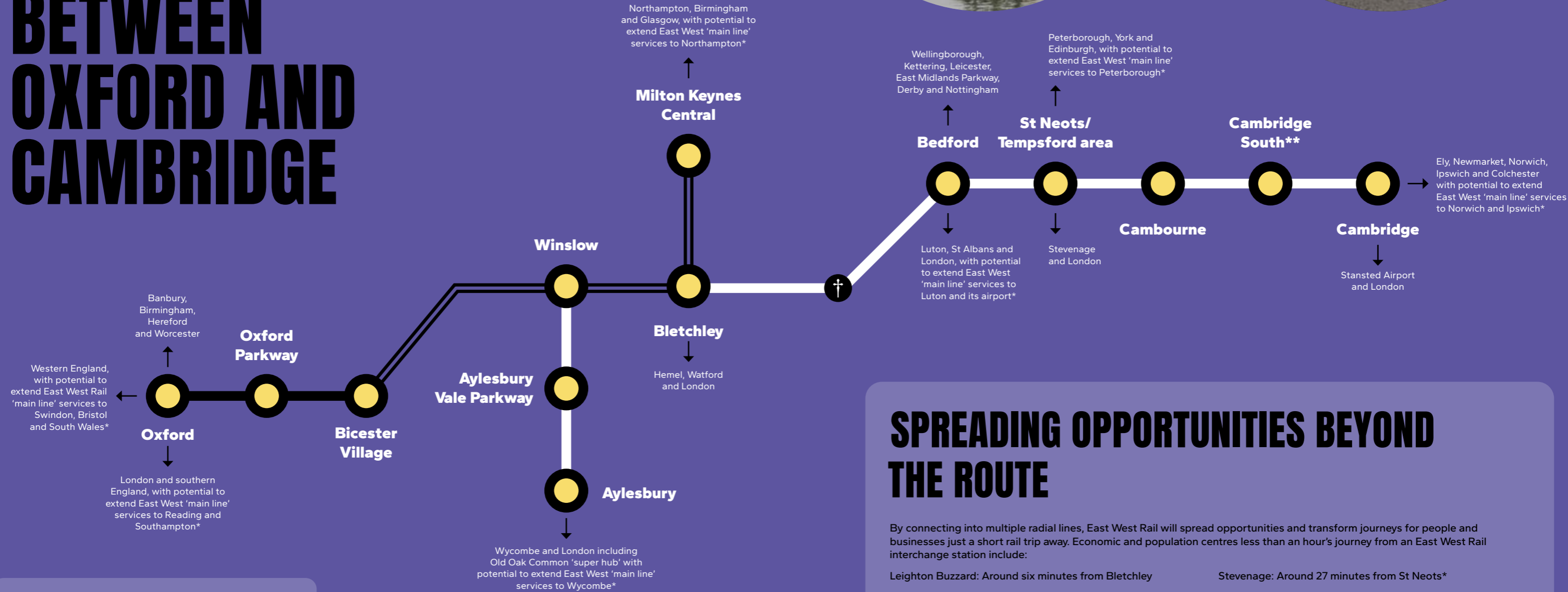
# THE ROUTE: EAST WEST RAIL BETWEEN OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE



BEDFORD



CAMBRIDGE



## SPREADING OPPORTUNITIES BEYOND THE ROUTE

By connecting into multiple radial lines, East West Rail will spread opportunities and transform journeys for people and businesses just a short rail trip away. Economic and population centres less than an hour's journey from an East West Rail interchange station include:

Leighton Buzzard: Around six minutes from Bletchley	Stevenage: Around 27 minutes from St Neots*
Wellingborough: Around 11 minutes from Bedford	Corby: Around 29 minutes from Bedford
Didcot: Around 12 minutes from Oxford	Stansted Airport: Around 29 minutes from Cambridge
Northampton: Around 15 minutes from Milton Keynes	Wycombe: Around 30 minutes from Aylesbury
Luton (and Airport): Around 15 (18) minutes from Bedford	Watford: Around 31 minutes from Bletchley
Ely: Around 15 minutes from Cambridge	St Albans: Around 39 minutes from Bedford
Banbury: Around 18 minutes from Oxford	Leicester: Around 40 minutes from Bedford
Rugby: Around 20 minutes from Milton Keynes	Harlow: Around 40 minutes from Cambridge
Kettering: Around 21 minutes from Bedford	Welwyn Garden City: Around 45 minutes from St Neots*
Newmarket: Around 21 minutes from Cambridge	Birmingham: Around 48 minutes from Milton Keynes
Hemel Hempstead: Around 24 minutes from Bletchley	East Midlands Parkway: Around 58 minutes from Bedford
Peterborough: Around 24 minutes from St Neots*	
Reading: Around 25 minutes from Oxford	

(\* Existing St Neots station – East West Railway Company is planning for a new St Neots South/ Tempsford station on the East Coast Main Line, its exact location to be confirmed.)



AYLESBURY

# FACTSHEET

This factsheet provides an overview of key information and statistics relating to East West Rail and the region (statistics relate to the England's Economic Heartland sub-national transport region unless otherwise stated).

East West Rail would re-establish a rail link between **Cambridge and Oxford**, (including **Aylesbury**) which had been in operation from Victorian times through to the late 1960s.

The East West Rail Consortium (now East West Main Line Partnership), **was formed by local authorities in 1995** and made the original business case for the project.

The Oxford to Bicester section is already in operation. The Bicester to Milton Keynes section **will open by 2025**, with construction currently on time and to budget.

East West Rail **unlocks countless new journey opportunities** by intersecting with radial lines including the West Coast Main Line, Midland Main Line and East Coast Main Line.

East West Rail would provide journey times between Oxford and Cambridge of **little over 90 minutes**, compared to current times of more than two-and-a-half hours by rail and road.

Journeys between Bedford and Cambridge will take **around half an hour**, as opposed to over 50 minutes by road and two hours by public transport.

#### Other selected EWR estimated journey times

- Oxford to Bedford: 1hr
- Oxford to Milton Keynes: 45 mins
- Cambridge to Milton Keynes: 1hr 25mins
- Bedford to Milton Keynes: 45 mins

Cambridge is the most **inventive place** in the UK with 146 invention applications to the IPO per 100,000 residents, followed by South Cambs (105) and Three Rivers in Herts (86).

Cambridge's life sciences cluster **employs 23,000 people** across 627 firms with a collective turnover of £7.4bn per year.

Three of the six **'fast growth cities'** identified by the Centre for Cities – Oxford, Milton Keynes and Cambridge – are on East West Rail.

The remaining **'fast growth cities'** – **Swindon, Peterborough and Norwich** – could all form part of the wider 'East West Main Line'.

In Cambridge and Oxford, the ratio of median house price to median gross annual earnings is **regularly over 12**, compared to around eight nationally.

The region accounts for **approximately 10% of the UK's carbon emissions** from surface transport. Emissions are 30% higher than the UK average (from 2005-2020).

Productivity in the region (measured as GVA per hour worked) is around **2% lower than the national average** with Oxford, Bedford and Cambridge all at least 8% below the national average.

Oxford, Milton Keynes and Bedford all contain neighbourhoods which are among the **top 10%** most deprived in the country (Aylesbury and Cambridge contains neighbourhoods among the top 20% most deprived).



The universities of **Oxford** and **Cambridge** are ranked among the top three in the world

**1 in 10** of the UK's knowledge sector jobs are in the region



There are a combined **11 'unicorns'** (companies founded after 1990 now valued at more than **\$1bn**) located in **Oxford** and **Cambridge** – the most in the UK outside of **London** and the same amount as **Paris**

**Milton Keynes** is one of the most productive economies within the UK, with an estimated **GVA of £13.5bn in 2019**. It is also in the top eight cities for start-ups

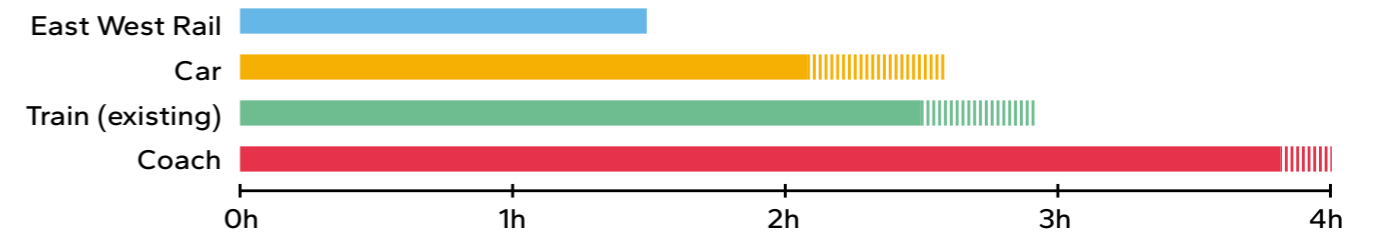
**Buckinghamshire** has the highest percentage of **'micro enterprises'** (up to 9 employees) of all LEP areas (91.5%), followed by **Hertfordshire** (91.1%)

**The Cambridge Biomedical Campus** (located near Cambridge South) is the city's **biggest employer** and the **largest centre of medical research and health science in Europe**

The region's success is good news for the wider **UK economy and supply chains**. For example, **AstraZeneca** conducts much of its research activity around **Cambridge** but manufacturing and distribution is undertaken in the **North West**

**Cambridge** is the most congested urban area in the UK outside of London. People in Cambridge spent **75 hours** on average, in traffic jams in **2021**. **Aylesbury** also features in the **top 20**.

**Oxford to Cambridge** minimum and maximum journey time comparison by mode

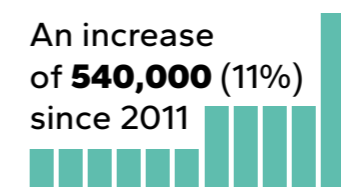


**Cambridge** has the most expensive commercial office space in the country outside of **London**

Business rental prices increased **74%** in Oxford to **£43.50** psf in the five years to **2019**, **32%** in Cambridge to **£46.50** psf and **28%** in Milton Keynes to **£28.00** psf

It is estimated that additional office space equivalent to a market the size of Reading will be required in the region by **2050**

The availability of R&D labs in Cambridge stands at just **4%** and Oxford just **6%**. In **2022** laboratory demand approached 1.4m sq ft with no space available



East West Rail will help make the growth in current local plans more sustainable, while regenerating existing **town** and **city centres**

The number of businesses in the region grew by **28%** between 2013 and 2019

Economic growth was **35%** between 2012-2019  
**9%** of UK total GVA

Gross value added of **£168bn**



# DELIVERING ECONOMIC GROWTH AND INNOVATION



It is not surprising that speaking recently on the Today programme, the editor of The Economist, Zanny Minton Beddoes, said the government should ‘boost the areas Britain is strongest at’ and highlighted the ‘Oxford-Cambridge-London triangle’s’ potential to ‘help the whole of Britain’. East West Rail is vital to achieving the region’s economic potential, spreading the benefits of economic growth and prosperity across the UK and providing the extra tax revenue to spend across the country. As we have heard from our conversations with business leaders, the new connections that East West Rail provides will not only transform journeys in the region, but drive productivity, unlock sustainable locations for new commercial space, and unleash innovation throughout the country now and in the future.



“East West Rail will connect the main centres in the region, and therefore provide connectivity with other businesses, creating more accessibility, stimulating growth and creating opportunity for us to capitalise on more synergies with customers and others in our ecosystem.”



Andreas Hohmann, Managing Director, Total Carbide (Westcott Venture Park)

“East West Rail would enable better connectivity, which would in turn enable businesses to attract the people, the innovation and the investment to grow and scale. There are so many innovative businesses here that have so much potential and they need this kind of investment to make that happen.”



Pim Van Baarsen, CEO, Silverstone Technology Cluster

“East West Rail is a logical and critical solution given the economic headwinds that we’re facing right now and the challenges facing businesses and the people working for them. We need to give people the option of sustainable connectivity with their places of work. It’s a crucial element for future growth.”



Mike Archer, UK Corporate Government Affairs Director, AstraZeneca (Cambridge)

“Stansted has huge potential to enable more growth. The region needs a comprehensive package of public transport investment, including East West Rail, that can widen and deepen the catchment of businesses and make use of the new and existing air links from Stansted, enlarging regional industrial clusters and driving economic growth.”



Tim Hawkins, Chief of Staff, MAG Airports (which includes Stansted Airport in its portfolio)

“Milton Keynes is a growing tech hub. It has the potential to be a more natural meeting point between the big university cities, creating a connected region that can be at the forefront of the conversation around blockchain, metaverse and decentralised finance. Better connectivity would help us shape and lead that conversation to the benefit of the whole of the UK.”



Steve Salvin, CEO, Aiimi (Milton Keynes)

“We have is a lot of new start-up businesses, and what we need is to bring that together with innovative minds coming out of the universities. East West Rail would bring the two together and enable one to flow into the other, bringing innovation, brainpower and commerce together which would be hugely beneficial for the growth of the region.”



Peter Rowe, Partner, KPMG (Bletchley)

“There is an urgent need for regional-scale schemes to provide transport and unlock long-term sustainable growth and development. East West Rail is the most significant example of this. It will link the core growth hubs of Cambridge, Oxford and Milton Keynes with the academic, research and business assets of the region, enabling the corridor to further its GVA contribution.”



Jane Paterson-Todd, CEO, Cambridge Ahead

“East West Rail would create real economic benefits for our business in terms of creating the efficiencies and conditions for innovation aligned to our ambitions for growth.”



John Ellis, Commercial Manager, ARC Aerosystems (Cranfield)

“Connecting Oxford, Milton Keynes and Cambridge will help us thrive by making it easier for academia and industry to collaborate, and to compete as a global hub for innovation and enterprise.”



Alistair Cory, Oxford University Science Park (Begbroke)

“Our universities underpin national competitiveness in many sectors. This contributes billions to the national economy. East West Rail will further enhance our world leading research by linking clusters of innovation and fostering new partnerships between the public and private sectors. Remote working may have found a place, but it is no substitute for the physical colocation of researchers and students. So many of our great breakthroughs, including the Covid vaccines, are built on social interaction. East West Rail will also make our universities more accessible to a wider range of students and academics from the UK and abroad. We urge government to commit to delivering East West Rail in full as soon as possible.”



Professor Alistair Fitt, Chair, Arc Universities Group and Vice-Chancellor, Oxford Brookes University



# CONNECTING SKILLS AND TALENT



East West Rail will connect businesses with the skills they need, providing an economic stimulus to the country. The new connections will run much deeper than improved transport, boosting job opportunities for hundreds of thousands of people and contributing to an improved standard of living for generations to come. We have heard from leaders of industry how East West Rail will assist them in overcoming recruiting and skills shortfalls and spearheading new recruitment by dramatically improving inter-regional travel across the region.



"With a smaller pool available, it does become more and more challenging to get the right people. East West Rail will go a long way to solving that challenge for a lot of businesses in the area, by creating economic benefits and an environment where people want to live and work."



Mike Archer, UK Corporate Government Affairs Director, AstraZeneca (Cambridge)

"Just five minutes away from Oxford Parkway, East West Rail will bring us closer to new opportunities for attracting investment and talent. It also supports our longer-term expansion plans to transform the Science Park into a world-leading innovation district with sustainable transport links."



Alistair Cory, Oxford University Science Park (Begbroke)

"East West Rail will help level up less affluent areas as people will have access to more jobs, while companies will find it easier to recruit staff – it's not easy to find the right people at the moment."



James Burchell, Co- Founder and Partner, Tellon Capital (which owns the Harpur Centre in Bedford and 5-7 Cornmarket Street in Oxford)

"Like any other advanced manufacturing company in the region, access to talent and labour is a huge issue for us. East West Rail will create more jobs locally and open opportunities for us to find people with the skills we need."



Andreas Hohmann, Managing Director, Total Carbide (Westcott Venture Park)

"We're looking to increase headcount by 40% over two years in a market that's very competitive. East West Rail will mean that a candidate in Oxford can commute into Milton Keynes in an hour. And that increases our likelihood of being able to access a broader pool of people, and crucially the people we need."



Peter Rowe, Partner, KPMG (Bletchley)

"East West Rail will help local businesses to be better connected with other regional businesses and institutions, enabling us to better share knowledge, data, skills and even costs, making collaboration and supply chains much more efficient."



Justin Richardson, Chief Executive, Bedfordshire Chamber of Commerce

"There is an urgent need for regional schemes to provide transport and unlock long-term sustainable development locations and to connect existing and future communities to more job opportunities. East West Rail is the most significant example of this."



Jane Paterson-Todd, CEO, Cambridge Ahead

"Connectivity is the life blood of a strong economy. Our workforce needs to be mobile and East West Rail will provide the route for talent within Buckinghamshire to connect to opportunities."



Philippa Batting, Managing Director, Buckinghamshire Business First

"London Luton Airport is one of the region's biggest economic assets and excellent public transport services are essential to its future success. Projects such as East West Rail have the potential to provide exciting additional connectivity for Luton with communities between Oxford and Cambridge, further widening our customer base and opening up new labour markets not only for the airport itself but also its supply chain and the next-generation sustainability research and finance sector that can play such a key role in the future prosperity of our town."



Graham Olver, Chief Executive Officer, Luton Rising (trading name of London Luton Airport Ltd)

"East West Rail would definitely be a positive development. The more we can do to ease and enable connectivity to attract engineers and skilled people the better. The ability to create a hub where we can grow and foster the skills and talent we really need would be hugely welcomed."



Pim Van Baarsen, CEO, Silverstone Technology Cluster





# VITAL CONNECTIONS: OUR BUSINESS ECOSYSTEM

East West Rail will connect businesses, universities and innovation clusters within the region which is home to a unique business, science and technology ecosystem. Many of these are world-leading centres of research and development. The map highlights just some of the region's key businesses and sectors, while the profiles are a small example of the many world class science and business parks in close proximity to East West Rail.



## Oxford University Science Park, Begbroke

Begbroke is the only science park wholly owned and managed by Oxford University. It has incubated, accelerated, and contributed to the successful growth of multiple high growth R&D businesses from the University of Oxford and Oxfordshire business ecosystem. This includes Helio Display Materials, the first joint spin out company from Oxford and Cambridge universities.



## The Westcott Venture Park

The Westcott Venture Park, part of Bucks enterprise zone and located between Aylesbury and Bicester, is home to a growing nucleus of companies developing innovative technologies in space and aviation related industries. These include Westcott Space Cluster, the Westcott Business Incubation Centre and the 5G Step-Out Centre. With over 90 companies working alongside each other, the park is a hub of innovation and collaboration. With a long history of propulsion testing, the site allows the simulation of high-altitude testing of thrusters and is a key component of the UK's space technology ambitions.



## Science Vale

Science Vale has two enterprise zones: Science Vale Oxford and the Didcot Growth Accelerator. It includes Harwell, home to over 200 businesses, employing more than 5,500 people. With £3 billion of scientific infrastructure, Harwell's community of experts is pioneering advances in energy, space, health and quantum computing. Harwell has one of the most ambitious campus investment plans in the world, with a goal of thousands more people to join a world-leading science community with cutting edge facilities.



## Silverstone Park

With more than 40 advanced manufacturing companies and testing facilities next to the world famous F1 circuit, Silverstone Park – part of Bucks enterprise zone – is a globally renowned automotive hub. The Silverstone Technology Cluster (STC) is an area within approximately a one-hour radius of Silverstone Park, home to an industry cluster of 3,500 businesses with an exceptional pool of specialist skills in high-tech engineering. The STC was formed to support these businesses and promote the cluster nationally and internationally



## Cranfield University Technology Park

Cranfield University Technology Park is home to nearly 60 science, technology and knowledge-based businesses, ranging from start-ups through to internationally recognised brands such as Nissan European Technical Centre. Located between Bedford and Milton Keynes, the park also contains the Aerospace Integration Research Centre, the Aerospace Technology Institute, and soon also the Digital Aviation Research and Technology Centre which will spearhead the UK's research into digital aviation technology.



## Colworth Park

Colworth Park has been a leading R&D location for more than 60 years. Centred around the original 18th Century, Grade II\* Listed Colworth House, Colworth Park is set in 91 acres of rolling parkland on the edge of the village of Sharnbrook in Bedfordshire, 10 miles from Bedford. It comprises approximately 554,000 square feet of laboratory, office and ancillary space, where academia, SMEs and other life science companies come together to drive technology transfer and accelerate the commercialisation of R&D.



## The Cambridge Biomedical Campus

A globally renowned biomedical centre, the Cambridge Biomedical Campus combines world-class biomedical research, patient care and education on a single site. With a community of over 17,500 healthcare professionals and research scientists, the campus is the largest employment site in Cambridge. Led by world-leading academic and industry scientists alongside the University of Cambridge's teaching hospitals, the campus is home to new and expanding companies and its growing international connections make it a global hub for biomedical research.



## UTAC (Millbrook)

With over 700 employees, Millbrook is a proving ground and a test facility for automotive vehicles and their components. It merged with French automotive testing group UTAC CERAM in 2021. From crash laboratories to battery test facilities, Millbrook helps leading automotive companies develop the engines, vehicles, tyres, fuels and lubricants of the future. At its Proving Ground, Millbrook has 70km of test tracks where professional drivers and engineers perform repeatable tests on all types of vehicles in a secure and safe environment.



## Stevenage Bioscience Catalyst

Stevenage Bioscience Catalyst was formed through a collaboration between the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), GlaxoSmithKline, Wellcome and Innovate UK. This has created a globally recognised cluster for therapeutic research and development that provides support for translation and commercialisation of innovative new medicines.



# BOOSTING GLOBAL INVESTMENT



The vibrant mix of business and academic communities within proximity of East West Rail blend innovation with an increasingly dynamic business scene. While the region is an attractive destination, global investors are being let down by a lack of good transport links. The UK is currently missing out on inward investment to business hubs in other parts of the world. East West Rail will deliver the transport links necessary to attract greater international investment ensuring the continued economic growth of the region for the benefit of UK Plc.



"Better connectivity in the region would impact businesses decisions on where to locate and where to invest. My clients want to grow and attract inward investment. If better connectivity is not improved, it does impact those ambitions."



Peter Rowe, Partner,  
KPMG (Bletchley)

"East West Rail would very much improve the region's ability to attract inward investment, feeding innovation and the economic benefits that come with it."



John Ellis, Commercial Manager,  
ARC Aerosystems (Cranfield)

"Colworth Park strongly supports the development of the East West Rail connection and sees it as vital to the further development of the high-technology cluster represented by the Oxford-Cambridge arc. The ability to travel across the arc will play a significant role in encouraging further investment and relocation to the region."



Keith Purdie, Commercial Director,  
Colworth Science Park (Bedford)

"There's a wealth of opportunity in the science and technology sector, from energy and sustainability to space and emerging technologies. But the UK needs critical assets like East West Rail to join up innovation hubs in the region and create a globally leading zone that can rival London for global investment. This should be an absolute top priority for government."



Mike Archer, UK Corporate Government Affairs  
Director, AstraZeneca (Cambridge)

"Good transport links are an important consideration for investors and the plans for East West Rail were something which attracted us to Bedford. It can have a huge impact on the regeneration of the town centre, encouraging greater footfall and attracting more businesses. Linking the leading science and technology hubs can only benefit the region. However, commercial space in Oxford and Cambridge is limited and expensive – East West Rail will unlock new opportunities for investment in commercial premises in the area between those two cities."



James Burchell, Co- Founder and Partner,  
Tellon Capital (which owns the Harpur Centre  
in Bedford and 5-7 Cornmarket Street in Oxford)

"The region is unrivalled when it comes to the clustering of world-leading companies and educational institutions. To really capitalise on this momentum, we need to be better connected. East West Rail will ultimately make it easier for business and industry to collaborate and innovate, to retain and boost our position in the global markets."



Justin Richardson,  
Chief Executive, Bedfordshire Chamber of Commerce

"We've had interest from all over the world and from big businesses in the region – from BAE Systems to Amazon Web Services – all wanting to engage with us and our cluster companies. There is a huge opportunity there, and better connectivity would both facilitate and accelerate that for us."



Pim Van Baarsen, CEO, Silverstone  
Technology Cluster

"East West Rail will create a hub of innovation and an exchange of resources and ideas that will attract the inward investment we need to grow. This is a crucial infrastructure project for the region."



Andreas Hohmann, Managing Director,  
Total Carbide (Westcott Venture Park)

"The region has the potential to compete globally on innovation and science, attracting jobs and investment from across the globe. East West Rail will be critical in unleashing this potential. This investment needs to happen."



Jane Paterson-Todd, CEO,  
Cambridge Ahead

"I talk to private equity and corporate finance companies about potential investment. We want to grow and scale but being able to tell the story of how we sustainably acquire new talent and grow our customer base is important to investors. Better connectivity would go a long way towards helping us to deliver on our growth plans."



Steve Salvin, CEO,  
Aimi (Milton Keynes)



# TIMELINE



WINSLOW

**JANUARY**  
Government confirms £760m to construct East West Rail between Bicester and Bletchley – with services due by 2025.

East West Railway Company announces that the scheme will be delivered in three connection stages: Oxford to Bletchley and Milton Keynes; then to Bedford; then to Cambridge.

**MARCH**  
The East West Railway Company's public consultation includes details of the proposed route from Bletchley to Cambridge.

**SEPTEMBER**  
The East West Rail Consortium relaunches as the East West Main Line Partnership

**FEBRUARY**  
The East West Rail Consortium publishes a prospectus outlining the benefits of extending East West Rail to Ipswich and Norwich, unlocking £17.5bn for the East Anglian economy and creating 120,000 jobs.

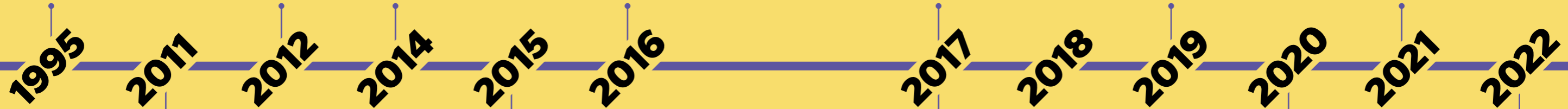
Transport Secretary, Chris Grayling, says: "East West Rail is the perfect example of how we can revitalise the railways, grow the network and unlock jobs and housing growth."

**DECEMBER**  
Chiltern Railways opens its new route between Oxford and London Marylebone, effectively completing the first phase of East West Rail between Oxford and Bicester.

**AUGUST**  
The East West Rail Consortium publishes a report that demonstrates the substantial economic benefits of East West Rail to Cambridge.

**JULY**  
The Secretary of State for Transport, Justine Greening, announces that the western section of East West Rail will be part of the Government's strategy for rail transport, confirming government funding for the project. It is due to open in 2017.

The East West Rail Consortium is established by Ipswich Borough Council, bringing together local authorities to make the case for the line.



**2022**

**2021**

**2020**

**2019**

**2018**

**2017**

**2016**

**2015**

**2014**

**2012**

**2011**

**1995**

**MARCH**  
Network Rail publishes its strategic statement on an East West Main Line, evidencing the benefits for a coast-to-coast service from Norfolk and Suffolk through to Bristol and South Wales, including connectivity south to Southampton.

**JANUARY**  
Minister for East West Rail, Paul Maynard, says East West Rail could help 'revolutionise transport' in the region, 'increasing people's access to job opportunities while making travel quicker, cheaper and easier'.

**NOVEMBER**  
The Chancellor announces funding for Network Rail to deliver Bicester to Bedford, and Milton Keynes to Aylesbury.

**DECEMBER:**  
The East West Rail Alliance – which includes Network Rail – is formed to construct East West Rail between Bicester and Bedford, and from Milton Keynes to Aylesbury.

**NOVEMBER**  
After the East West Rail Consortium makes the strategic case for East West Rail, the 'western section' (Oxford to Bedford, including Aylesbury) is included in the National Infrastructure Plan by Chancellor, George Osborne

**AUTUMN**  
Construction of East West Rail between Bicester and Bletchley remains on time and budget. Passenger services should be running by early 2025.

Transport Secretary, Grant Shapps says: "The East West Rail link [will] connect Oxford and Cambridge, which will increase access to jobs and make it easier and cheaper to travel, creating a region that has been dubbed the UK's Silicon Valley."

**DECEMBER**  
Transport Secretary, Chris Grayling, officially launches the East West Railway Company at Bletchley Park. The Company "will seek opportunities to accelerate delivery of the central section of East West Rail between Bedford and Cambridge, with the aim for passenger services to begin by the mid-2020s".

Sir Peter Hendy, Chairman of Network Rail, publishes his review of the nationwide Railway Upgrade Plan, which confirms the western section will go ahead with delivery starting before March 2019, for completion in the following five-year railway control period.

The Minister of State, Department for Transport, Theresa Villiers says the collaboration of the 20+ plus local authorities in the Consortium 'provides a good example for others to follow in building a broad local consensus for an ambitious vision of new rail infrastructure to support economic growth'.



BLETCHLEY

# WHY THE TIME IS NOW

- With a business community that has grown by almost 30 per cent in the past six years alone and a cluster of world-class innovation hubs containing 10 per cent of all the knowledge sector jobs in the UK, the region covered by East West Rail has the potential to join global economic hotspots such as Silicon Valley, Ulsan, Randstad and Baden-Württemberg.

But the success of the region is not guaranteed. While the potential for economic growth is huge, so too is the need for better infrastructure and connections. As this report demonstrates, when it comes to planning for success, it's the connections that matter. Historically, it's connections that have determined the success of the UK's great cities. And it will be connections which will support regions across the UK to thrive on the global stage. Far from merely connecting the businesses that exist today, better rail connections will create new businesses, enable the expansion of existing companies, and attract investment from the UK and overseas. Furthermore, East West Rail will transform the region into one of the world's most attractive destinations to live and work, while supporting the region's retail, hospitality and leisure sectors.

Around the world, we have seen the positive impact of what happens when countries make bold investments in building connections. From Paris to Shanghai, investment in rail continues to be one of the primary drivers of economic growth across the globe. The benefits for business are clear. We have heard from leaders across the region. They have been unambiguous about the advantages that East West Rail would deliver and the risks of not investing in better rail infrastructure. From recruiting talent to attracting investment, East West Rail would unlock employment options for thousands of people in the region and give businesses the essential skills they need to grow.

An over-riding priority for government is the UK's economic recovery and growth. In East West Rail, it has a project – part of which is already under construction, while the other part is in an advanced stage of planning – which can play a significant role in helping it to achieve its objectives. By providing better rail access, East West Rail will connect the academic, research and business hubs across the region and beyond. It will enable the region to deliver innovation, access to talent and economic growth, and create a sustainable environment for people want to live and work.

What we need now is for government to invest and for the region to come together to ensure the potential of East West Rail is realised in full.

For East West Rail, it is time to connect.

To find out more about East West Rail, please visit the Partnership's website at [www.eastwestrail.org.uk](http://www.eastwestrail.org.uk) and the East West Railway Company's website, [www.eastwestrail.co.uk](http://www.eastwestrail.co.uk).

# Acknowledgements

With thanks to the following organisations for their participation in this report and support of East West Rail:

