The Heartland is an economic success story and vital asset for the UK in its economic recovery and the decades which follow... founded on science and technology innovation, powered by world-leading universities... which we will harness to develop new solutions that will decarbonise our transport system... while championing investment in digital infrastructure to reduce the need to travel, transforming public transport and promoting active travel... increasing opportunities for our residents, supporting a green recovery and sustainable growth, and ensuring that our freight and logistics needs are met while lowering their environmental impact.

England’s Economic Heartland brings together the region’s Local Transport Authorities in a strategic partnership that works with the region’s local enterprise partnerships to provide leadership on strategic infrastructure.

A REGION OF OPPORTUNITY

Our region’s strengths provide the opportunity to do things differently, as articulated in the Transport Strategy’s vision:

“To realise sustainable growth opportunities and improve the quality of life and wellbeing for Heartland residents and businesses, by harnessing the region’s globally renowned centres of innovation to unlock a world class, de-carbonised transport system.”

Central to our strategy is putting the needs of the user at the heart of all that we do.

Improving connectivity for people and places to services and opportunities is crucial to levelling up across our region. And it supports economic recovery by helping to improve productivity.

As our experience during the COVID-19 pandemic has shown, there is considerable scope to increase our use of flexible and remote working; to challenge received wisdom when it comes to the future for our transport system; to do things differently.

The Heartland is an economic success story founded on science and technology innovation, powered by a network of world-leading universities and research centres, and includes the Oxford-Cambridge Arc, which has been made a national priority by Government. It is a net contributor to the Treasury and is a vital asset for the UK, both during its recovery from the COVID-19 crisis and in the decades that follow.

But the Heartland’s success cannot be taken for granted - just as a business requires continual investment to flourish, so too does our region.
A STEP-CHANGE IN APPROACH

‘Business as usual’ will not get us where we need to be, which is why our Transport Strategy maps out the additional actions needed to achieve our vision.

A step-change in approach is required to address the challenges our transport system already faces - and is all the more critical if we are to realise our economic potential and deliver sustainable growth.

The strategy sets out how the region will:

- Use the need to decarbonise our transport system as the opportunity to harness innovation and deliver solutions that in themselves generate economic growth
- Champion investment in digital infrastructure as a means of improving connectivity, particularly within our rural communities, in order to reduce the need to travel
- Use delivery of East West Rail as the catalyst for the transformation of our strategic public transport networks, investing in those networks to connect our economic assets and communities in a shared endeavour that unlocks added value
- Champion increased investment in active travel and shared transport solutions to improve local connectivity and ensure that everyone has the opportunity to realise their potential
- Ensure that our freight and logistic needs continue to be met whilst lowering the environmental impact of their delivery.

In this way our Transport Strategy sets out how we are responding to the need to:

- Improve the resilience of a transport system already under strain, one where unreliability and congestion act as a brake on sustainable growth
- Reduce our transport system’s carbon emissions, which are higher and growing faster than the national average
- Address the inequalities which exist within our region by improving connectivity to opportunities for those in our more deprived communities
- Support our rural communities and the businesses that operate in them, a demographic which is significantly larger than the national average
- Reduce reliance on the private car in a region where average journeys are longer and car use is higher than the national average.

Through our programme of connectivity studies we will work with our partners to ensure our investment requirements enable the delivery of sustainable growth.

And through our investment pipeline, we will ensure that the region’s requirements are clearly set out, giving greater confidence to both public and private investors.

A REGION OF AMBITION

The step-change in approach underpinning our strategy reflects the ambition of our region. Engagement on our Outline Transport Strategy last year highlighted the region’s desire for EEH to be bold, and to view the Heartland’s strength in science and technological innovation as the opportunity to deliver new solutions which improve connectivity and achieve net environmental gain.

The strategy’s bold policies create the framework for harnessing the opportunities in our region and overcoming the challenges facing our transport system. They are shaped by four overarching principles:

- Achieving net-zero carbon emissions from transport no later than 2050
- Improving quality of life and wellbeing through an inclusive transport system accessible to all which emphasises sustainable and active travel
- Supporting the regional economy by connecting people and businesses to markets and opportunities
- Ensuring the Heartland works for the UK by enabling the efficient movement of people and goods through the region and to/from international gateways.

The strategy’s development has been shaped by an Integrated Sustainability Appraisal (ISA), an independent process that ensures our policies have been tested against the need to address social, environmental and economic needs.

Our Transport Strategy is bold in its ambition, and sets out the need for change. Whilst there is much that can be achieved as a collaborative strategic partnership, we believe that given the importance of delivering the strategy, the region is best served by EEH seeking to turn the partnership into a statutory body, ensuring our region’s voice shapes the national agenda to the benefit of our communities and businesses.

CONSULTATION

England’s Economic Heartland has now launched a formal public consultation on the Draft Transport Strategy, which runs until midnight on October 6. The consultation also invites feedback on the ISA and plans for statutory status.

Our website contains all the information that has been used to shape the strategy, as well as documents and videos explaining our proposals in more detail. The consultation is your chance to shape the final version of our Transport Strategy via the online survey at englandseconomicheartland.com.

The final version of the Transport Strategy will be published at the turn of the year.
Enhanced regional connectivity. For example, HS2 Released Capacity is the catalyst for Improved connectivity on the Midland Main Line – to include as a minimum: restoration of services to Worksop, improvements to the Existing Lincoln to Peterborough section and additional capacity on the Peterborough – Ely – Cambridge line.

Realisation of East West Rail’s full capability – this will require: delivery of Eastern Section (with linkages to the M1-M11 corridor).

Improved connectivity (north-south) eastern
• Delivery of Eastern Section (with linkages to the M1-M11 corridor).

Improved connectivity (north-south) western
• Delivery of Western Section as planned represents a critical infrastructure (region-wide)

Enhanced rail connectivity between West (north-south) – western
• Delivery of Midland Main Line electrification – significance increased by banning of new petrol, diesel and hybrid vehicles from 2035

Access to Strategic Gateways
• Improved connectivity by public transport operators
• Planned enhancements to M25:
  - Junction 25 of the M25
  - A5 Towcester Relief Road
  - Gibbet improvements
  - A47 Wansford to Sutton
  - A429
  - A416

Step Change in Local Connectivity
• Improved connectivity to the regional transport network to support all road users and services previously removed
• A2 Missenden – with Chiltern Mainline
• Bicester Village – with Chiltern Mainline
• Oxford – with Great Western and East Coast

Targeted investment in the highway network, as part of a system approach
• New Strategic interchanges – delivery of a London – Cambridge corridor and provision for strategic route improvement (such as New Barnet bypass) and additional capacity on regional motorways, including
• Bedford – with Midland Main Line
• Sandy/Beddis area – with East Coast Main Line
• Cambridge/Cambridge South – with Anglian

Access to Strategic Interchanges – delivery of East West Rail – this will require:
• Marston Vale – linked with East West Rail
• Aylesbury – linked with East West Rail, Chiltern Mainline
• Oxford – with Great Western and East Coast
• Sandy/Beddis area – with East Coast Main Line
• Cambridge/Cambridge South – with Anglian

Provision of digital infrastructure delivers – 5G and fibre connectivity
• Extension of Midland Main Line
• Enhanced capacity for rail freight

• A northern arc connecting Northampton, Cambridge – the CAM
• A southern arc connecting central London

Four strategic corridors serve/cross the region:
• East West Railway
• Felixstowe to Nuneaton
• Southampton to West Midlands
• West Coast Mainline

Realisation of East West Rail's full capability – this will require:
• Luton Airport – through enhanced services
• Heathrow Airport: through Northampton – Wycombe – Old Oak Common: and through the Varsity Way to form the backbone of a strategic cycleway across Buckinghamshire, Watford and southern

Opportunities for improved connectivity
• Aylesbury – with Chiltern Mainline
• Bedford – with Midland Main Line
• Bicester Village – with Chiltern Mainline
• Oxford – with Great Western and East Coast

Support the delivery of investment in the Strategic Road Network (as outlined in the Road Investment Strategy 2) to support road users and services previously removed

• Luton – Bedford – with Midland Main Line
• Cambridge – the CAM
• Aylesbury – with Chiltern Mainline
• Sandy/Beddis area – with East Coast Main Line
• Cambridge/Cambridge South – with Anglian

Delivery of Eastern Section (with linkages to the M1-M11 corridor).

Targeted investment in the Network (MRN) to support all road users and services previously removed

Support the delivery of a high quality cycleway (the Varsity Way) to form the backbone of a strategic cycleway across Buckinghamshire, Watford and southern

Map created for illustrative purposes only.
For illustrative purposes only. The boundaries of the connectivity studies are not currently fixed and will be decided in due course after consultation with our partners.
Get in touch

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