Oxfordshire Strategic Rail Freight Interchange
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Written Representations on behalf of Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan Forum

Rule 8 - Deadline 1 – 13 October 2026



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Introduction

1. The following Written Representations ('WRs') are submitted in pursuance of rule 10(1) of the Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010 ('ExPR') in relation to an application under the Planning Act 2008 for a Development Consent Order ('DCO') for Oxfordshire Rail Freight Interchange ('the Project') submitted by Oxfordshire Railfreight Limited ('the Applicant') to the Secretary of State.

2. The Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan Forum ('MCNPF') represents the interests of 11 Parishes through a formal constitution. It was formed in 2015 to create a neighbourhood plan for the plan period to 2031, which became part of the statutory development plan in 2019. Revision of the plan (to 2042) is currently undergoing examination. Represented parishes are:

   - **Ardley with Fewcott (Lead Parish)**
   - *Duns Tew*
   - **Fritwell**
   - **Kirtlington (including Northbrook)**
   - **Lower Heyford (including Caulcott)**
   - *Middle Aston*
   - **Middleton Stoney**
   - *North Aston*
   - **Somerton**
   - *Steeple Aston*
   - **Upper Heyford**

   The communities of all member Parishes are affected by the Applicant proposals. Those that are in close proximity (**BOLD**) are within a 3-mile radius of the proposed site, Ardley being the closest.

3. MCNPF sets out in this document to provide details of the principal concerns from the communities it represents, garnered through Parish Council meetings and other residents' consultations. MCNPF representatives have engaged with the Applicant and their consultants during their Stage 1 Community Engagement events in 2022, in 2025 during their Stage 2 Statutory Consultation and as an Interested Party in the initial hearings (IHS1 and IHS2). The Applicant has been responsive to our questions, answers to which form part of our WRs.

   Our primary areas of concern in relation to the DCO Application were/are:

   1. **LOCATION, WAREHOUSE USERS AND COMMERCIAL VIABILITY**
   2. **TRANSPORT**
   3. **LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL (INCLUDING LIGHTING)**
   4. **SOCIOECONOMICS (INCLUDING HEALTH)**
   5. **RAIL**
   6. **ECOLOGY AND BIODIVERSITY**

7. **UTILITIES AND SERVICES**
8. **INFRASTRUCTURE FIRST**
9. **CUMULATIVE HARMS**
10. **RAF WESTON-ON-THE-GREEN**
11. **SECURITY AND POLICING**

4. MCNPF's broad position in relation to the Examination is that while we wholeheartedly support Government aims to grow rail freight volumes by at least 40% by 2040 and further to 75% by 2050, and for the principle of Railfreight Interchanges, we remain unconvinced that the proposed location at Ardley will make a significant contribution to that aim, and that the harms committed by The Project significantly outweigh the claimed benefits.

5. This WR is made without prejudice to any future representation MCNPF may make about the DCO Application throughout the examination process.

Section A: Summaries of Written Representations

The following Summaries are provided as an introduction to more detailed Representations (in nearly all cases) which follow in Section B.

1. LOCATION, WAREHOUSE USERS AND COMMERCIAL VIABILITY.

- Our following WR details concerns about the Applicants' site selection process, as set out in their documents **APP-190 - 6.2D ES Appendix 2.4 Alternative Sites Assessment and APP-191 - 6.2D ES Appendix 2.4 Alternative Sites Assessment - Appendix**
- The process used fails to compare the chosen site, using the same evaluation criteria, with the alternative sites. It concludes by stating that the process has proven the chosen site to be the most suitable, despite the fact that the chosen site is not covered by the process.
- We also communicate our additional concerns regarding Warehouse Users, one of which has already been dismissed in correspondence with the Applicant.
- Finally, we pose some questions to the Applicant to help us understand how their business case justifies this location, and the forecast contribution to the local and national economy.

2. TRANSPORT

- MCNPF is concerned that the Applicant Transport Assessment relies on the Bicester Transport Model Heyford Park Update Model 2018. MCNPF has undertaken an evaluation of this model update and identified a number of serious deficiencies in the model build and validation processes. MCNPF will provide more detail and evidence about this discovery in the Appendices. OCC has formally agreed to arrange an urgent meeting to respond to the identified deficiencies. **(APP 192 TA Part 1, 9.3-9.7; APP-194 TA Part 3 Appendix 12; APP 195 TA Part 4, Appendix 14; MCNPF Appendix A).**
- Of particular note is the apparent failure to assess the B4030 between the A4260 and the road connecting it to the western end of the Heyford Park Link Road (HPLR). This would be a principal westbound route

for traffic from the OxSRFI towards the A4260. This section of the B4030 is also the principal western approach to Heyford Park and a direct east-west route to Bicester. The HPLR and MSRR are likely to attract additional traffic onto this section by providing a faster route to Bicester that bypasses congestion at Middleton Stoney. **(APP 192 TA Part 1, 11.97; APP 187 ES Appendix 2.1).**

- This B4030 section is sensitive to increased traffic because of impacts on heritage assets of national importance and a signal-controlled single-lane medieval bridge. This constraint has not been assessed in the model, and the Applicant has not demonstrated that it can accommodate the forecast traffic increases either alone or cumulatively with the Heyford Park application. There is no assessment of capacity, queue lengths or delays for either the OxSRFI or Heyford Park applications or whether a nationally important medieval bridge should be carrying additional loads. **(APP 171, 6.3 A Transport, 3.7.4-3.7.14).**

- The narrow and structurally weak hump back bridge through Somerton between OxSRFI and the A4260 has likewise not been assessed by the Applicant. The OxSRFI forecasts indicate traffic increases approaching three times existing levels but there is no assessment of the bridge's load bearing capacity, ability to accommodate increased traffic or resulting queues and delays. The cumulative impact of the proposed Heyford Park new town is also unresolved. **(APP 192 TA Part 1, 9, Tables 9.15-9.17; APP 171 6.3A Transport, 3.7.4-3.7.14)**

- The assessment of the A4260/B4030 junction is fundamentally unreliable. The base model assigns zero traffic to a turning movement for which 90 vehicles were recorded in the 2016 AM peak survey. The zero model error persists in the OxSRFI forecasts, and will be progressively amplified by the growth of traffic at this junction. Please refer (**APP 195 TA Part 4, Appendix 14; APP 202 TA Part 11 Appendix 45 3.51-3.55**) and our reference: **(Appendix A – Evaluation of Bicester Transport Model)**

- The modelled forecasts on the B4030 associated with the Heyford Park development do not appear credible. They show that background growth, Local Plan development and the Heyford Park new town will produce less am peak traffic on this principal western approach road to Heyford Park in 2045 than observed counts in 2018, 2019 and 2023. **(Appendix B – Observed vs Modelled Traffic Counts)** taken from the TA for 25/02190/HYBRID and OCC traffic surveys).

3. LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL (INCLUDING LIGHTING)

- The following WR sets-out how the Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan contains a number of policies applicable to the landscape and character of the area. We bring them to the attention of the ExA, as they have been produced, refined and examined precisely to convey a deeper understanding of the locality. We reference Government guidance supporting NSIP decision-making using local development plans. We also note that the Applicants have assessed the impact on heritage assets using classification that has been superseded by the latest iteration of the NPPF. We raise questions for the Applicant to assist the ExA.

- The proximate communities will be heavily affected by this development. Residents of Heyford Park and existing village properties close to the proposed SRFI live in an area where the Bortle Scale Darkness is Class 4. MCNPF is concerned about the impacts of light pollution on residents' amenity and enjoyment of

their properties, along with the impact on wildlife in the vicinity of the proposed warehouses and the freight terminal.

4. SOCIOECONOMICS (INCLUDING HEALTH)

- It is the opinion of the MCNPF that the area is being targeted purely for its proximity and access to the M40, rather than its strategic suitability for warehousing. In this respect, The Project competes with Government guidance for this area with the Oxford/Cambridge Arc strategy. This is strategy does not propose this location as suitable for warehousing, but targets this area as a regional growth and spatial planning initiative aimed at connecting the economies, research centres, and infrastructure of the corridor between Oxford, Milton Keynes, and Cambridge. Junction 10 of the M40 is centred in that corridor.

- MCNPF believes if land in this area was aligned to the Oxford-Cambridge Arc strategy, while there would always be objections, it would be a much more defensible application of land resources at this location. In this section MCNPF sets out our concerns related to this topic area.

- Finally in this WR, we have some questions for the Applicant to answer as it relates to the Project's impact on public health in the area.

5. RAIL.

- Reference **APP-005 Pre-application Programme Document, in Section 3.18** the Applicant states '*Network Rail has confirmed that the proposed OxSRFI can meet the requirements of the Planning Act 2008 and NPS regarding rail freight capacity and connectivity*'. We believe the selected location stifles the possibility for optimising the route for Rail Freight because of restrictions intrinsic to the Chiltern Line.

- Where the Chiltern Line is now considered part of the Rail Freight Network, it is limited in its gauging, although we now understand this can be rectified between Northolt and Aynho Junction (refer our Section 5.6 on Load Gauging). In MCNPF opinion, due to the potential increased passenger service demand potentially brought by the (as yet unconsented) Puy Du Fou theme park, the in-progress expansion of Bicester Village and the potential reinstatement of an improved Ardley Station, there will be concomitant and consequential limitations in routing capacity.

- We assert that there is a limit in pathing to the proposed four per day, with their "stretch goal" to twelve unlikely without significant public funded upgrades. Although four per day meets the minimum requirement in the NNNPS, it only represents 240 HGVs taken off the road out of 4,920 total. This can hardly be described as a 'strategic' impact. We believe that unless a significantly greater number can be guaranteed by the Applicant, it undermines the fundamental argument for rail freight transfer at this location, and the nett benefits as described by the Applicant becoming locked-in, and incapable of meeting future growth demands over time. We set out MCNPF concerns in the following WR.

6. ECOLOGY AND BIODIVERSITY

- The Project impacts on no less than two Sites of Special Scientific Interest, one of national and the other of international importance. The NNNPS is clear in para.5.61 that SSSI's must be protected unless there

are exceptional circumstances. We provide the ExA in our following WR with evidence that we believe supports refusal of the application.

- We also draw attention to NNNPS para. 5.62 in relation to Ancient Woodland, and Cherwell District Council's concerns regarding the impact of the Project on the ecology of the local area.

7. UTILITIES AND SERVICES

- Water Supply. Thames Water forecasts indicate that Oxfordshire and the wider South East will suffer severe water shortages by 2040. To combat this and to reliably support major new infrastructure and housing developments, Thames Water has a secured Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project which is unlikely to be operational in time to offset the water demands placed on supply by the Project and other local, consented and unconsented projects. Our concerns also extend to Water Treatment and Electricity Supply. We set out our observations in this section.

8. INFRASTRUCTURE FIRST

- MCNPF considers the Infrastructure First implication is of critical importance to ensure effective planning is in place across multiple projects to avoid a *"fix it when it is a problem"* syndrome that can adversely affect local residents, by making sure that capacity is available before demand, or is at least, increasing commensurate with demand.

- The increased pressure on local infrastructure is highly significant, and the MCNPF is concerned that the multiple large scale developments proposed for this area, including this NSIP does not demonstrate "joined up" thinking in the provision of services and infrastructure to support i.e.:

- The Project and multiple other projects in the vicinity, namely:

    - Heyford Park
    - Richborough Estates
    - Puy Du Fou
    - Tritax and Albion Land applications at Baynards Green
    - Great Wolf Water Park
    - Bicester Expansion (Cala and others)
    - HS2
    - East-West Rail
    - Pye Homes development
    - Potential for expansion of mineral extraction in the area

- Whereas it is not for the Applicant to address these issues alone, the phasing of their construction plan will be impacted if other projects commence simultaneously or overlap. We know that the Applicant is aware of this, but with so many moving parts, it will be difficult for any applicant, no matter how sophisticated in their planning capabilities to forecast all contingencies likely to occur with this potential "Perfect Storm".

- We have already experienced this lack of joined up thinking with a much lower scale example currently underway, that is inconveniencing residents from a dispute between two developers over works imposing closures of Camp Road in Heyford Park. A situation our local authorities seem unable to mitigate.

- The effects are not limited to the implications for the road system. They expand to Electricity Network loading, Water Supply and Treatment, Internet Bandwidth and implications for Emergency Services capacity.

- MCNPF would like to press local and regional authorities as well as national authorities and utilities supply companies for reassurance that these issues are being given due consideration, with assurances that they are collaborating effectively and efficiently to ensure that the multiple, many and large applications do not disrupt commerce, or disproportionally affect the 172,200 residents living in the Cherwell District.

9. CUMULATIVE HARMS

- Local planning authorities are limited by the town and country planning act to determine every individual application based on its own merits. Residents represented by the MCNPF are deeply concerned. Multiple applications in close proximity to Junction 10 of the M40 Motorway, some consented, others in the examination process, will generate cumulative harms to an area which is prevalently rural.

- The cumulative harms of course include traffic, which we address in our Transport section. However, in combination, all of the aforementioned projects will have an impact for example on Landscape and Visual, Light, Noise and Air Pollution, effects on wildlife, and other categories – there is no combined ES for example that considers the accumulation of harms collectively say from the closest proximity developments; Puy Du Fou, Baynards Green Warehouses, Richborough Estates application for 475 houses, Dorchester Group application for 9,000 houses, schools and other buildings.

- The Applicant acknowledges the issues, recognising the diminishing of the benefit of this proposal if other schemes go ahead, but suggests no significant effects as an opinion with no supporting evidence. '*The submitted TA has considered likely transport issues and identifies no likely significant cumulative traffic effects, albeit without additional mitigation associated with these live schemes, some reduction in OxSRFI (sic) benefits is likely with additional schemes traffic added'* **(Reference APP-006 "Potential Main Issues for the Examination – Table Reference 3).**

- A stark example that illustrates our concern is evidenced in **Appendix J – National Highways Response – December 2025.** The response indicates there were no meetings between National Highways and the major developers around Junction 10 of the M40 to December 2025.

10. RAF WESTON-ON-THE-GREEN

- Early in the consultations, MCNPF were concerned that the proximity to the Project site of RAF Weston-on-the-Green and RAF Croughton were not being represented. We duly sent an FOI request asking the MOD to respond. It has been made clear to MCNPF that they are reviewing the Project. We therefore make no further representation on this topic.

11. SECURITY AND POLICING.

- MCNPF submitted a request for information to the Office of Oxfordshire Police and Crime Commissioner, asking how they would address the additional Security and Policing demands on and around the Project site. We received a response with the assurance that this would be managed if the Project proceeded to DCO, and consequently, required resources would be assessed at that point. MCNPF will be making no further representation on this topic.

Section B: Written Representations

Our representations are formed by a) referencing documents in the Examination Library, b) our own collective community experience is used to investigate topic areas, and c) finding source documents using Google embedded AI searches. Where representation has been formed partly by AI queries, we will mark those sections with "AI Sourced" accordingly, however MCNPF has referenced original sources to corroborate).

1. LOCATION, WAREHOUSE USERS AND COMMERCIAL VIABILITY.

1.1. Location – Alternative Sites Assessment

1.1.1. This note is a response to the Applicants' paper Alternative Sites Assessment **(APP-190 - ES Document 6.2D - September 2025)**

1.1.2. MCNP Forum wishes to bring to the attention of the ExA a number of points in relation to the above document, as follows:

1.1.2.1. The document purports to be an assessment of alternative sites, which is a standard process that forms part of Option Appraisal in the preparation of Business Cases for development projects of many kinds. the Applicants claim in para. 1.6 that 'There is no formally prescribed process or methodology for undertaking an ASA'. On the contrary, there are a number of established models that are widely used in planning, and the one used by the Applicants is not one of them.

1.1.2.2. The applicants state at para. 1.4 that the purpose of the document is to help 'demonstrate that the Main Site is the most suitable of the reasonable alternatives studied by the Applicant' (our emphasis). They also state there that there is no requirement in the NPS for such a comparative study to be carried out, but that they have chosen to do so '*in response to various comments raised during the Scoping process and Stage 1 non-statutory consultation...*'.

1.1.2.3. MCNPF submit that in fact, the Applicants selected the site which is the subject of the Examination, and subsequently – in response to demand from consultees – produced a retrospective examination of 14 other possible sites. However, in doing so they have failed to arrange the level playing-field of a comparison, using the same criteria and methodology, with the chosen site. The Alternative Sites Assessment is therefore not a credible document, since the option of selecting the chosen site is not one that is considered in the document.

1.1.2.4. The non-standard process used by the Applicants identifies in Section 6 a Long List of sites, which fails to include the very site that eventually is stated to be the most suitable, but without it having been examined (or even mentioned) in the document. This extraordinary omission means that the appraisal of options is restricted to the sites that are eventually dismissed as alternatives. The document nevertheless concludes by stating that this has proved the unexamined site is the most suitable, which is clearly not the case.

1.1.2.5. An example of why that conclusion is unsound: MCNPF note in Table 1 in Section 6, which evaluates the 14 alternative sites against five key criteria, namely: *Rail Connectivity, Road Connectivity, Environmental and/or Local Plan policy constraints, Proximity to Sensitive Uses, and Availability*. A Red/Amber/Green system is used to evaluate each site. No sites manage to

achieve a Green for all the criteria. Only one site out of the 14 achieves a score of 4 Greens – namely *Site 1.5: Land South of Junction 9*. It might reasonably be expected, then, that the sifting process carried out in order to achieve a short-list would at least include that site. However, despite its unique ranking, it does not make it to the next stage. In the text it is claimed that this is because the site is in the Green Belt, but we know that at least one approved SRFI overcame that obstacle. Instead, included in the short-list of three sites is *Site 2.4: Land North of Bucknall* which only scored 2 Greens. And despite there being 5 sites identified in the Long List with 3 Greens, only two of them make it on to the short-list. This is a confusing picture that does not follow any logical process of choosing options. The short-list does not convincingly grow out of the Long List.

1.1.2.6. MCNPF do not know how many Greens the chosen site at Ardley would have been awarded, if it had been part of the same process. And we cannot be at all sure that even if it were to receive a good score, it would have even made it on to the short-list.

1.1.2.7. Whilst it may yet be true that the chosen site is the most suitable, we have no evidence in any of the copious documents that make up the ES, or indeed elsewhere, that fulfils the recognised process of conducting an Options Appraisal, and we can have little or no confidence in the statements that are made by the Applicants that convey that Ardley is the optimal site for the SRFI.

1.1.3. MCNPF therefore believe that the members of the ExA cannot consider themselves satisfied that the correct process has been undertaken, and that they should take steps to correct the situation. In our view, this is fundamental to the proper Examination of the proposals.

1.2. Warehouse Users

1.2.1. Soon after the Stage 2 Consultation, we sent a number of questions to the Applicant. One of the concerns was related to whether the Applicant would contemplate leasing a warehouse for Data Centre application. Encouragingly, they confirmed to us that such an application would not be considered **(Appendix D - eMail Response from ORL to MCNPF Questions),** therefore allaying our fears of negative impacts which would materially affect their Environmental Statement, such as:

- 24/7 Noise and Low-Frequency Vibrations.
- Air Pollution and Environmental Degradation.
- Water Consumption and Contamination.
- Increased electricity supply costs.

Electricity supply costs are not the same across the UK. Local electricity bills to this region can be affected by a number factors including the distribution network, grid access, the electricity demands of the warehouses users, but, of course, potentially offset by the amount of renewable energy generated by solar panels delivered by the Project. MCNPF would like some assurances that forecast electricity load demand would not adversely financially impact local residents.

1.2.2. Given that there may have already been some user interest in these facilities **(Reference Answer 3 in Appendix D)**, we would like to understand if any company is considering use of warehousing as a distribution centre, including the possibility of "Last Mile" deliveries?

1.3. Commercial Viability

1.3.1. MCNPF are confused about the assertion at APP-311 Market Analysis Report 7.1 – Section 7.19 in that it applies the theory of the "Golden Triangle" to this location in terms of logistics in that area being able to serve 90% of the UK population within a 4.5 Hour Drive. the Applicant asserts that given the same logic, the Project would serve 92% of the population with the same drive time. MCNPF do not follow the logic that when there is a cluster of logistics facilities, including other SRFIs within 30 minutes of this location, what would be the compelling reason to come to this site, instead of one of the others? In terms of strategic location, why not Bristol which geographically is very poorly served by SRFIs, particularly with its existing, well-established port-based intermodal facilities and bulk freight requirements.

1.3.2. MCNPF have a simple request with reference to the table of benefits to London and South East in **APP-312 - 7.2A Rail Report – Page 15: Table 2 Rail freight economic contribution across the UK.** the Applicant asserts that, by highlighting in bold, that in London and the South East that they, with this project, would target improvement of the current 8% of benefits accruing to London and the South East of Rail Freight. MCNPF request that this table should be updated as it dates back to 2018/19, a significant time ago, pre-COVID (pandemic was declared by WHO as no longer a concerning risk to global public health in May 2023). Therefore it could be misleading, as any assertions the Applicant makes based on this data cannot be relied upon because of major changes in the UK economy and other, external geopolitical factors. In addition, we think it reasonable that the Applicant provides forecasts (with sensitivity analysis) on the delivered benefit to these regions (London and South-East), which in part, underpins their business case for basing the Project at this location.

2. TRANSPORT

Represented in summary, the rest of this section is deliberately left blank.

3. LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL (INCLUDING LIGHTING)

It is acknowledged that this application must be decided in line with those factors listed in s104(2) of the Planning Act 2008. Government guidance (MHCLG issued 3.7.26) on this clearly includes reference to 'relevant local development plans and policies' (para 2.7). MCNPF identify in this WR a number of policies of the MCNP, which forms part of the adopted local Development Plan, and we have therefore linked the relevant policies to the NSPNN where possible (s104(3)) and otherwise have explained why the content of the policy is nonetheless an important and relevant consideration (104(2)(d))

3.1. **MCNP (2019)** – which remains in force until the revised MCNP (2025) is adopted. Several policies are of relevance:

3.1.1. '*Policy PD3: Development Adjacent to Heyford Park: Whilst the proposed SRFI development falls to the east of Heyford Park and therefore outside of the zone of coalescence located on the west, the policy does seek to ensure that development around Heyford Park does not seek to lead to coalescence with other settlements and the character of each area is maintained*.' Source: CDC's Relevant Representation (July 2026). Policy PD3 includes the following statement: '*Any development which is proposed adjacent to the designated strategic area of Heyford Park (as defined by Local Plan policy Villages 5) should not give rise to coalescence with surrounding settlements, to ensure that their separate identity and character are maintained.*'

MCNPF COMMENTARY: MCNP Forum is of the opinion that the SRFI proposal, being immediately adjacent to the Heyford Park designated strategic area, will effectively coalesce with it and have a damaging impact on the separate identity and character of Heyford Park. This is contrary to the aims of policy PD3.

3.1.2. *'Policy PD4: Protection of Important Views and Vistas: This policy seeks to protect a range of views across the plan area. This includes views north of the application site around Ardley Conservation Area and around RAF Upper Heyford*.' Source: CDC's Relevant Representation (July 2026).

The policy states: '*Development proposals within the plan area must demonstrate sensitivity to the important views and vistas described in Table 4 and illustrated by photographs in the documents referred to in that Table, by including an assessment of the significance of the views and the effect of the proposed development on them. Proposals which cause significant harm to any of these views will only be acceptable where the benefits of the proposal clearly outweigh any harm.*'

MCNPF COMMENTARY: The policy refers to views identified in Appendix K, p.90 Viewpoints map. There is an important viewpoint shown there, emanating from the bridge carrying the B4030 over the M40 motorway. It is likely that the rural character which this identified view aims to protect will be compromised by the scale and nature of the proposed warehousing. The applicants have identified this view as Viewpoint 31 in their document (ref. APP-254) and the ExA is requested to ask them to produce a photomontage comparing current and future views from this point.

Appendix K includes the following statement: '*Between the villages there are isolated and scattered farmsteads comprising residences and associated farm buildings and infrastructure. The low density of development across the area and its setting amongst broad areas of farmland away from major urban areas has resulted in strongly rural characteristics.*' Source: MCNP Appendix K, p.31: Settlements.

In relation to S104 of the Planning Act 2008, paras. 5.168 and 5.179 of the NNPS are relevant here. In the opinion of MCNP Forum the rural characteristics of views and vistas compromised by the proposed SRFI should be protected by this policy.

3.1.3. *'Policy PD5: Building and Site Design: This policy seeks to ensure new development is designed to a high standard which responds to the distinctive character of the settlement and reflects the guidelines and principles set out within the Heritage and Character Assessment. Part (a) of the policy goes on to ensure proposals should wherever possible include appropriate landscape mitigation measures to reduce the impact of the built form, to ensure that development is in keeping with the existing rural character of the village, and to provide a net gain in biodiversity.*' Source: CDC's Relevant Representation (July 2026).

MCNPF COMMENTARY: The Heritage and Character Assessment (Appendix K) includes an important map (page 13, Fig.4) showing the significant number of Heritage Assets within the vicinity of the SRFI site. This is an area of Oxfordshire with an unusually high density of such Assets, including three Registered Parks and Gardens, one of which is very close to the SRFI site, as are no less than four Conservation Areas. This makes the proposed location of the Interchange far from ideal, as it introduces a completely alien form of development, at an unprecedented scale, which fails to complement, still less enhance, the setting and character of the heritage assets that surround it. The impact on these assets, and the harm done to public appreciation of them, is a high price for the community – both local and regional – to pay in exchange for a facility that offers little or nothing in the way of benefits to compensate local people.

MCNP Forum wishes to point out that the potential 'benefits' deriving from the construction of new roads around Ardley and Middleton Stoney are only required if the SRFI is approved. The Forum and the parish councils concerned are very happy to forego the dubious advantages of these new roads in order to avoid the need for such mitigation in the first place - by rejecting the proposals altogether. MCNPF wish to highlight the fact that the extensive land take required for such mitigation significantly increases the scale of loss of open countryside as a result of the scheme. The loss of landscape value is immense and irreversible.

With regard to the proximity of heritage assets to the site, it is accepted best practice for decision-makers to recommend that development impacting on such assets should be reversible. Generally this translates into changes made with a light touch, that can later be removed, returning the historic fabric to its essential character. The setting of a conservation area, for example, can however be damaged forever by the construction of large and inappropriate structures that have so much associated infrastructure (car and lorry parks, new roads, landscape bunds) that reinstatement becomes impossible. Such is the case with the OxSRFI.

In particular, the findings of the Applicants' document **APP-282 - 6.10G Built Heritage Impact Assessment are – at para 3.26 and 3.31** respectively, that the impacts of the Project on the Ardley Conservation Area and RAF Upper Heyford Conservation Area, which are respectively close to and immediately adjoining the SRFI site area, are in both cases to the lower end of 'Less than Substantial'. This judgement is not justified by any technical appraisal, despite the indisputable facts that both the proposed warehouses and the railfreight terminal will be visible from within each of the Conservation Areas. These structures will be among the largest and tallest structures anywhere in the entire region, regardless of attempts at

landscape mitigation. The conclusion must be that the level of harm to both Conservation Areas is likely to be considerably greater than '*Less than Substantial*'.

In any event, the publication of the revised NPPF in August 2026 has removed the category of 'Less than Substantial Harm'. The impact of the Project now has to be assessed against HE5 2(c), identifying '*harm to the significance of a heritage asset, either from work affecting the asset itself or from development within its setting. The degree of harm should be identified: substantial harm would occur where the development proposal would seriously affect a key element of the asset's significance.*' With regard to RAF Upper Heyford Conservation Area, we consider that, by the Applicant's own description of the impact on the runway end adjacent to the Project (APP-282 para 3.30), this would be a high level of harm to the (international) significance of the heritage asset. MCNPF note that Historic England consider recent amendments to landscape mitigation in this area to be acceptable. MCNPF wishes to point out, however, that the setting and significance of the heritage asset remain seriously compromised by the development, and in the circumstances we ask the ExA to consider the importance of this irreplaceable asset.

MCNP Appendix K p.76: Managing Change states the following:

'Character Management Principles:

The distinctive local vernacular of the villages within the Mid-Cherwell area, their historic character, and largely intact historical layouts are all highly sensitive to change from the pressure and requirement of new development. In particular, the character of the Cherwell Valley and the scale of the villages along it, which are distinct and separate in their rural setting, are under threat from poorly sited and designed developments, and from the potential for substantial development at Heyford Park. New development that does not respect the local vernacular or the historic characteristics of the villages in the area has the potential to impact on their individual character, and cumulatively on the character of the Mid-Cherwell area as a whole.

The layout and design of the Heyford Park development at the former RAF Upper Heyford has been extensively described and assessed in other published documents, yet the potential for further development at Heyford Park, and in particular the potential for further developments extending westwards towards the villages of Upper Heyford and Lower Heyford could have irreversible impacts on the landscape character of the Cherwell Valley. This could be managed by developing policy to influence the Heyford Park development, and protect the Mid-Cherwell area. This could include defining buffers to settlements along the eastern side of the Cherwell Valley and around the former RAF Upper Heyford to protect the character of these villages and their strong rural settings. Specific consideration should also be given to the impact of increased traffic through this strongly rural landscape, and the impact on views from along and across the Cherwell Valley from settlement and footpaths within the Cherwell Valley.

In order to address the issues highlighted above, principles for managing change should focus on sustaining, reinforcing or enhancing those aspects which contribute to the local vernacular, historic character, and rural setting of settlements and the Cherwell Valley.'

In relation to S104 of the Planning Act 2008, the revised NPPF is clearly an important and relevant consideration (Planning Act 2008 s.104(2)(d).

3.1.4. '*Policy PD6: Control of Light Pollution: This policy aims to ensure the design of external and street lighting in all new development should minimise the risk of light spillage beyond the development site boundary.*' Source: CDC's Relevant Representation (July 2026).

Cherwell DC's Relevant Representation (July 2026) also states:

'If, due to the requirements of documents like British Standards Institution BS EN 12464- 2:2024 Light and lighting - Lighting of outdoor work places, it is deemed essential for lighting on both masts and the gantry cranes to exceed the height of the surrounding bunds to ensure safe working conditions on site, then there is a potential for an unassessed harm to occur which may have such significance that the balance of any judgment on the acceptability of the proposal is tilted to such a degree that the scheme is deemed to be unacceptably harmful when weighed against the potential benefits that may accrue'.

To address this concern, it is requested before the decision on the Order in finalised, that details be provided of the requirements for illumination of the interchange and the manner in which lighting across the site, including from, and onto, any gantry cranes is facilitated. These details should then be plotted and lighting diagrams provided to show that in a worst-case scenario where the optimal lighting is provided, the risks of light spillage onto neighbouring land including the Chiltern rail line, do not cause unacceptable levels of harm.

Consideration has been given as to whether this level of information which, by its very nature will be detailed, can be left to later consideration under a finalised Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP). This route is considered unacceptable to the Council as if it later transpires that lighting masts need to be 15m plus in height to accord with mandatory safety standards and the landscaping around the site cannot be elevated to fully mitigate any light spillage, then the local environment will be inevitably be compromised to a level where the harm arising from the scheme is widely considered to be unacceptable to nature, neighbours and rail operators.'

MCNPF COMMENTARY: Heyford Park currently has a Dark Skies Bortle Scale Class 4 rating. It does not appear feasible for either Heyford Park or surrounding countryside to maintain such a level once the SRFI becomes operational, with large-scale night-time lighting. The level of harm is considered to be unacceptable. In relation to S104 of the Planning Act 2008, there is specific reference to 'dark skies' in para. 5.162 of the NNNPS.

3.2. Current CDC Local Plan (2031)

Policy ESD 13: Local Landscape Protection and Enhancement. Development will be expected to respect and enhance the local landscape character, securing appropriate mitigation where damage to local landscape character cannot be avoided. Proposals will not be permitted where they:

- Cause undue visual intrusion into the open countryside
- Cause undue harm to important natural landscape features and topography
- Be inconsistent with local character
- Impact on areas judged to have a high level of tranquillity
- Harm the setting of settlements, buildings, structures or other landmark features, or

- Harm the historic value of the landscape

CDC's RR (July 2026) states:

'Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment:

The site is not located inside a designated landscape, sitting as it does outside the North Ploughley and Cherwell Valley Local Landscape Designations (set out in in the Cherwell Local Landscape Designation Assessment 2024, as part of the evidence for Cherwell District Council's emerging local plan). The site does, however, straddle the following character zone, set out in the Cherwell Landscape Character Assessment (District Level) 'Upper Heyford Plateau' Landscape Character Area.

Whilst parts of Upper Heyford Plateau' have a "distinctive elevated and exposed character with open, broad skies", particularly "where there are no woodlands or hedgerows to intervene", the Upper Heyford Plateau is, in practice, a varied landscape, which, in addition to a great number of arable fields, includes a number of ancient woodlands, long-standing hedgerows, villages, farmhouses and roads. The Cherwell Landscape Character Assessment also notes that, whilst there are pockets of tranquillity and a strong sense of character in certain parts, these are away from major transport infrastructure like the M40 and major developments – Heyford Park, with its military air base, for example, which are considered to be significant detractors'.

The Council's Landscape officer, along with officers from OCC and a CDC Planning Officer, visited the site in April 2026 to gain a shared understanding of the landscape context, the sensitivity of local receptors, and the likely extent of visibility across the Cherwell Valley, Upper Heyford Plateau, Middleton Stoney, Ardley, and the surrounding public rights of way network.

The Applicant has submitted ***APP-175 – 6.7 ES Chapter 7 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA)****. The LVIA is a sequential process. This means that if there is a weakness in the early stages of the assessment, those weaknesses could impact on the soundness of the final judgements.*

The Landscape Officer's appraisal raises a number of concerns regarding the robustness, at this stage, of the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA). The Landscape Officer, as a consultee, has concluded that the LVIA does not provide sufficient evidence or transparency to demonstrate that the landscape and visual effects of the proposals have been fully or accurately assessed.

Firstly, his view is that there are limitations with the methodology, those limitations being:

- *The LVIA has not adequately responded to the Planning Inspectorate's Scoping Opinion (2021).*
- *Nor has it fully addressed matters raised by Cherwell District Council, at the scoping stage (namely, the provision of field survey record sheets, the use of Natural England's 2014 Landscape Character Assessment guidance, justification of earth mounding, and inter-visibility analysis with key heritage assets.*
- *The omission of field survey records (an acknowledged oversight by the applicants) limits transparency regarding how the baseline was established and how susceptibility and value judgements were derived.*
- *The way the methodology has been set out is not that user-friendly and, sometimes, the information does not allow for cross referencing. Consequently, it is not easy to understand the assumptions underpinning the assessment. The ZTV is a key example: the 12m lighting columns to the proposed Ardley bypass have not been modelled.*

- *These inconsistencies undermine confidence in its conclusions.*

Second, in the landscape officer's opinion, the scale of the development and associated earthworks and lighting would result in adverse effects on the receiving landscape character, both directly and indirectly. The proposals would, he feels, likely result in an erosion of landscape character and the mitigation strategy currently put forward, does not adequately address these effects. Presently, he objects to the proposal.

Third, the landscape officer believes that the residual impacts on character would remain significant. He also notes that cumulative landscape effects have not been assessed and is concerned that those developments would further erode character.

Ultimately, officers view (having carried out a site visit, reviewed the applicant's submission documents and the Council's Landscape Officer's comments), feel that more assessment is required – the Council feels that the following supporting info would help in securing confidence that the potential impacts of the proposed development are not so excessive that they would tilt the balanced judgement against the OxSRFI:

- *Provide a detailed response to the Planning Inspectorate's Scoping Opinion (2021).*
- *Provision field survey record sheets, and evidence of the use of Natural England's 2014 Landscape Character Assessment guidance.*
- *Submit justification of earth mounding; and,*
- *Provide inter-visibility analysis with key heritage assets.*
- *Include a narrative which explains the design evolution – e.g. an explanation of how the landscape strategy has responded to local variations in landscape character including perceptual qualities,*
- *Improve the readability/legibility of the methodology- make it more user-friendly,*
- *Provide photomontages based on the maximum design parameters instead of the illustrative masterplan.*
- *Update the LVIA so that it adequately factors in tranquillity, rurality and dark skies*

MCNPF Commentary: MCNPF fully support CDC's views. They have submitted that the Applicants' LVIA is inadequate, meaning that there is insufficient information to make an informed judgement in line with S.104 of the NNNPS. There is also a very significant cumulative impact of numerous major development projects in the local area, all contributing to the loss of open countryside and each damaging the rural character of the neighbourhood. The SRFI project would be a major contributor to this extensive damage. It should not be considered in isolation because of the unprecedented scale of cumulative impact.

3.3. Emerging MCNP policies in 2025 Review.

In addition to the continuation of existing policies (covered in 3.1 above), the Review of the MCNP (currently under examination) introduces two additional policies of relevance to this application.

MC2 Ardley site allocation - land off Station Road.

MCNPF COMMENTARY: This allocation, if approved, will provide 8 new homes on a site which would be within 250 metres of the proposed Ardley bypass. The disruption during construction, and noise emanating from the new road during the operational period will be very considerable. The latter will render outdoor living

impossible. The site is also very close to the proposed Rail Interchange and will suffer similarly from that location.

MC9 Green Infrastructure Network.

MCNPF COMMENTARY: The policy places importance on the existing network of green and blue natural infrastructure in the designated area. Clause C states that '*proposals that will harm the effectiveness or connectivity of the Network will not be supported*'. Very significant numbers of trees and hedgerows are to be removed by the OXSRFI project, which form a key part of the existing natural network. Their replacement elsewhere will do little or nothing to repair the loss of habitat and continuity represented by the network.

In relation to S104 of the Planning Act 2008, MHCLG guidance issued in July 2026, para 2.7 makes clear that 'relevant local development plans and policies' should be taken into account.

4. SOCIOECONOMICS (INCLUDING HEALTH)

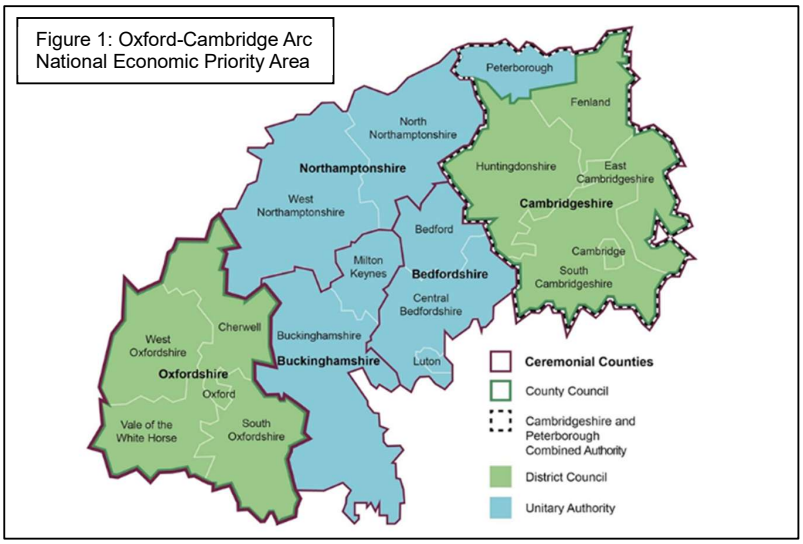
4.1. Socioeconomics

4.1.1. Our own modelling considers the demographics of the Chiltern area and the immediately adjoining districts with 40 miles (commutable distance) and supports the Applicant's evidence in **APP-296 6.12A ES Appendix 12.1 Travel To Work Data and Drive-time.**

4.1.2. In the Applicants evidence at **APP-297 – Appendix 12.2** Cherwell's major employment sectors are - (examples in descending order); Retail (11,000), Health (9,000), **Manufacturing (9,000), Professional, Scientific and Technical (8,000)**, with Transport and Storage (including Postal) at 4,500. Granted, this sector is growing at 29%, but it represents 5% of Cherwell employment. Combined, Manufacturing, Professional, Scientific and Technical represents 19% of Cherwell employment, with Manufacturing flat, but Professional, Scientific and Technical growing at 33%. The current employment base is much more consistent with the Oxford-Cambridge Arc strategy than Warehousing. MCNPF would like to understand if there are adjacent regions, with some analysis, and within reasonable commuting distance *(we suggest, Oxford City, South Oxfordshire, Vale Of White Horse, Stratford-on-Avon West Northamptonshire, Buckinghamshire, Cotswold, Warwick and Rugby, all within 40 miles of this site)* have a larger pool of experienced personnel to fit Warehouse employment.

4.1.3. HMG strategy for the Oxford-Cambridge Arc (*Figure 1*) shows Cherwell as a strategic part of the

Figure 1: Oxford-Cambridge Arc National Economic Priority Area



main corridor between the areas defined. MCNPF understands that the government is developing a Spatial Framework Plan that will set transport policy and national planning policy for this area. This will define 1) how the land will be used; 2) how the environment is protected and enhanced; 3) where and what type of development happens, and 4) what infrastructure is provided. MCNPF asserts that the emerging Oxford-Cambridge-Arc strategy will be incompatible with the Applicants' proposals.

The Oxford-Cambridge Arc **Appendix E** sets out certain principles in its ambition that clearly conflicts with the Project, whereas the Applicant sets out to comply with the NNNPS, understandably, not considering this emerging strategy. The Arc strategy identifies Luton Airport area for logistics and supply chain development, not Ardley. The area around the Chiltern District is targeted for advanced manufacturing,

clean energy technologies, life sciences, quantum computing and advanced research. There is consideration of brownfield and industrial sites at Oxford West End, but they are generally targeted for clean energy, advanced manufacturing and research. MCNPF could perhaps be forgiven for feeling that there is a lack of "joined-up" thinking here. We suggest that clarification be sought by the ExA as to which will take priority - the NNNPS already in force, or the government ambition for growth in defined sectors within the Oxford-Cambridge Arc.

4.2. Health

With the declaration of a climate emergency by Oxfordshire County Council on April 2nd 2019, MCNP Forum consider that the placing of this facility in this area in such close proximity to villages and an emerging small town, is going to bring with it significant harms to local community health. The World Health Organization (WHO) has established clear evidence that transportation infrastructure deeply affects population health. For the following topics, MCNPF would like confirmation that the local authorities, including the local planning authorities are satisfied that the Applicant has satisfactorily addressed these matters and are proposing effective measures to mitigate these harms.

4.2.1. **Air Quality & Respiratory Health**. While accepting Diesel-Electric locomotives produce fewer greenhouse gases and particulate matter per tonne-mile than road freight, localised emissions such as elevated nitrogen dioxide and particulate matter from exhaust and brake dust around freight depots and diesel-powered sections can aggravate respiratory conditions. In addition, while the Rail Freight Terminal will transfer HGV Loads to the Freight wagons at an optimal rate of 1,104 per day, the Project will attract to the location an additional forecasted 4,920 HGV Trips per day **(AP-171. 6.3 ES Chapter 3 Transport (Revision E) Page 59 Table 6.4).** That is more (Diesel-powered) road haulage to this location. At this time, EV Technology to enable Waste Carts, Passenger Buses and other short distance service vehicles is well established, however long haul HGV options are not yet available in the near future. There is further concern that these pollutants will collect in lower-lying areas in the Cherwell Valley topography, exacerbating respiratory health conditions in the populations of Lower Heyford and Rousham.

4.2.2. **PFAS/PFOS.** MCNPF does not address this category of public health concern in the locality as we are confident that the topic will be exhaustively represented by Gallos Brook representation and Local Councils.

4.2.3. Mental Health and Well-being. Community exposure to heavy rail freight is known to contribute to long-term anxiety and stress. Integrating health baselines helps identify at-risk populations in dense areas (which Heyford Park is likely to become) to justify noise-barrier investments and track maintenance. **Citation: BMJ 2025;391:e081193.**

4.2.4. **Ground-Borne Vibration.** Freight trains create low-frequency vibrations that penetrate nearby homes. Evidence shows that repetitive vibration causes psychological distress, sleep fragmentation, and physical annoyance. **Citation: BMJ Open, 3(5), e002655**

4.3. Safety & Hazard Risks

4.3.1. Safety. Rail networks must plan for the safe transport of hazardous materials. In the US, evidence supports strategic routing away from densely populated areas **(reference East Palestine Ohio Train derailment on February 3 2023)** The USA has enacted government policy and guidance related to this. MCNPF

understands that there are no comparable UK Government Policies or Regulations in regard to strategic routing to prevent devastating exposures or catastrophic incidents. The Carriage of Dangerous Goods and Use of Transportable Pressure Equipment Regulations 2009 (CDG09) does regulate rail transportation. With the proximity of a fast-growing community at Heyford Park, MCNPF would like confirmation that the Applicant is instigating best-practice measures to protect public safety.

4.3.2. **Noise**. The proposal to fund acoustic glazing on nearby residences and the construction of bunds will not mitigate the effects on residents' enjoyment of outdoor recreation, or the need to open windows for ventilation at night. **Reference Building Regulations – Approved Document O – Overheating – Requirement 01: Overheating Mitigation Regulations 40B.** There may be other SRFI schemes that have addressed this diferently with best-practice approaches; however, at a minimum, the Applicant should consider compliance with the Building Regulations, rather than putting the onus on the District Council to resolve.

5. RAIL

Note: *"References Office of Rail and Road data licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0."*

Reference **APP-005 Pre-application Programme Document, in Section 3.18** ORL states "*Network Rail has confirmed that the proposed OxSRFI can meet the requirements of the Planning Act 2008 and NPS regarding rail freight capacity and connectivity*". However, MCNPF believes the selected location stifles the possibility for optimising the route for Rail Freight because of restrictions intrinsic to the Chiltern Line (CML). Where the CML is now considered part of the Rail Freight Network, it is currentlly limited in its load gauging, although we now understand this can be rectified (refer our section 5.6 on Load Gauging). In MCNPF's opinion, due to the potential increased passenger service demand potentially brought by the (as yet unconsented) Puy Du Fou theme park, the in-progress expansion of Bicester Village, and the potential reinstatement of an improved Ardley Station, there will be concomitant limitations in routing capacity, limiting the pathing to the proposed four per day (perhaps slightly more), with their "stretch goal" to twelve unlikely to be possible without significant public-funded upgrades. We believe this undermines the fundamental purpose of a rail freight interchange at this location, and the net benefits described by the Applicant delivered by OXSRFi become locked-in and incapable of meeting future growth demands over time. **Appendix H – Framework Capacity Statement** indicates that the CML already has "*very little spare capacity*" (Ref. Strategic Route M: West Midlands and Chilterns M.01. Marylebone – Aynho Jcn). MCNPF sets out our concerns in the following sections.

5.1. Passenger Rail Services competing with Rail Freight Services

5.1.1. The line is predominantly used for Chiltern Railways passenger services, forming a high frequency commuter corridor with limited freight paths **Chiltern Railways, *Right Route 2030 Vision* (2025)** . As a result, high capacity freight is generally directed to alternative routes such as the West Coast Main Line, which is the primary high cube freight corridor **Network Rail, *Freight Network Map* (2024)** MCNPF accepts that the Applicant has met the NNNPS requirements in establishing with Network Rail, and GBR, pathing for the minimum 4 Freight movements per day to accommodate W8 gauging and the use of low-deck intermodal wagons for high-cube. The Applicant aspires to growth potential of 12 trains per day. MCNPF would like to understand the feasibility of that claim, and sets out the following questions and assertions:

5.1.1.1. Reference **Appendix F – ORR Passenger Rail Statistics**. The Office of Rail and Road (ORR) present steadily increasing passenger journeys over time. For the CML this will increase significantly with Puy Du Fou predicting that 50% of their visitors coming by Rail (it must be emphasised however, that this project although submitted, is not consented). However, major expansion of Bicester Village is underway , and this will increase rail passenger demand at this site. Can the Applicant provide evidence that the increasing demands for passenger services on the CML will not compromise their ability to expand from the current 4 paths to 12? Or can they confirm that their ambition remains to comply with the minimum requirements of the NNNPS at 4? Or alternatively, do they forecast that they can grow to some number between the minima of 4 and the maxima of 12? Will the Applicant model the GVA to the area, and the benefits of Rail Freight to London and the South East (see 1.3.2 of this document) demonstrating how they increase the benefits to these regions?

5.2. Rail Freight demand

5.2.1.1. Reference **Appendix G ORR Rail Freight Statistics**. The ORR shows Rail Freight movements flat, for a significant period of time. These statistics appear to show that Rail Freight demand has been essentially flat for some time. Is this because demand for SRFI's and RFI's has reached market saturation? Does this present as a period of stagnation? Is it because other sectors are declining or zeroing (e.g. Coal) with Intermodal and Construction growing to constitute a larger part of Rail Freight movements?

5.2.1.2. Are there any width restrictions on the CML preventing 2.5m or 2.6m container variations? Given the government target for 1.5m additional homes, there will be demand for construction material transportation **Appendix I – Railway Freight Bill.** Construction materials, for example aggregates, are typically not containerised. Are there limitations on the CML preventing certain categories of construction materials, e.g. steels, roof trusses?

5.3. Strategic rail limitation of this Ardley location (The "Y" Front Challenge).

5.3.1. The proposed Ardley Rail Freight Interchange is located at the midway point of a nine mile section of the Chiltern Main Line Rail (CML) lying between two important strategic rail junctions namely, Bicester North (connecting CML with the new East West rail route) and Aynho (connecting CML with Cherwell Main Line).

5.3.2. From a rail perspective, this nine mile section of track is the most strategically unconnected part of the entire CML route. The reason for this "unconnected" aspect of this nine mile stretch of track is all down to the historic topographical nature of the two junctions at Bicester North and Aynho. For convenience, and because it provides an accurate visual understanding of the challenge that both Ardley and Bicester North's junction location present, we have named this issue the "Y front challenge"

5.3.3. At Bicester North, the CML crosses over and joins the new East West Rail. This is a new multi-billion-pound rail linking (in the next 10 years+) the two University cities of Oxford and Cambridge. In addition, it will also link the GWR and Southern rail routes with the East Coast routes (including direct access to Felixstowe and London Gateway) avoiding any need to travel via or across London.

5.3.4. Given the importance that the Government has attached to this new East West rail route, it might have been expected that any proposed rail freight interchange would want to capitalise on its proximity of this critically important piece of national Infrastructure. As far as we are able to observe, the proximity of this multi-billion pound route is not mentioned in any of the Applicants reports or submissions despite the close proximity.

5.3.5. Of course, the issue with the Ardley location, lying as it does to the west of Bicester North, is that it has no direct access to the East West rail despite the two routes meeting at Bicester North. East West Rail is suitable for and designed to support rail freight, forming a key strategic link between the Port of Southampton, the Midlands and the Oxford–Cambridge Arc. It provides an alternative route connecting to the West Coast Main Line and strategic freight corridors. Infrastructure design includes freight-compatible gradients no steeper than 1 in 80 and junction speeds around 40mph.Reopened sections already carry freight, and commercial freight trials have taken place between Oxford, Calvert, Bletchley and Bedford.

5.3.6. Because of the Y aspect of this juncture, any freight train using East West rail and arriving from say the North Sea ports (Felixstowe etc) would be unable to turn right at Bicester North, and Visa Versa, any trains departing from Ardley, which need to use the East West route, would likewise be unable to turn left at Bicester North. The only way that a freight train using the currently underutilised East West rail could access Ardley OXSFRI would be to travel all the 20 miles south through Bicester to Oxford station. At Oxford station, it would need to decouple and for the engine to come to the other end of the train (re-couple) and for it then to "reverse" out of Oxford station and by crossing over the Cotswold Main Line it would then need to join the CML to travel the 30 mile rail journey north to Aynho junction.

5.3.7. At Aynho junction (where the Cherwell line meets CML) there is an exact repeat of the "Y challenge" found at Bicester North junction namely, there is no facility for a right turn for north bound trains. Therefore, a freight train would be forced to continue another 9 miles into Banbury station where it would be forced to undertake the same de-coupling, recoupling, and reversing exercise as it was required to undertake at Oxford station. It would then reverse out of Banbury on the same track that it entered Banbury and return to Aynho junction (this time on the opposite southbound track) where it could then cross over on to the CML for the final 4.5 miles from Aynho to Ardley.

5.3.8. Trains coming from, say Southampton Container Port would have a similar but not quite as extensive challenge. They would require only a single decoupling/ recoupling/reverse at Banbury.

5.3.9. There are significant strategic limitations to this site, which are not replicated in any other section of the CML route, only in this very limited 9 mile (Bicester North/Aynho) section.

5.3.10. Ardley's 4.5 miles distance from both East West rail's Bicester North junction and Cherwell Main Line Aynho's junction means that freight traffic will be required to take this 50-60 mile rail detour together with two sets of decoupling/recoupling/reversing as well as the commensurate challenges of signalling and alterative line usage.

5.3.11. Given the importance attached to overall rail connectivity for establishing the arguments for a strategic rail freight interchange in general and the suitability of a particular location in particular, it is extraordinary that the Applicant has decided to apply for this site. It is even more concerning that this strategic limitation is not addressed in any of the Applicant submission and certainly does not feature in its alternative site criteria.

5.4. **London Orbital Challenge utilising the Dudding Hill Lane rail freight line near Cricklewood**.

5.4.1. Currently, the Mayor of London has gone out to consultation with a proposed new West London Orbital passenger rail service which will link Hendon to Hounslow and provide new passenger stations at various locations including Neasden, Harlsden, Oak Common and Lionel Road.

5.4.2. The proposed route would incorporate the existing Dudding Hill line (freight only line). This line, with southwest to northwest chords with the Chiltern line at Neasden, is used for enabling important east London to central England connections including transport of aggregates and for landfill from both Brent Cross and Dagenham to Calvert in Buckinghamshire

5.4.3. Chiltern rail also uses this line to take faulty stock to Willesden via Neasden which is accessible from the "up" line at Wembley. A regular passenger service on this important section of the north west London rail

network which previously was “freight only” will have important direct and indirect scheduling and usage implications regarding the entire Capital’s orbital ability to provide rail freight access around north London for access to the container ports of Felixstowe, London Gateway, Folkestone (Channel Tunnel) and Tilbury.

5.4.4. As it is, there is a serious pinch point close by at Hampstead where 8 passenger trains per hour, linking Richmond/Clapham Common to Stratford, compete with existing freight services

5.4.5. The Applicant does not appear to address these issues relying instead on addressing the immediate issues of specific Chiltern Line scheduling and usage and avoiding the challenge of London’s orbital routes

5.5. Load Gauging

5.5.1. MCNPF accepts that in **AS-092 - Additional Submission accepted at the discretion of the Examining Authority** (unhelpfully named as it is 8.1 the SOCG between the Applicant and Network Rail), that in 6.1 Section on Gauging, surveys have indicated that Ardley Tunnel can be cleared to W8 by removing a build-up of Calcite along the tunnel. This contradicts the result of a MCNPF FOI Request to Network Rail. Please refer to **Appendix C - Network Rail FOI Request**. In this response NR surveys indicate a need to Track lower/slab. It would be useful to establish if the other recommendations for achieving W8 impose any other limitations on the full utilisation of the CML.

5.5.2. MCNPF are encouraged that the Bucknells Farm at-grade crossing would be replaced, an important safety consideration in that CML is likely to get busier.

5.5.3. MCNPF would like to understand if there are any Rail Freight movement limitations that need addressing, in that the 50 mile section of CML under consideration includes sections of 1 in 88 grading, and if any necessary changes would be borne by public funding or by the Applicant.

5.5.4. In **AS-092 - Additional Submission accepted at the discretion of the Examining Authority**, in Section 4.2 NR asserts that there is and opportunity here to respond to the NNNPS in serving the South East and London (*note summarised*). MCNPF remains yet unconvinced that the location of this SRFI will significantly contibute to that goal because of the limitations of the CML. In 6.1 section on Pathing, NR have confirmed that 4 return paths can be feasible, but also maintains that “Additional compliant paths have also been found by AP-313 - GB Railfreight”. However, in **APP-313 - 7.2B – GB Railfreight Supporting Statement** at Section 4 confirms that “*four circuits can be reasonably expected to fit within the timetable framework”* but *“attempting detailed future pathing on other routes...would be…speculative, unsound, contrary to normal timetable planning practice”.* MCNPF asserts that the Applicant aspirations for up to 12 paths could be considered misleading. MCNPF believe that it would be more appropriate to confirm that the Applicant complies with the minimum requirement of 4 Paths as stated in the NNNPF without hinting at expansion of pathings to 12, as we think that to do so would impose a significant burden on public funding..

5.6. Continuously Welded Rail

5.6.1. Continuously Welded Rail (CWR) is generally necessary for modern, high-capacity freight routes such as those accommodating W9, W10 and higher gauges. Jointed track is rarely used on lines deemed suitable for large containers on standard or low-deck wagons.Across the UK, jointed track has been almost

entirely replaced by CWR on major freight corridors. Some large sections (but notably, not all) of the Chiltern Main Line are constructed using CWR, consistent with Network Rail's ongoing programme of track renewals. Network Rail frequently undertakes track renewal on the Chiltern Main Line, including works between London Marylebone, Gerrards Cross and Bicester North. MCNPF would like to understand if any of the upgrades to CWR along CML will be required to enable Freight pathing, and if this is currently a planned programme of works funded by public money, or will be funded by the Applicant.

5.7. Electrification of Chiltern Line for Passenger Traffic and Light Freight (W8)

5.7.1. The Chiltern Main Line is not electrified and remains one of the few major diesel-only routes into London. Chiltern Railways is exploring alternatives to electrification, including hybrid traction and renewable HVO fuel. The Department for Transport is not planning to electrify the line under the current Rail Network Enhancements Pipeline.[1]New Mk5A trains entering service in 2026 are designed for non-electrified operation. *"The cleanest, most sustainable freight operation,"* is the stated goal of Maritime Transport, according to Executive Chairman John Williams" 2 March 2026, is undermined by the constraints on this line. In addition, The freight operating sector is undergoing a massive rolling-stock upgrade to eliminate diesel locomotives under the UK's decarbonisation goals, which is again compromised by the constraints of the Chiltern Line. MCNPF maintain that this is an intrinsic limitation of the section between Northolt and Aynho Junctions, requiring the long-term use of Diesel-Electric Locomotives with the only option to reduce pollutants is the use of HVO fuel. Bi-mode locomotives are being considered for CML Passenger Rail, and there are potential feasible future solutions for passenger services, but none yet conceivable for Rail Freight applications.

5.8. Ardley Station

5.8.1. the Applicant asserts that they are facilitating the development of Ardley Station through additional line signalling and drainage works. While MCNPF agrees that these works may be helpful, as shown in **APP-041 2.6 Illustrative Masterplan** their site crowds out the only logical area that is available for car parking and a bus turnaround that could be sited to serve a passenger station. MCNPF believes that the potential for reinstatement of Ardley Station is seriously compromised in the North-East section of the Masterplan, with the siting of the roundabout, the positioning of the furthest north-east Warehouse, and the potential spur to the Eastern Warehouses.

5.9. Summary

5.9.1. The Rail Freight terminal will support the minimum of intermodal transfer to rail of 4 rail freight movements per day, with 4,960 predicted road freight traffic movements per day. The transfer of these containers (empty and loaded) seems minimal compared to the huge capacity of warehousing ORL are proposing to construct with 6.5 million square feet of Class B Warehouse capacity and another additional allowance applied for of approximately 2 million square feet of mezzanine levels within the warehouse scheme further necessitating the imposing height of the warehouses and further increasing the damaging visual impact on what is currently a rural, open area.

5.9.2. The national strategy for Railfreight proposes a 40% increase in Rail Freight volumes by 2040 leading to a 75% target by 2050. A 45% proportion of that target is related to construction materials which are

largely transported by bulk carriers and are never containerised. This removes a large part of the justification when the Chiltern line will only ever be rated to W8 unless significant public funding is used to upgrade this line. This means this interchange will need to be targeted to the 65% of High Value and Retail Goods that are the other element of the target (consumer goods, cars, electronics, medicines and other commodities which will be the subject of “last-mile” deliveries that the MCNP Forum considers have not been traffic modelled effectively, and will compete directly with the other warehouse projects proposed at Baynards Green by Albion Land and Tritax.

5.9.3. The Chiltern Line was never originally designated as part of the Strategic Rail Freight network and was always a dedicated passenger dual-track line until this project was proposed. Rare instances of freight movements on this line were then cited to redesignate it. The Chiltern Line lacks extensive “four-tracking” (separating faster passenger services from slower freight); the burden this will impose on what has been a successful passenger service will be significant, and Great British Railways is explicitly required to protect passenger services. Problems will arise from competing freight vs passenger slots that will require meticulous operational planning and the absence of unforeseen circumstances affecting the line. In addition, adding Rail Freight to a Passenger line will increase wear on the line and increase the need for more frequent maintenance.

6. ECOLOGY AND BIODIVERSITY

6.1. SITES OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST

The OXSRFI impacts on two SSSIs. The extent of the impact is critical for the ExA to understand in view of the specific references in the NNNPS to the importance of SSSI in the context of NSIPs. It states (our emphasis):

'5.61 Where a proposed development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest is likely to have an adverse effect on a Site of Special Scientific Interest (either individually or in combination with other developments), ***development consent should not normally be granted****. An exception should only be made where the benefits of the development proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest. The Secretary of State should ensure that the applicant's proposals to mitigate the harmful aspects of the development and, where possible, to ensure the conservation and enhancement of the site's biodiversity or geological interest, are acceptable. The Secretary of State is bound by the duty placed on all public bodies in section 28G of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 to take reasonable steps, consistent with the proper exercise of their functions, to further the conservation and enhancement of the features by reason of which a site is of special scientific interest.'* Source: NNNPS 2024

The SSSIs impacted are:

6.1.1. Ardley Cutting and Quarry SSSI



'Impacts of the SSSI: Presently, there is no standalone strategy for mitigation of the impacts to the SSSI. This information would be helpful in assessment of its adequacy. There are some details in the draft HMMP with proposals for the North West Ecological Mitigation area, as a whole. However, a standalone scheme which shows the ratio of compensation to loss and the timings of provision, as well as regard to any species-specific mitigation required, would be valuable'. Source: CDC's RR (July 2026).

The listing is as follows (our emphasis):

COUNTY: OXFORDSHIRE: SITE NAME: ARDLEY CUTTING AND QUARRY. Status: Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) notified under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981(as amended). Local Planning Authorities: Cherwell District Council, Oxfordshire County Council. National Grid Reference: SP540269; Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 164 1:10,000: SP52 NW, NE. Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): 1972 Date of Last Revision: Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1988 Date of Last Revision: 28 July 1999. Area: 40.13 ha 99.12 ac. Other information: Part of the site is managed by the Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust.

Description and Reasons for Notification - This site lies in the eastern part of the Oxfordshire Cotswolds along a section of the London to Birmingham railway line. It is of geological interest for its exposures of Jurassic rocks and has biological interest associated with limestone grassland, scrub, ancient woodland and wetland habitats. The soils are mostly shallow loams of the Aberford Series, interrupted in places by bands of ill-draining clays and outcrops of Northants sands giving rise to changes in the flora.

The railway cutting and southernmost quarry constitute one of southern England's key sites for Jurassic strata. It has exposures ranging from the lowest Bathonian Chipping Norton Formation to the White Limestone Formation thus exhibiting the entire local Bathonian development with the exception of the Forest Marble. The Chipping Norton Formation is composed of oolitic limestones, sandy limestones, and mudstones. The formation is deeply excavated by sand-filled channels which themselves are topped by rootlet horizons and a lignite, indicating a period of emergence as low, marshy land. The overlying Sharps Hill Formation here consists of a thin oyster-bearing clay horizon and indicates the return of marine conditions. The Taynton Formation, consisting of flaggy, oolitic limestones and a basal oyster bed was deposited in a relatively inshore site under turbulent conditions. The Hampden Marly Formation contains a rich fauna of oysters and brachiopods at a number of horizons. The cutting is the only site where an ammonite has been recovered from this formation and places it in the Procerites Progacilis Zone, correlating it with the Acuminata Beds of the South Cotswolds and Somerset. The uppermost White Limestone Formation consists of approximately seven metres of micritic and peloidal limestones with subsidiary marls and clays. The site is the type locality for the Ardley Member of this formation. The abundant gastropods, bivalves and brachiopods preserved in these limestones enable correlations with the White Limestone Formation to the south in the Cotswolds, and with the Blisworth Limestone Formation in Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire.

This is a key site for its fossil marker horizons, palaeontology, sedimentary features such as channels and emergent surfaces, and its stratigraphy. The rocks of Ardley enable the Bathonian sections of the Midlands to be correlated with those of the Oxford area and Cotswolds and as such is of national importance for the understanding of the Jurassic Period in Britain. The limestone grassland on the steep banks of the railway cutting and the adjacent quarry forms the main biological interest. **It is one of the largest limestone grassland sites in the Oxfordshire Cotswolds where unimproved grassland is now very rare.**

The grassland is a characteristically tall sward either dominated by Upright Brome Bromopsis Erectus or a mixture of Brome and Tor-grass Brachypodium Pinnatum. The grassland contains a variety of species associated with limestone grassland including Quaking Grass Briza Media, Basil Thyme Acinos Arvensis, clustered bellflower Campanula Glomerata, Dropwort Filipendula Vulgaris and Sainfoin Onobrychis Viciifolia. Other species which are locally common in the sward include Horseshoe Vetch Hippocrepis Comosa, Kidney Vetch Anthyllis Vulneraria, Glaucous Sedge Carex Flacca, Blue Fleabane Erigeron Acer, Bee Orchid Ophrys Apifera, Green-winged Orchid Orchis Morio and Cowslip Primula Veris, as well as a number of well-established

introductions such as Dragon's Teeth Tetragonolobus Maritimus, Elecampane Inula Helenium and Broad-leaved Everlasting Pea Lathyrus Latifolius. The flora of the woodland includes Lords and Ladies Arum Maculatum, Wood Anemone Anemone Nemorosa and the uncommon Green Hellebore Helleborus Viridis.

The eastern edge of the quarry has a near vertical rock face with a seasonally dry pool at its base. This pool is contiguous with a low lying, marshy section containing Willow Carr and a flora dominated by soft rush Juncus Effusus, Reedmace Typha Latifolia, reed canary grass Phalaris Arundinacea, and water mint Mentha Aquatica.

Invertebrate fauna - The invertebrate fauna is particularly rich along the railway cutting, with large populations of calcareous grassland butterflies like small blue Cupido Minimus, Brown Argus Aricia Agestis, dark green Fritillary Argynnis Aglaja, green hairstreak Callophrys Rubi and Duke of Burgundy Hamearis Lucina, all of which are uncommon in Oxfordshire. There is also a colony of the nationally rare four-spotted moth Tyta Luctuosa whose larvae feed on field bindweed Convolvulus Arvensis, as well as the nationally uncommon leaf beetles Cryptocephalus Hypochaeridis and C. Moraei.

Vertebrates - The Cutting and adjacent quarry also support a notably wide range of vertebrates. These include part of a large population of the internationally protected great crested newt Triturus cristatus which spreads into several adjacent quarries.

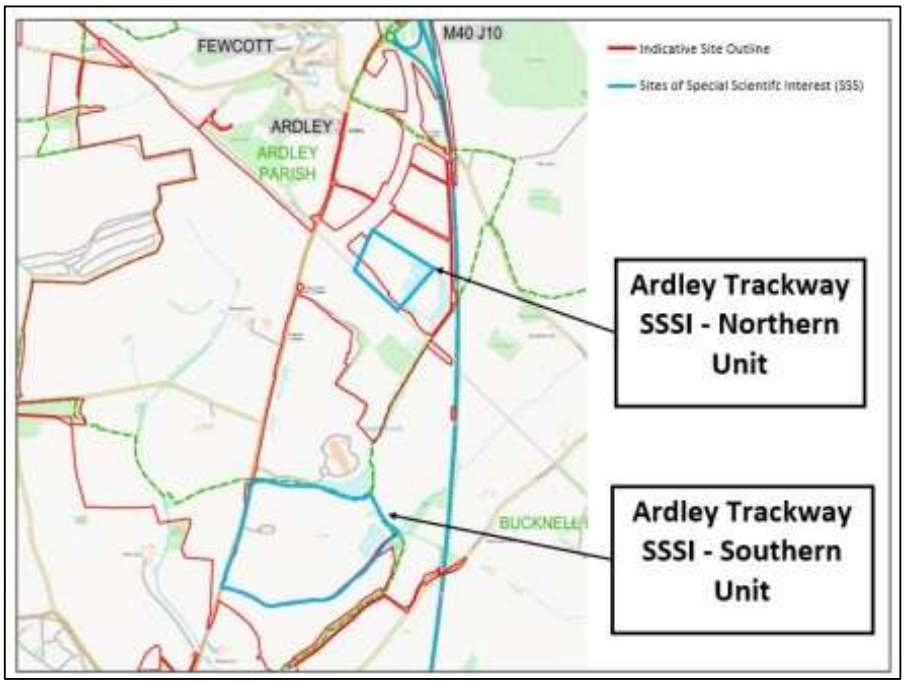
MCNPF Commentary: Ardley Cutting and Quarry SSSI is 6.3km long by up to 93m wide (at former station site); it is 55m wide close to Souldern tunnel. It runs from the tunnel mouth to just past Bucknell, running under Ardley Road and the M40. The designated railway embankment widens out to include an area of former quarry – part of Ardley Wood. The SSSI also includes the widened area that was formerly Ardley Station.

OxSRFI states that 11% of the SSSI would be lost, and a further 12% temporarily affected by construction activity **APP-19 – 5.1B Consultation Report Appendix 3.** This scale of disturbance and potential loss to an SSSI must be regarded as highly undesirable; it should weigh heavily in the balance of impact vs benefits referred to in the NNNPS. Although the Applicants plan to replace 50ha. of calcareous grassland on a site adjacent to the end of the Heyford Park runway (not sure if this is still the case), no explanation is given as to how they would obtain the calcareous grassland. Is it to be removed from the SSSI site or obtained from elsewhere? Unless and until the details of mitigation are clear, the Secretary of State cannot ensure that the proposals are acceptable, as required by the NNNPS.

As regard the presence of the rare fauna and flora identified in the Listing, the ExA is reminded of para 5.56 of the NNNPS – '*In taking decisions, the Secretary of State should ensure that appropriate weight is attached to: designated sites of international, national, and local importance; irreplaceable habitats; protected species and habitats; other species of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity; biodiversity and geological interests within the wider environment and to areas prioritised for nature's recovery in the relevant local nature recovery strategies.'*

6.1.2. Ardley Trackways SSSI

This comprises two separate areas east of Station Road. They are of international importance, for different reasons to as related above.



The listing is as follows (our emphasis):

SITE NAME: Ardley Trackways SSSI County: Oxfordshire District. Status: Cherwell Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) notified under section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as substituted by Schedule 9 to the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. Local Planning Authority: Cherwell District Council National Grid reference: Ordnance Survey Sheet: Notification date 19 January 2010 Area: 1:10,000: 63.59 ha SP 52 NW, SP 52 SW.

Reasons for notification: **Ardley Trackways SSSI is an internationally important site** containing a rock horizon close to the top of the Shipton Member of the White Limestone Formation which, in the immediate vicinity of the SSSI, has revealed the presence of an array of fossilised trackways. These trackways were formed by the passage of a herd of sauropod dinosaurs, and several theropod dinosaurs, along a shoreline in what is now north-eastern Oxfordshire, during the Middle Jurassic (approximately 165 million years ago). Such extensive and relatively complete assemblages of trackways are otherwise unknown in England and are rare in the Middle Jurassic worldwide. **The rarity of these trackways and their geological and environmental context for future research, mean that Ardley Trackways SSSI can be regarded as being of international importance**. Based on the orientation of the trackways studied to date, the SSSI has been identified as containing a finite buried reserve of the trackway bed, which is accessible for scientific study.

General description: Ardley Trackways SSSI consists of a series of working quarries lying either side of the railway line from Bicester to Banbury, to the south of the village of Ardley, about 4 km northwest of Bicester in Oxfordshire. The bedding-plane in which the trackways lie is near the top of the Shipton Member of the White

Limestone Formation. The general trend of the trackways is on a bearing north-north-east to south-south-west, although a few trend north east to south-west. The Shipton Member of the White Limestone Formation is of Bathonian age (Middle Jurassic – approximately 165 million years ago) and was deposited within a belt of near-shore lagoons on the north-western margin of the London Platform (a land mass extending over part of the area now consisting of south-eastern England, the southern North Sea and Belgium).

In locations where it has previously been exposed immediately adjacent to the SSSI, the bedding-plane surface has so far revealed the presence of over 40 more-or-less continuous trackways attributed to two-legged, carnivorous (theropod) dinosaurs and four-legged vegetarian (sauropod) dinosaurs. The trackways yield information relevant to our understanding of dinosaur locomotion, their burial and how they came to be preserved (taphonomy), the implications these trackways have for the classification (systematic taxonomy) of the footprints, the evolutionary relationships of the dinosaurs thought to be represented by the trackways, the taxonomic composition of this particular ecosystem, and insights into the behaviour (ethology) of these animals.

Evidence of a change in the stride (gait transition) associated with a temporary increase in speed on a theropod trackway has important implications for understanding the mechanics of the limb movement and the evolution of the oldest theropods. The interpretation of many of the sauropod tracks as havingbeen formed by members of the Titanosauria (a large group of sauropods characterised by their widegauge limb posture), pushes the origins of this group back into the Middle Jurassic. This provides evidence to counter theories that titanosaurs originated in Gondwana (the continent consisting of Africa, Antarctica, Australia and South America) after the break-up of Pangea (the supercontinent consisting of Gondwana combined with Eurasia and North America) during the late Middle Jurassic. The similar directions of the trackways, combined with the relatively limited time period over which the tracks could have been formed, may suggest that the sauropods were moving in a mixed herd. It has also been speculated that the theropods were following the sauropod herds and that additional evidence from the site might provide insights into pack behaviour in large theropod dinosaurs.

In **APP-294 – 6.11I ES Appendix 11.9 Ardley Trackways Technical Note** the Applicant assessment of the issues. The applicant states:

'The Applicant has considered the potential for dinosaur footprints to be found on-site during construction, and has proposed a 'watching-brief' during relevant construction works (secured by draft DCO Requirement 13(3)). Given the very limited areas of appropriate geology which will be disturbed onsite, the Applicant is of the view that such finds are of low probability, but the watching brief is considered an appropriate and proportionate mitigation response. the Applicant notes and welcomes the positive response of Natural England (RR- 101) who have confirmed agreement to the Applicant's approach to avoiding or mitigating potential effects on the nearby SSSI.' Source: Applicant's Comments on Relevant Representations, Document 9.1, September 2026.

MCNPF Commentary: In August 2026, MCNPF wrote to the Oxford University Museum of Natural History seeking expert advice on preservation, the applicant's proposed methodology, and the effects of major groundworks near the trackways and Ardley Quarry SSSI. MCNPF stated that we wished to make representations to the Examiners about issues that concern the local communities. Amongst our concerns is that of the extensive destruction of the landscape and context in which the dinosaur finds exist, which we understood to be of international importance. MCNPF referenced the extensive major groundworks proposed, which involve new road construction next to the trackways, and huge foundation pads for warehouses adjacent to them.

MCNPF noted that OUMNH's website stated that *'More of the footprint surface is likely to be exposed over the coming years, and a full description of the significance, new scientific discoveries and potential for future preservation of the site is expected soon.'*

The Museum has provided a response, which we understand will be appended to OCC's Local Impact Report. The response relates to further more recent finds on the sites which are not covered by the listing. In some contrast to the Applicants' views, their response includes the following statement (our emphasis):

'*The dinosaur trackways discovered since the 1990s in the White Limestone Formation at Ardley and Dewars Farm quarries are of major international importance. Over 60 individual trackways have been discovered over an area >200,000 m^2 (Fig. 1), by far the largest UK dinosaur tracksite, and one of the largest globally on a single surface.* ***The longest dinosaur trackways documented to date extend >300 metres, making them the longest in the Northern Hemisphere and amongst the longest in the world****. To date, five scientific papers have been published on the trackways, providing major new insights into dinosaur distribution and locomotion with multiple others in train. A quantitative assessment by our team found the Ardley/Dewars Farm site to be the second most scientifically important dinosaur tracksite in the UK, and the most important from the Jurassic Period. In 2026, we discovered a skull of a marine crocodilian at the site, which is the first large body fossil material from the White Limestone, demonstrating the potential for discovery of significant fossil skeletons as well as tracks'*

The site has also provided unique scientific training for hundreds of undergraduate and graduate students from the University of Oxford, University of Birmingham and Liverpool John Moores University.

Likelihood of further finds during the SRFI works.

'*Palaeontological discoveries of this scale and importance are rare. The chances of preserving structures for hundreds of millions of years, especially those as ephemeral as footprints in mud, are vanishingly small, much less so that they will ever be discovered should they be preserved.* ***However, in the case of trackways in the Ardley/Dewars Farm area we are not dealing with a random search.*** *Rather there is a proven record of discovery over three decades, demonstrating that the conditions for dinosaur footprint preservation were persistent across an area minimally 2 km long and several hundred metres wide. Specifically, since their discovery in summer 2022, dinosaur trackways have invariably been found at Dewars Farm[5] whenever quarrying activity reaches the footprint-bearing surface, Bed 1 of the Shipton Member of the White Limestone Formation. The trackway discoveries to date have all been east of the B430, but this is a function of the lack of exposure of the relevant rock surface to the west of the B430, rather than a real limitation of the preservation of the fossils themselves. While the majority of the trackways at Ardley/Dewars Farm run approximately N-S[3,5] (i.e. parallel to the B430), a significant number run E-W.* ***Based on our observations it is highly likely that they continue beneath the road and through the proposed SRFI site. Therefore, it is almost certain that if excavations extend to the footprint-bearing surface dinosaur trackways will be encountered'.***

The authors conclude that great care will need to be taken by operators of machinery if excavation gets near to the layers where further footprints may be found. They are extremely easy to damage or lose altogether.

MCNPF's view is that the ExA should consider the exceptional circumstances of this site of international importance, as presenting evidence of such rarity and significance that it may outweigh the advantages offered by the SRFI. MCNPF further argue that if the Alternative Sites Assessment had been carried out properly (see

Item 1 of this Written Representation), the chosen site would have been eliminated from the shortlist on account of its impact on no less than two SSSIs of national and international importance.

6.2. ANCIENT WOODLAND

'Whilst there is consideration of indirect effects or air pollution on ancient woodland, other recognised indirect effects have not been considered in full. These include 'breaking up or destroying working connections between woodlands, changing the landscape character of the area, increasing disturbance to wildlife, such as noise from additional people and traffic'. The severing of the functional woodland corridor and mature hedgerow connections to the ancient woodland of Burntclose Copse for example, is not discussed in this context, and it should be, as it is an important material consideration'. Source: CDC RR July 2026.

'5.62 Irreplaceable habitats including ancient woodland, and ancient and veteran trees:

Ancient woodland and ancient and veteran trees are irreplaceable habitats. England's ancient woodlands and ancient and veteran trees support high levels of biodiversity. They are home to a quarter of England's priority species for conservation and once lost they cannot be recreated. They also deliver many ecosystem services including clean water and healthy soils, carbon storage, support for people's wellbeing and their long-standing cultural values. The Keepers of Time published in 2022 updates the government's policy to recognise the value of England's ancient and native woodlands and ancient and veteran trees. It restates the government's commitment to evaluate the threats facing these habitats and sets out updated principles and objectives to protect and improve these habitats for future generations'.

5.63 'The Secretary of State should not grant development consent for any development that would result in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats including ancient woodland and ancient and veteran trees unless there are wholly exceptional reasons (for example, where the public benefit would clearly outweigh the loss or deterioration of habitat) and a suitable compensation strategy exists'.

MCNPF Commentary: MCNPF fully support the views of CDC regarding ancient woodland, and we draw the attention of the ExA to the unusually strongly-worded paragraphs in the NNNPS. MCNPF also refer to emerging policy MC9: Green Infrastructure, which is covered in Section 3. The local communities represented by MCNPF place great value on the surviving woodlands and veteran trees, a key element of the natural rural heritage of the Mid-Cherwell area. MCNPF rely on the ExA to give suitable weight to these concerns.

7. UTILITIES AND SERVICES (note that 7.1.1 and 7.1.2 has, in part, been constructed from an AI query)

7.1. **Water Supply.** Thames Water forecasts indicate that Oxfordshire and the wider South East will suffer severe water shortages by 2040. To combat this and reliably support major new infrastructure and housing developments, Thames Water has secured Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) status to build the massive £2.2bn White Horse / Abingdon Reservoir. Reference Planning Inspectorate Register WA010005. The water supply concerns appear to be more of an issue if the 9,000 dwellings at Heyford Park are approved – with a cumulative impact rather than a standalone OxSRFI issue.

7.1.1. **AI.** Thames Water region is classified by the Environment Agency as having a "serious" degree of water stress. Hosepipe bans in the last 5 years x 2 (22July 2025 to 27 November 2025, 23 July 2026 still in effect) Evidence has been found that the required megalitres per day (ML/d) of water required from South West Oxfordshire (SWOX) which falls under Thames Water is undercapacity.

7.1.2. **AI**. A quantified maximum potable-water demand (An exact calculation of the absolute maximum amount of drinking water (potable water) the new project will use once it is finished) + a corresponding quantified Thames Water/SWOX resource allocation (Official confirmation from the water company (Thames Water, specifically for the South West Oxfordshire / SWOX region stating exactly how much water they are officially setting aside for this project)+ a phase-by-phase demonstration of resource availability before 2040 (A step-by-step timeline showing that as each stage of the project is built, there is actually enough water ready and available to supply it, covering the entire period leading up to 2040).

7.1.3. The applicant's own consultation log shows repeated Thames Water meetings right through May 2025, but the published summary gives no substantive information about what Thames Water said about potable supply. That makes the actual Thames Water correspondence potentially much more valuable than the Environmental Statement.

7.1.4. An Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) request to Thames Water and the Environment Agency was sent on 6th October 2026, asking for:

- The OxSRFI potable-water demand calculation;
- Thames Water's clean-water capacity assessment;
- All correspondence with Oxfordshire Rail freight/Oxalis concerning potable-water supply;
- The Pre-Development Enquiry and capacity assessment;
- Any WRMP/SWox modelling undertaken specifically for OxSRFI;
- Any identified reinforcement works;
- The capacity of those works in MLX/day;
- Planned completion dates

7.1.5. MCNPF requests the right to make further representation on these matters if responses to the EIR requests supply information of interest.

7.2. Electricity Supply. As with water the supply demand issue is of greater concern if other developments such as the 9,000 homes in Heyford Park being approved – the cumulative impact.

7.2.1. An EIR request for the following information was made to SSE Networks on 10th October 2026:

- Connection Offers and Agreements: Copies of any formal grid connection offers, capacity reservations, or Pre-Development Enquiry responses issued by SSEN to the applicant (Oxalis / Oxfordshire Rail Freight) concerning the OxSRFI project.
- Capacity Assessments: Any network capacity assessments, feasibility studies, or grid impact models undertaken by SSEN regarding a connection for this site.
- Demand Calculations: The forecast peak electricity demand (expressed in Megawatts / MW) and annual consumption projections used by SSEN to evaluate this project's grid connection request.
- Infrastructure and Reinforcement Works: Details of any required new primary substations, on-site or off-site reinforcement works, or linear asset upgrades identified by SSEN as necessary to facilitate this connection.
- Capacity of Works & Timelines: The specific capacity (in Megawatts (MW) / Megavolt-Ampere (AMP) of those reinforcement works and their projected or agreed completion dates.
- Proposed Connection Point: The exact geographic location of the proposed grid connection point where the OxSRFI site will interface with the wider SSEN network.
- Local Network Outage Data: Historical data or reports held by SSEN regarding the frequency, duration, and root causes of intermittent power interruptions and outages across the Mid-Cherwell parish network over the last 36 months, and any assessment of how the OxSRFI connection will impact this existing instability.

7.2.2. MCNPF requests the right to make further representation on these matters if responses to the EIR request supplies information of interest.

7.2.3. Other concerns relating to power supply and demand is the Impact on Local Communities:

- Will supplying OxSRFI reduce available electricity capacity for existing residents or businesses in Cherwell?
- Has the cumulative impact been assessed alongside planned housing growth in Cherwell and Oxfordshire?
- Could the development contribute to increased risks of local network constraints during peak demand periods?
- What assessment has been undertaken of impacts on villages such as Ardley, Middleton Stoney and Upper Heyford?

7.2.4. Future Demand and Electrification

- Does the electricity demand assessment include future electric HGV charging infrastructure?
- What assumptions have been made regarding fleet electrification between now and 2050?
- If demand exceeds current forecasts, what additional grid upgrades would be required?

- Has allowance been made for warehouse occupiers installing high-energy automated systems after occupation?

7.3. Security and Resilience

- What happens if there is a major power outage?
- Will there be backup generation on site?
- How many hours could critical operations continue during a grid failure?
- Has climate resilience of the electricity infrastructure been assessed?

7.4. Renewable Energy and Carbon Reduction

- How much electricity demand will be met by on-site renewable generation?
- What roof-mounted solar capacity is proposed across the warehouse estate?
- Will battery storage be provided?
- Why has the chosen renewable energy provision been considered sufficient?
- Has a net-zero operational electricity strategy been developed?

7.5. Strategic Planning

- What is the total annual electricity demand of OxSRFI at full build-out, and how does this compare with the electricity demand of a town the size of Bicester?
- Has the applicant assessed the cumulative electricity demand arising from OxSRFI together with planned housing growth, employment growth and transport electrification in Cherwell?
- Can the relevant electricity network operator confirm that sufficient capacity exists without adversely affecting existing consumers, and if not, what infrastructure upgrades are required?
- If the applicant states that "a connection can be provided”
- A connection being technically possible is not the same as demonstrating that the wider electricity system can accommodate the demand sustainably. What evidence has been provided regarding cumulative demand growth across the area over the lifetime of the development?

7.6. Waste disposal and management

7.6.1. The Operational Continuity Gap for Local Waste Facilities

The site layout completely displaces the active Severn Trent Green Power / Biffa In-Vessel Composting (IVC) facility at Ashgrove Farm. The applicants’ Environmental Statement notes that they would allow Biffa to operate until their lease ends in 2030, but admits that approval represents a permanent loss of local organic waste capacity unless Biffa can find an alternative site.

7.6.2. MCNP Forum, representing local communities, is seriously concerned at the possible loss of this amenity, which forms part of a highly successful programme of recycling in Oxfordshire. Forcing the closure of a major composting facility with no alternative site secured or modelled in the DCO creates a quantifiable

deficit in regional waste infrastructure. This can be framed as a direct threat to county-wide environmental compliance.

7.6.3. Forcing a major organic waste processing facility to close without securing, permitting, and modelling a replacement site creates an immediate, quantifiable deficit in regional infrastructure. **MCNPF argue that the DCO cannot be granted if it causes the host region to fail its statutory green waste processing duties.**

7.6.4. In addition, if the facility is demolished, hundreds of thousands of tonnes of municipal and commercial organic waste must be diverted elsewhere. Because there are no equivalent vacant facilities nearby, this waste will have to be moved by HGV to neighbouring counties or alternative regions. This exposes a massive, logical flaw in the developer's core case: OxSRFI is being pitched under the National Networks National Policy Statement (NNNPS) as a project designed to reduce net HGV road mileage. By displacing local waste processing, the developer is actively creating new, un-modelled HGV road miles to move waste out of the district, negating a portion of the project's carbon-saving claims.

7.6.5. The DCO application lacks a guaranteed, legally binding protection agreement for the haulage access routes feeding the Ardley ERF during the highly disruptive 7-year construction phase. If construction delays or gridlocks the intake of municipal waste to the incinerator, it risks forcing regional councils to divert waste to distant commercial landfills.

8. CUMULATIVE HARMS

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9. INFRASTRUCTURE FIRST

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10. RAF WESTON-ON-THE-GREEN

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11. SECURITY AND POLICING

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Appendix B – Traffic Survey Comparison Evidence – Observation vs. Modelled Evidence

Appendix C – Network Rail FOI Request

Appendix D – eMail Response from ORL to MCNPF Questions

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Appendix H – Framework Capacity Statement (Network Rail)

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Appendix J – National Highways EIR Response December 2025

Appendix A

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ASSESSMENT OF THE BICESTER TRANSPORT MODEL
HEYFORD PARK MODEL UPDATE 2018

1. Key Conclusions from the Evidence

The 2017 Bicester Transport Model (BTM) was updated in 2018 because the existing model did not represent the Heyford Park area with sufficient accuracy and detail for the proposed assessment. This review of the **2018 Local Model Validation Addendum and appendices** identifies significant deficiencies in the model building and validation processes as well as multiple failures to meet **Government Transport Analysis Guidance requirements (WebTAG)**. As a result, they do not demonstrate that the model can reliably assess traffic impacts on the local roads and villages around Heyford Park.

The reasons are as follows:

- Use of the model for a purpose for which fitness was not demonstrated
- Failure to demonstrate adequate zoning and trip loading arrangements
- Failure to report prescribed validation of the prior trip matrices
- Significant failure to meet multiple WebTAG matrix estimation criteria and failure to follow WebTAG processes
- Failure to demonstrate reliable O/D patterns around Heyford Park, relying instead on Bicester-focused observed O/D data
- Under-representation of local traffic movements
- Inadequate and Bicester-focused post-estimation matrix validation
- Inadequate highway assignment calibration and independent validation
- Failure to demonstrate reliable HGV representation
- Incomplete journey time validation

These deficiencies include multiple failures to meet WebTAG requirements and failures to demonstrate that the model is fit for its use to assess impacts on the area around Heyford Park. Taken together, they mean that WebTAG's fundamental test of fitness for purpose has not been demonstrated: '*can robust conclusions be drawn from the model outputs?*' (WebTAG M3.1, para 3.4.1)

2. Background and Purpose of this Note

In 2018 Oxfordshire County Council and White Young Green (now Tetra Tech) updated the 2017 Bicester Transport Model to create the BTM Heyford Park Model Update. The model, with a base year of 2016, was used to assess the impact on local villages arising from the Heyford Park Masterplan consented in 2022 (18/00825/hybrid). The Transport Assessment contained no evidence to demonstrate the model's 'fitness for purpose' other than a table entitled '**Review of Model Validation**' which did not contain validation counts for 11 of the 12 villages under assessment.

Due to some unlikely model outputs, the 2018 Local Model Validation Report Addendum (LMVR Addendum) and appendices were obtained from Oxfordshire County Council through a Freedom of Information request in 2022.

The faults in the model-building and validation evidence were raised with OCC Highways and Tetra Tech in October 2022 and in subsequent correspondence, but were not resolved. OCC acknowledged that the consultation should have contained the underlying evidence to support the modelling but advised that its role was as a consultee in the process.

The faults were raised with Cherwell District Council in October 2024, with a request that future planning applications include the 2018 BTM LMVR Addendum and supporting data as it would show that the robustness of the model cannot be substantiated. Cherwell's reply in March 2025 referred responsibility back to OCC and gave no commitment to require this evidence in future consultations. **The underlying deficiencies in the model therefore persist without public scrutiny.**

This is now of particular importance because the BTM, incorporating the Heyford Park Update and forecasts derived from it, continue to be relied upon for major development proposals affecting the local road network around Heyford Park.

This note sets out the deficiencies with direct reference to the **2018 Local Model Validation Report Addendum** and **Government Transport Analysis Guidance requirements (WebTAG)**.

Compliance with WebTAG is an express requirement of the Bicester Transport Model. The 2017 LMVR (1.1.4) states that the previous model was replaced because it '*did not comply with WebTAG guidance for transport models which is required in order to develop major schemes.'*

3. Use of the Model for a Purpose for which Fitness was not Demonstrated

WebTAG requires clarity about the purposes for which a model can be used. It requires an LMVR to include the proposed uses of the model, including the scenarios to be forecast and interventions to be tested (Webtag M3-1, paras 2.2.7, 10.1.4; Appendix F).

The LMVR Addendum (1.1.6) states that the model update was required to evaluate the impact of the proposed Heyford Park development as part of the Middleton Stoney Study, and to provide a more suitable base for option testing within the Upper Heyford/Middleton Stoney area. **However, it was subsequently used to assess development impacts across the rural roads and villages surrounding Heyford Park. The LMVR does not demonstrate that the updated model was 'fit for purpose' for this wider application.**

4. Failure to Report Validation of the Prior Trip Matrices

WebTAG M3.1, para 8.2.1 states '*It is important that the need for either matrix estimation or other adjustments to the prior trip matrices is clearly established before any such processes are carried out.* ***The prior trip matrices should therefore be validated by comparing total screenline and cordon modelled flows and counts by vehicle type and time period*'.**

No validation of the prior trip matrices against screenline and cordon counts is reported in the 2018 LMVR Addendum.

Without the prescribed prior-matrix validation, it is not possible to establish how well the original matrices reproduced observed traffic or the extent and geographical pattern of any deficiencies revealed by the required screenline and cordon comparisons. This is particularly important because the LMVR Addendum (para 4.2.1) states that '*model calibration could not be achieved directly using the synthetic based matrices*' and substantial changes were subsequently made through matrix estimation.

The failure to report the prescribed prior matrix validation and comparisons does not accord with WebTAG (M3.1, para 8.2.1).

5. Failure to meet WebTAG Requirements for Matrix Estimation

Matrix estimation adjusts the prior trip matrices so that, when assigned to the network, the resulting flows more closely match observed counts.

Despite the absence of the prior matrix validation, the LMVR Addendum proceeded to matrix estimation. The resulting changes failed multiple WebTAG criteria:

- Zonal cell values do not generally meet the criteria for any vehicle class or peak period
- Zone trip ends do not generally meet the criteria for any vehicle class or peak period
- Trip length distribution criteria are not met in some cases
- Sector to sector matrix changes widely and substantially exceed the 5% limit, in some cases reaching between **30-75%**

The Addendum (4.2.14) seeks to justify these significant and widespread failures as follows:

'*It is widely accepted that the strict WebTAG criteria thresholds are intrinsically hard to achieve with an 'absolute' model such as this one. However, the absolute form of the model design is required to forecast the very high growth for Bicester.* ***The Matrix Estimation 2 statistics are a trade off and so are considered acceptable in this case*'.**

WebTAG provides no exemption from these thresholds simply because the model is absolute or the criteria are difficult to achieve. On the contrary, WebTAG expressly requires that the limits set out in Table 5 should be respected (even where validation criteria are difficult to achieve in models of large congested areas), and that all exceedances should be examined for their importance rather than simply accepted.

WebTAG M3-1 sets out the following requirements:

'*The changes brought about by matrix estimation should* ***not*** *be significant*' (para 8.3.14)

'*All exceedances of these criteria should be examined and assessed for their importance for the accuracy of the matrices in the fully modelled area or the area of influence of the scheme being assessed. Where the exceedances are important and statistically significant, the development of the prior matrix should be reconsidered. Where they are not considered important, the reasons should be documented in the LMVR*'. (para 8.3.15)

'In some models, particularly models of large congested areas, it may be difficult to achieve the link flow and journey time validation acceptability guidelines as set out earlier in Table 2 and Table 3 without matrix estimation bringing about changes greater than the limits shown in Table 5. ***In these cases, the limits set out in Table 5 should be respected, the impacts of matrix estimation should be reduced so that they do not become significant, and a lower standard of validation reported. If issues in the process of creating the prior matrices are identified then these should be rectified before running through the model calibration and validation process again'*** (para 8.3.16)

The LMVR Addendum does not demonstrate that these requirements were followed. In particular it does not:

- Examine all exceedances for their importance to matrix accuracy in the area around Heyford Park
- Reconsider the prior matrices where exceedances are important and statistically significant
- Document the reasons why exceedances are not considered important.
- Where validation criteria are difficult to achieve, reduce the impacts of matrix estimation so that they do not become significant, and report a lower standard of validation.

Instead, the very significant and widespread changes produced by matrix estimation were retained and accepted as a 'trade off'.

The extent of these changes is particularly important because future forecasts rely on the integrity of the base matrices. Matrix estimation should not introduce significant changes capable of distorting the underlying pattern of demand on which future forecasts depend. Compliance with WebTAG's matrix-estimation requirements is therefore fundamental to the reliability of those forecasts.

The LMVR Addendum does not demonstrate that robust conclusions can be drawn from the model outputs, as required by WebTAG's fitness for purpose test. (M3-1, para 3.4.1)

6. A. Failure to Demonstrate Reliable Origin/Destination Patterns

The LMVR Addendum seeks to justify the failures to meet WebTAG criteria in paras 4.2.13-4.2.16 of the 2018 LMVR Addendum by reference to:

- Use of synthetic matrices
- Use of trip length distributions from the 2011 Census data which is unlikely to fully reflect local conditions
- Potential under-estimation of shorter distance trips by private vehicle modes
- Estimation of internal to internal LGV and HGV movements where observed data were limited

These justifications are repeated verbatim from the 2017 BTM LMVR. It is questionable whether the latter two weaknesses in the prior matrices would be identical in the area around

Heyford Park. **The Addendum does not provide a Heyford-specific assessment of their significance.**

More fundamentally, the Addendum acknowledges limited observed origin/destination data, while relying on observed RSI data from a cordon around Bicester to support its assertion that matrix estimation produced the 'correct sector to sector movements'. That data provides observed O/D evidence only for movements captured at the Bicester cordon. It does not provide equivalent observed O/D evidence for movements between Heyford Park, the surrounding villages and the A4260 which do not cross that cordon.

Weaknesses in the prior matrices do not justify failures to meet matrix estimation criteria.

The Addendum needed to demonstrate that these acknowledged limitations did not materially affect the representation of origins, destinations and traffic distribution around Heyford Park. This cannot be established merely by achieving a good match to observed counts because different underlying trip patterns can produce similar aggregate traffic flows.

It has therefore not been demonstrated that the resulting matrices reliably represent the origins, destinations and distribution of traffic around Heyford Park.

B. Under-Representation of Local Traffic Movements

The LMVR Addendum (para 3.8.4) identifies two deficiencies in the representation of traffic at the western extent of the model:

- Significant underestimation of through trips on the A4260 due to absent source data
- Likely under-representation of turning movements near to the limit of the coding area due to limited or absent O/D data

Additional trips were included in the fixed trip matrices to represent through traffic on the A4260, but the matrices were not similarly adjusted for less strategic 'external to external' movements on the extents of the network. The Addendum states, for example, that turning movements at junction 18 (A4260/B4027) are likely to be low in the model.

This raises an important issue for the representation of traffic on the rural road network between the A4260 and Heyford Park. The network includes Somerton Road, the B4030 and the A4095 and the villages that they pass through - Upper Heyford, Somerton, North Aston, The Bartons, Lower Heyford, Caulcott and Kirtlington. These are sensitive rural roads which already carry through traffic as well as traffic to the major strategic site at Heyford Park - some are narrow, contain single lane historic bridges, pass through conservation areas and affect nationally important heritage assets. The sensitivity of the network is illustrated by the current proposal for a station to serve 9,000 homes on the B4030 beside a single lane medieval bridge. **Reliable representation of traffic volumes and route choice here is therefore vital.**

The Addendum does not demonstrate how the acknowledged lack of O/D source data at the western extent of the study area affects the representation and distribution of traffic entering the Heyford Park area from the west. The Addendum simply asserts that the under-representation '*will not detrimentally impact the Heyford Park Assessment'*. **It does not**

demonstrate that the missing or under represented movements were immaterial to traffic volumes and route choice. Given the acknowledged lack of O/D data, that conclusion required evidence rather than assumption.

7. Inadequate Trip Matrix Validation

The LMVR Addendum concludes that '*the post-estimation matrices are fit for purpose provided the cordon calibration meets WebTAG criteria'*. However, it then assesses the matrices using counts forming a tight cordon around Bicester for calibration and a north/south screenline through the centre of Bicester for independent validation.

Clearly, these tests focused on Bicester cannot demonstrate the quality of the trip matrices for traffic movements around Heyford Park. No cordon or independent screenline validation is reported in the Heyford Park area, despite the update model's specific use to assess the impact of major development at Heyford Park on the surrounding area.

WebTAG requires independent validation screenlines to be spread across the fully modelled area. It also states that, for a specific intervention, '*it will be natural to pay greater attention to validation quality in the vicinity of the interventions*'. (M3-1, para 4.3.1 and 3.1.2). This is directly relevant to Heyford Park, where the update model was specifically used to assess the traffic impacts of major development at Heyford Park.

It has therefore not been demonstrated that the post-estimation matrices are fit for their use in the Heyford Park area.

Taken together the matrix evidence show a clear progression:

- **The reliability of the prior matrices around Heyford Park was not demonstrated before matrix estimation was undertaken.**
- **Matrix estimation then materially altered those matrices beyond multiple WebTAG criteria limits, without demonstrating that those changes were acceptable within Heyford Park's area of influence.**
- **The resulting post-estimation matrices were then calibrated and validated using Bicester-focused tests which do not demonstrate their reliability around Heyford Park.**

8. Inadequate Data for Highway Assignment Calibration

Calibration is the process of adjusting the model so that its results match observed traffic conditions

Junction numbers in this section refer to those used in the Heyford Park Masterplan Assessment (18/00825/hybrid).

Turn count calibration (Appendix D)
A turn is a vehicle movement through a junction

- Out of date counts at access junctions to the Heyford Park site. Junctions 1, 10 and 11 were surveyed in 2013 and junction 5 in 2014 (Appendix A), despite a base year of 2016. These are access junctions to a major strategic site, which underwent

substantial development during this period. The LMVR therefore provides no evidence that these counts represent base year traffic conditions.
- No counts at B4030/Portway junction (J12) or Somerton Rd/Water St/Ardley Rd junction
- **No observed or modelled counts for any vehicle class for the separate inter-peak assignment**

Link count calibration (Appendix E)
A link is a section of road between junctions
The data is inherited from the 2017 BTM and confined to the area east of Heyford Park, principally Bicester and the M40 junctions. No link counts were undertaken around Heyford Park for the Heyford Park Model Update.

Inadequate Data for Highway Assignment Validation

Validation is the process of testing the calibrated model against independent observed traffic data

Total vehicle link flow validation (Appendix F)
A link is a section of road between junctions

- Validation coverage is very limited on the local road network to the north, south and west of Heyford Park: only one road link to the north (Ardley Rd), one link to the west (B4030) and two to the south of Heyford Park (A4095).
- No validation counts were undertaken from the Heyford Park site entrance northbound through Upper Heyford; or from the site entrance southbound on Station Road (key links)
- No validation counts on links through the villages of Upper Heyford, Somerton, North Aston, Caulcott, Kirtlington, the Bartons, Fritwell, Duns Tew and Bucknell despite the model's use to specifically assess impact on these villages.
- No validation counts on links from the 3 junctions off the A4260 to Heyford Park via North Aston, Lower Heyford and Kirtlington. It is necessary to assess the attractiveness of these competing routes in order to produce realistic route assignment.
- No validation counts from the B4030 to the A4260 via Rousham.
- **The LMVR does not clarify what ATC validation counts were used from the annual dataset. It does not identify the period over which the ATC flows were averaged or demonstrate that those flows are representative of neutral traffic conditions.**

Turn count validation (Appendix G)
A turn is a vehicle movement through a junction

- This data is inherited from the 2017 BTM and confined to the area around Bicester and the M40 junctions.
- Validation counts are absent for almost all the junctions within the Heyford Park study area, i.e. junctions 3, 4a, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19, 20 and 21. The only exceptions are Junction 12 (Portway/B4030) but in 2014 and Junction 18 which was only partially counted. (Appendix A).

The outdated calibration data and sparse independent validation mean that the model has not been adequately tested in the area in which it is being used.

Traffic from the major strategic site at Heyford Park must travel through the surrounding rural road network before it reaches the A4260 and destinations further west. This network includes constrained rural roads, single lane historic bridges, conservation area villages and nationally important heritage assets that are particularly sensitive to changes in traffic.

Critically, validation is largely absent on the roads which are closest to Heyford Park. They are the roads that development traffic must first use and are therefore particularly exposed to the impacts of further development. Their physical constraints and sensitive environmental and heritage settings make reliable modelling of these roads particularly important.

The reliability of the model on these roads has not been adequately demonstrated. This does not accord with WebTAG's test of fitness for purpose (M3-1, para 3.4.1).

9. Incorrect Representation of HGV Movements

The reliability of estimated HGV movements is particularly important around Heyford Park because the historic villages are inherently unsuitable for HGV traffic. Narrow roads, absent or narrow pavements, residential buildings directly abutting roads and single lane bridges result in disproportionate impacts from HGVs in terms of safety, congestion, residential amenity, as well as on nationally important heritage assets and village conservation areas.

Notably, **the 2016 base model assigns no HGVs through Lower Heyford** against calibration counts of 27 HGVs in AM peak and 9 HGVs in PM peak. (Junction 13, Appendix D).

This conflicts with an OCC traffic survey only months later in **March 2017** which recorded an average **682 HGVs per day through Lower Heyford** (OGV1 and OGV2, 5 day average). For the corresponding periods in Appendix D, the Monday to Thursday average would be 74 HGVs in AM peak and 43 HGVs in PM peak. This also shows a substantial difference from the HGV calibration counts.

The discrepancy is material because the village is on a direct route to the Heyford Park site entrance (1.5km) as well as on an east/west route to Bicester. **Where a route carries substantial background HGV traffic but the base model assigns none, the model cannot reliably establish the future baseline against which the impacts of Heyford Park or other major development can be assessed.** This concern is heightened by evidence of previous non-compliance with HGV routing agreements at Heyford Park and the absence of effective enforcement.

No independent validation of assigned HGV or LGV flows is reported in the Heyford Park area.
Their absence does not accord with WebTAG. M3.1 para 9.3.1 requires the LMVR Addendum to include evidence of validation by vehicle type and time period and states that, for goods vehicles, flows on short screenlines should be compared unless very accurate counts have been obtained.

No interpeak calibration counts for vehicles of any class are reported, including HGVs and LGVs, leaving their interpeak turning movements untested through the calibration process.

The reliability of HGV representation on the local road network has therefore not been demonstrated. The LMVR does not demonstrate that the HGV matrix is representative around Heyford Park and assigned flows have not been independently validated in this area. This does not accord with WebTAG's test of fitness (M3-1, 3.4.1).

It has also not been demonstrated that the model can provide a robust basis for assessing the associated environmental and heritage impacts.

10. Incomplete Journey Time Validation

Journey time routes are truncated before reaching the A4260 and, crucially, exclude the single-lane bridges through Lower Heyford and Somerton on the only two westbound routes from Heyford Park. These river crossings are major network constraints**. Their omission leaves crucial sections of the western road network unvalidated. The reliability of modelled journey times, congestion and route assignment in this area has therefore not been demonstrated.**

This does not accord with WebTAG Unit 3.1, para 4.4.3 which states that journey time validation routes should:

- Cover as wide a range of route types as possible
- Cover the fully modelled area as evenly as possible
- Include routes expected to be affected by the proposed development
- Where environmental impacts are material, assess journey times and speeds at a finer link level.

The bridge crossings engage each of these criteria. Without validation through these constraints, it has not been demonstrated that the model reliably assigns and reassigns development traffic across the road network.

These are not merely network constraints. Both bridges are close to Heyford Park and lie on **the only direct roads west from the Heyford Park site**. The failure to account for and validate the bridges as critical constraints affects the assessment of the sustainability of Heyford Park as a location for further major growth. **Congestion on the B4030 before the single lane bridge would prohibit the use of Heyford Station to serve 9,000 homes at Heyford Park**.

Moreover, the omission of the bridges from journey time validation is also material to heritage and environmental assessment. Heyford Bridge is medieval, Grade II* and forms the principal view for Grade I Rousham; Somerton's small hump-backed bridge contributes to its conservation area and has a weight restriction. Both bridges are in areas susceptible to flooding and have been overtopped by flood water within the last five years.

11. Failure to Demonstrate Adequate Zoning and Trip Loading Arrangements

The LMVR Addendum (para 3.4.1) states that the zoning system '*for the Heyford Park area*' was updated to reflect 2016 development and refers to figure 3. However, figure 3 shows

only the zones within Heyford Park. The Addendum does not show the zoning or centroid connectors across the surrounding area or how trips are loaded onto the local road network.

The 2017 LMVR states that zones become progressively less detailed away from Bicester. The 2018 Addendum does not demonstrate that these inherited arrangements were adequate for the more detailed assessment around Heyford Park. WebTAG warns that large zones can distort nearby flows and that connector location is often critical to realistic assignment results (M3-1, para 2.3.9 and 2.4.11).

12. Conclusion

The 2018 LMVR Addendum and appendices reveal substantial deficiencies in the Heyford Park model base, including deficiencies in the trip matrices, inadequate calibration and particularly validation data, incorrect representation of HGV movements and incomplete journey time validation.

WebTAG (M3.1, para 3.4.1) identifies the fundamental test of fitness for purpose as whether robust conclusions can be drawn from the model outputs.

Taken together, the deficiencies identified in the model building and validation evidence mean that the LMVR Addendum does not demonstrate that robust conclusions can be drawn from the model outputs when assessing development impacts on the rural road network around Heyford Park. WebTAG's fundamental test of fitness for purpose has therefore not been demonstrated (M3-1, para 3.4.1).

This report has been compiled with reference to the following documents:

Local Model Validation Report for the BTM TT099211-001 Issue 2 with appendices
Addendum to the LMVR BTM Heyford Park Update RT099211-5-001 Issue 3 with:
Appendix A junction plan
Appendix C cordon and screenline data
Appendix D turn count calibration
Appendix E link flow calibration
Appendix F link flow validation
Appendix G turn count validation
Matrix Estimation 2 Analysis
Figure 1 journey time routes; Figure 2 study area; Figure 3 Zones; Figure 4 screenline/cordon
MHCLG '*Travel Plans, Transport Assessments and Statements*', Planning Practice Guidance
Department for Transport, *Transport Analysis Guidance (WebTAG*)
OCC Traffic Survey Lower Heyford March 2017
Cherwell Local Plan Review 2042 ED10 BTM Forecasting and Modelling Report
Cherwell Local Plan Review 2042 ED11 BTM Model Review
Transport Assessments for refs: 25/02190/hybrid; OxSRFI DCO TR050008; ref: 25/03343/OUT; 25/02232/OUT; 21/03266/F, 21/03267/OUT, 21/03268/OUT and 21/04275/OUT

20 August 2026

Appendix B

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COMPARISON OF OBSERVED AND FORECAST COUNTS ON B4030 THROUGH LOWER HEYFORD

YELLOW = forecast below at least one observed count

	OBSERVED COUNTS				MODEL FORECASTS			
Traffic measure	2017 OCC / LHPC 6–10 Mar	2018 OCC / LHPC 5–9 Nov	2019 OCC / LHPC 20–26 Jun	2023 Dorchester 5 Oct	2026 Baseline	2029 Reference	2045 Reference	2045 Ref. + development
AM PEAK								
Westbound	270	334	317	346	175	205	215	223
Eastbound	263	296	259	277	308	306	302	342
TOTAL	**533**	**630**	**573**	**623**	483	511	517	565
PM PEAK								
Westbound	261	293	343	279	239	253	304	350
Eastbound	255	277	254	242	261	267	293	418
TOTAL	**516**	**570**	**597**	**521**	500	520	597	768

OBSERVED COUNTS: 2017, 2018 and 2019 OCC traffic surveys for Lower Heyford PC, 2023 counts from revised TA for Heyford Park application 25/02190/HYBRID (Appendix P P10, Appendix K)

MODEL FORECASTS: from revised TA for Heyford Park application 25/02190/HYBRID Appendix R: Traffic Flow Diagrams

Appendix C

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[redacted]

Network Rail
Freedom of Information
The Quadrant
Elder Gate
Milton Keynes
MK9 1EN

[redacted]

7 October 2022

[redacted]

Information request
Reference number: FOI2022/01118

Thank you for your email of 8 September 2022, in which you requested the following information:

> *Can you please let me have the following information regarding loading gauge:*
>
> *Page 98 of the Network Rail publication "Delivering a better railway for a better Britain: Route Specifications 2021 North West and Central (NW&C) region" states that the gauge of the rail line operated by Chiltern Railways between London Marylebone and Aynho Junction is currently classified as W6 and W7.*
>
> *On the same page, it is stated that "There are aspirations in the medium to longer term to gauge clear the route from Neasden to Aynho Junction via High Wycombe, to allow W9 and possibly W10 traffic."*
>
> ***Can you please specify the principal locations, and the nature of these locations (eg bridge, tunnel, etc), that currently restrict the gauge to W6 and W7 between Neasden and Aynho Junction, and outline the nature of works needed to achieve, at a minimum, W8 gauge clearance.***
>
> *If this is a long list, I would be content with a summary of how many locations there are and how many of them require minor or major works to achieve W8 gauge, or better.*

I have processed your request under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA). I can confirm that we hold some of the information requested, please see the attached spreadsheet labelled 'FOI NAJ1-3 Freight'.

The spreadsheet contains a list of the structures between Neasden and Aynho Junction which currently do not support a gauge clearing of W8/9/10.

We do not hold recorded information for the second part of your request. To determine the work required to increase the gauge clearance along this route, we would need to conduct a full feasibility study into each structure which we have not completed.

To assist you, based on their professional knowledge the Principal Route Engineer has provided a basic overview of the expected level of intervention that would be required for each structure to increase the gauge clearance.

In the commentary where it states 'Change in Clearance Category', this is where the new freight gauge would change the current clearance category for the worse and would drive an increased maintenance activity.

The location of the structures are listed by their Engineers Line Reference (ELR), Line Code and Mileage. The locations for these can be found online here:

[redacted]

If you have any enquiries about this response, please contact me in the first instance at FOI@networkrail.co.uk. Details of your appeal rights are below.

Please remember to quote the reference number at the top of this letter in all future communications.

Yours sincerely

[redacted]

You are encouraged to use and re-use the information made available in this response freely and flexibly, with only a few conditions. These are set out in the Open Government Licence for public sector information. For further information please visit our website.

Appeal rights

If you are unhappy with the way your request has been handled and wish to make a complaint or request a review of our decision, please write to the Compliance and Appeals team at Network Rail, Freedom of Information, The Quadrant, Elder Gate, Milton Keynes, MK9 1EN, or by email at [redacted] Your request must be submitted within 40 working days of receipt of this letter.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner (ICO) can be contacted at Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF or you can contact the ICO through the 'Make a Complaint' section of their website on this link: [redacted]

The relevant section to select will be "Official or Public Information".

W8

Reporting Group	Structure Sub Type	Name	ELR	Line Code	Milleage	Survey Date	
Overbridges	Arched Overbridge	Arched Overbridge 6 Miles 31 Chains	NAJ1	2100	6m 33ch	06/10/20	Track lower/slab
Overbridges	Arched Overbridge	Woodsiding Bridge No.4	NAJ3	1100	2m 0ch	06/10/20	Change in Clearance category
Tunnels	Tunnel	South Harrow Tunnel Bridge No.5	NAJ1	1100	2m 22ch	06/10/20	Change in Clearance category
Tunnels	Tunnel	South Harrow Tunnel Bridge No.5	NAJ1	2100	2m 23ch	06/10/20	Track lower/slab
Tunnels	Tunnel	Ardley Tunnel 15 Miles 13 Chains	NAJ3	1100	15m 12ch	06/10/20	Track lower/slab

W9

Reporting Group	Structure Sub Type	Name	ELR	Line Code	Milleage	Survey Date	
Overbridges	Intersection	Intersects Lt Lines Bridge No.5A	NAJ1	1100	2m 22ch	06/10/20	Track lower/ bridge recon
Overbridges	Arched Overbridge	Arched Overbridge 6 Miles 31 Chains	NAJ1	2100	6m 33ch	06/10/20	Track lower/ bridge recon
Tunnels	Tunnel	South Harrow Tunnel Bridge No.5	NAJ1	1100	2m 22ch	06/10/20	Track lower/slab
Tunnels	Tunnel	South Harrow Tunnel Bridge No.5	NAJ1	2100	2m 23ch	06/10/20	Track lower/slab
Overbridges	Arched Overbridge	Woodsiding Bridge No.4	NAJ3	1100	2m 0ch	06/10/20	Track lower/ bridge recon
Overbridges	Arched Overbridge	Overbridge Bridge No.46	NAJ3	2100	14m 39ch	10/04/12	Track lower/ bridge recon
Overbridges	Arched Overbridge	Overbridge Bridge No.46	NAJ3	1100	14m 39ch	19/04/16	Track lower/ bridge recon
Overbridges	Arched Overbridge	Hill House Farm Bridge No.49	NAJ3	1100	15m 69ch	19/04/16	Track lower/ bridge recon
Tunnels	Tunnel	Ardley Tunnel 15 Miles 13 Chains	NAJ3	2100	15m 11ch	11/09/21	Track lower/slab
Tunnels	Tunnel	Ardley Tunnel 15 Miles 13 Chains	NAJ3	1100	15m 12ch	06/10/20	Track lower/slab

W10

Reporting Group	Structure Sub Type	Name	ELR	Line Code	Milleage	Survey Date	
Awnings	Awning	West Ruislip Station Up Passenger Loop Platform Awning	NAJ2	1504	1m 72ch	10/04/12	Change in Clearance category
Awnings	Awning	Denham Station Up Platform Awning	NAJ2	1100	4m 49ch	20/04/16	Change in Clearance category
Awnings	Awning	Gerrards Cross Station Down Platform Awning	NAJ2	2100	7m 19ch	21/04/16	Change in Clearance category
Awnings	Awning	High Wycombe Station Up Platform Awning	NAJ2	1100	16m 21ch	06/10/20	Works to Awning
Awnings	Awning	High Wycombe Station Down Platform Awning	NAJ2	2100	16m 28ch	21/04/16	Works to Awning
Overbridges	Intersection	Intersection Bridge No.1A	NAJ1	2200	0m 36ch	08/07/10	Track lower/ bridge recon
Overbridges	Intersection	Intersects Lt Lines Bridge No.5A	NAJ1	1100	2m 22ch	06/10/20	Track lower/ bridge recon
Overbridges	Arched Overbridge	Arched Overbridge 6 Miles 31 Chains	NAJ1	2100	6m 33ch	06/10/20	Track lower/ bridge recon
Overbridges	Arched Overbridge	Down Line Under Road Bridge No.90	NAJ2	2100	22m 33ch	21/04/16	Change in Clearance category
Overbridges	Arched Overbridge	Upper Icknield Way Bridge No.94	NAJ2	1100	23m 44ch	20/04/16	Change in Clearance category
Overbridges	Arched Overbridge	Chearsley Road Bridge No.119	NAJ2	2100	31m 60ch	21/04/16	Change in Clearance category
Overbridges	Arched Overbridge	Chearsley Road Bridge No.119	NAJ2	1100	31m 61ch	19/04/16	Change in Clearance category
Overbridges	Arched Overbridge	Accommodation Bridge No.3	NAJ3	2100	1m 42ch	21/04/16	Change in Clearance category
Overbridges	Arched Overbridge	Accommodation Bridge No.3	NAJ3	1100	1m 43ch	19/04/16	Change in Clearance category
Overbridges	Arched Overbridge	Woodsiding Bridge No.4	NAJ3	1100	2m 0ch	06/10/20	Track lower/ bridge recon
Overbridges	Arched Overbridge	Woodsiding Bridge No.4	NAJ3	2100	2m 1ch	21/04/16	Track lower/ bridge recon
Overbridges	Arched Overbridge	Ludgershall Bridge No.10	NAJ3	2100	3m 77ch	21/04/16	Change in Clearance category
Overbridges	Arched Overbridge	Ludgershall Bridge No.10	NAJ3	1100	3m 77ch	19/04/16	Change in Clearance category
Overbridges	Arched Overbridge	Piddington Bridge No.14	NAJ3	2100	5m 1ch	21/04/16	Change in Clearance category
Overbridges	Arched Overbridge	Piddington Bridge No.14	NAJ3	1100	5m 2ch	19/04/16	Change in Clearance category
Overbridges	Arched Overbridge	Occupation Bridge No.20	NAJ3	2100	6m 72ch	21/04/16	Change in Clearance category
Overbridges	Arched Overbridge	Occupation Bridge No.20	NAJ3	1100	6m 73ch	19/04/16	Change in Clearance category
Overbridges	Arched Overbridge	Overbridge Bridge No.46	NAJ3	2100	14m 39ch	10/04/12	Track lower/ bridge recon
Overbridges	Arched Overbridge	Overbridge Bridge No.46	NAJ3	1100	14m 39ch	19/04/16	Track lower/ bridge recon
Overbridges	Arched Overbridge	Hill House Farm Bridge No.49	NAJ3	2100	15m 69ch	10/04/12	Track lower/ bridge recon
Overbridges	Arched Overbridge	Hill House Farm Bridge No.49	NAJ3	1100	15m 69ch	19/04/16	Track lower/ bridge recon
Tunnels	Tunnel	South Harrow Tunnel Bridge No.5	NAJ1	1100	2m 22ch	06/10/20	Track lower/slab
Tunnels	Tunnel	South Harrow Tunnel Bridge No.5	NAJ1	2100	2m 23ch	06/10/20	Track lower/slab
Tunnels	Tunnel	Whitehouse Tunnel 13 Miles 12 Chains	NAJ2	2100	13m 12ch	21/04/16	Change in Clearance category
Tunnels	Tunnel	Ardley Tunnel 15 Miles 13 Chains	NAJ3	2100	15m 11ch	11/09/21	Track lower/slab
Tunnels	Tunnel	Ardley Tunnel 15 Miles 13 Chains	NAJ3	1100	15m 12ch	06/10/20	Track lower/slab

Appendix D

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Questions received fro[redacted]n behalf of Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood Plans Forum, June 2026

Questions shown in *italics*, followed by Applicant responses:

1. *Is there any further update to the statement (sent in March 2025) regarding discussions with Network Rail and/or Chiltern Railways regarding the proposed rail link?*

   The Applicant has worked on an ongoing basis with Network Rail (NR) regarding the proposed rail infrastructure including connections to the Chiltern Main Line since 2019.

   A comprehensive statement of common ground was signed between the Applicant and NR recently, and will be submitted to the Examination process once it begins. That Statement confirms NR's positive position regarding the deliverability of the proposed rail infrastructure, and provides reassurances regarding the role NR will play in the technical processes required to implement the works which form part of the OxSRFI scheme, if approved.

   Discussions have been held with Chiltern Railways to appraise the train operator of the SRFI proposals, including the proposed Public Transport Strategy (as agreed with the Transport Working Group). Chiltern Railways responded to the statutory consultation process on the DCO proposals in Autumn 2025.

2. *Regarding the proposed 9,600 employees likely to be working at Ardley, can you please explain the figures on the attached screenshot from the OXRSFI website. The percentages given only add up to 51%. Where are the remaining 49%? What does the total split look like?*

   An assessment of the estimated employment generated, and information about the potential range of roles is set out in further detail in the socio-economic chapter of the ES – this can be found here: https://nsip-documents.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/published-documents/TR050008-000367-Document%206.12%20-%20ES%20Chapter%2012%20Socio-Economics%20-%20including%20Health.pdf.

   In particular, see Section 5 of the ES Chapter which includes an indication of the breakdown of job roles which the proposed Development might be expected to produce based on evidence from across the wider sector. In summary, the type of roles seen generally includes:

   - Office: 25%
   - Warehouse: 49%

- Drivers: 8%
- Managerial roles: 12%
- Other: 6%

The research from which these figures are derived also suggests that full-time roles typically equate to around 78%, with the remaining 22% as part-time roles. Clearly these figures are indicative, but are hopefully of more use than the abbreviated figures on the website.

The general trend of seeing a more diverse mix of roles and skills requirements with a higher proportion of more office based, technical and higher-skilled roles in the distribution and logistics sector has been reported by numerous sources and commentators. For example, the British Property Federation report found here contains some good analysis: https://realestateuk.org/media/opglcplj/levelling-up-the-logic-of-logistics-bpf-report.pdf

3. *Are there any clients in the pipeline taking an interest in leasing warehouse space from ORL, who might they be and what business sector do they operate in?*

   Yes, there has already been some market interest in the potential for this site to deliver high-quality rail-served new logistics buildings. There have been initial high-level conversations with more than one major distribution or logistics related occupier who may have a requirement for a building on this site, if approved. Those conversations are naturally confidential at this stage, and given we remain at an early stage in the Examination and determination process for the scheme (and several years from any building being available), it would be unusual for an interested occupier to commit to the site now. But we expect dialogue with prospective occupiers to continue throughout the Examination period and beyond.

4. *Given the high potential for the nearby Baynards Green Warehouse projects to be approved on appeal in September, and knowing that ORL objected to these schemes, does ORL consider that these projects might have an impact on their business opportunities?*

   The Applicant's position remains as stated in our DCO Application with regard to the strength and scale of need for the OxSRFI scheme and the significant opportunity it represents to deliver the mode shift of freight envisaged by national policy, as well as delivering wider economic and environmental benefits.

5. *If there was a client who might consider using the facility for AI Data Centre operations, would ORL consider that a viable application on the site?*

   The DCO as submitted would not authorise AI Data Centres as a compliant use of this site which is proposed to deliver distribution warehousing alongside the rail freight terminal.

Appendix E

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This is the Oxford to Cambridge Growth Corridor

Invest in a world-leading innovation hub



GREAT
BRITAIN & NORTHERN IRELAND

The Oxford to Cambridge Growth Corridor

This is one of the UK's strongest long-term investment opportunities, combining world-leading research, deep talent pools and places where companies can start, grow and scale - at the heart of the Golden Triangle, with direct links to London and global markets.

This prospectus is for investors, developers and businesses looking to invest in, or locate within, the Corridor.

Navigate to your opportunity:

Setting up, growing or relocating your business → p.11

Firms choose the Corridor for its research base, specialist talent and connectivity — particularly for R&D and headquarters functions.

Investing in sites and infrastructure → p.15

Science parks, research campuses and commercial centres In strong, sustained demand — underpinned by East West Rail and major national infrastructure investment.

Investing in innovative growth companies → p.20

A continuous flow of IP-rich spin-outs and fast-growing companies in life sciences, AI and clean tech, with strong scale-up potential.

In this prospectus:

The Chancellor's Foreword (p. 2)

Why invest in the Corridor (p. 3)

Why invest in the UK (p. 4 - 6)

Sectors and enabling strengths (p. 8 - 10)

Opportunities for occupiers(p. 11 – 15)

Opportunities for capital investment (p. 16 - 19)

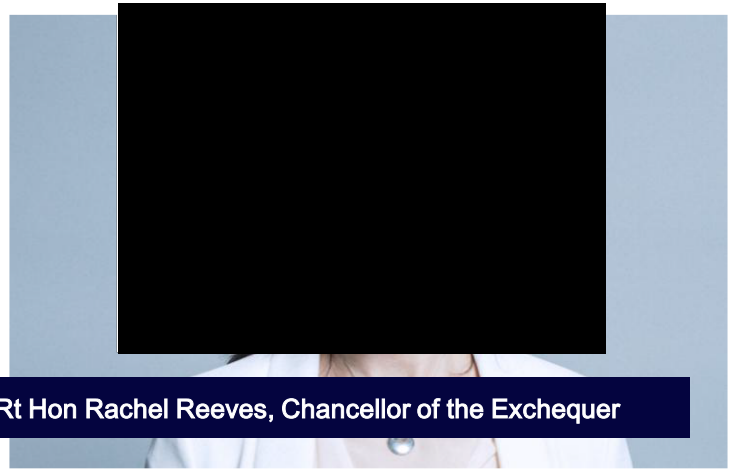
Innovation, scale-up and venture (p.20-21)

How to engage (p. 22)



Cambridge Biomedical Campus

Foreword



Rt Hon Rachel Reeves, Chancellor of the Exchequer

Economic growth is the number one mission of this government and remains at the heart of all we do. The Oxford to Cambridge Growth Corridor is a key pillar of this mission and offers huge potential for the UK. It is Europe's answer to Silicon Valley.

The Government is committed to providing the foundation for sustainable future growth, and to working in partnership with local government, the private sector, and academia to achieve our shared vision for the region. We are accelerating delivery, increasing certainty for investors, and unlocking sites that can be built on now. This is not just ambition; it is action.

The Corridor is already home to many unique strengths. It is a vibrant and innovative hub for globally renowned science and technology firms and internationally successful start-ups, that contribute to and benefit from the rich ecosystem of talent and ambition in the region.

It is anchored by two of the world's best universities, producing world-class research and generating hundreds of commercially successful spin-outs[1].

And the Government is committed to providing a strong base to facilitate sustainable future growth. We have delivered record funding for transport, housing, and infrastructure into the region, unlocking opportunities for new investors and businesses to join this ecosystem and grow here.

Deepening the links between Oxford and Cambridge, Milton Keynes, Bedford and beyond with significant investment into East West Rail, will ultimately connect a region of 3.5 million people[2] – highly skilled, highly employable, and highly mobile. Investors and businesses alike can seize the opportunity to be part of the Golden Triangle, bringing together the Corridor and London as one of the world's top innovation clusters.

The Oxford to Cambridge Growth Corridor is full of opportunities at the cutting edge of all that makes the UK an exciting place to invest, as you will see in this prospectus. With a rich tradition of academic research and expertise, and a track record of creativity and innovation, it sits at the intersection of our history and our future. I look forward to working with you as we continue to build that future together.

OFFICIAL

Why invest in the UK?

Government actions to improve investability and reduce friction

Faster delivery and lower friction

Faster consenting process for critical infrastructure, ensuring flexibility to reduce delays and uncertainty[1]

Expedited approval process for clean energy projects, halving average statutory consultation period[2]

Infrastructure Pipeline giving long-term certainty across **780 projects worth £530 billion over 10 years**[3]

25% Reduction of administrative costs of regulation by 2029[4]

Public backing and talent access

National Wealth Fund – £27.8 billion Policy Bank: equity, debt and guarantee investment[5]

Innovate UK: grants, loans, pre-procurement, and tailored support[6]

British Business Bank – £25.6 billion Economic Development Bank[7]

2025 Immigration White Paper – expanding visa route eligibility, fast-tracking global top talent to the UK[8] via the **Global Talent Visa / High Potential Individual (HPI) Visa / Skilled Worker Visa**



Competitive research and innovation-based incentives

- Uncapped R&D Tax Credits
- Innovate UK business-led Innovation funding and incentives6
- Generous R&D allowances with 100% tax deduction for R&D capital expenditure[9]
- Protected by certainty of Corporate Tax Roadmap until 2029[10]



Image: Bodleian

5 reasons to choose the UK

1st Globally for broadest geographic reach of international flows of trade, capital, information and people[1]

1st Most attractive location for investment in Europe as ranked by global CEOs (2024)[2] and 1st globally (alongside India) as ranked by UK CFOs (Q2 2025)[3]

1st For number of unicorns in Europe and 3rd globally[4] (2025), with $17.3 billion in venture capital raised (January-September 2025)[5]

4 Out of top 10 universities worldwide for 2026[5]

70+ Countries and territories outside the EU with signed UK trade agreements (2024)[6], with additional landmark deals agreed in 2025 with the US, India and the EU[7]

> “Universal chose Bedford, at the heart of the OxCam corridor, for the location of its first European theme park and resort because of its incredible connectivity, the skilled local workforce and supplier base, and the entrepreneurial energy that is evident across the whole area. We look forward to working with public and private sector partners across the region to realise the transformational potential of our project for jobs and economic growth”
>
> Gidon Freeman, **Vice-President, External Affairs, Universal Destinations and Experiences**

Why invest in the Oxford to Cambridge Growth Corridor?

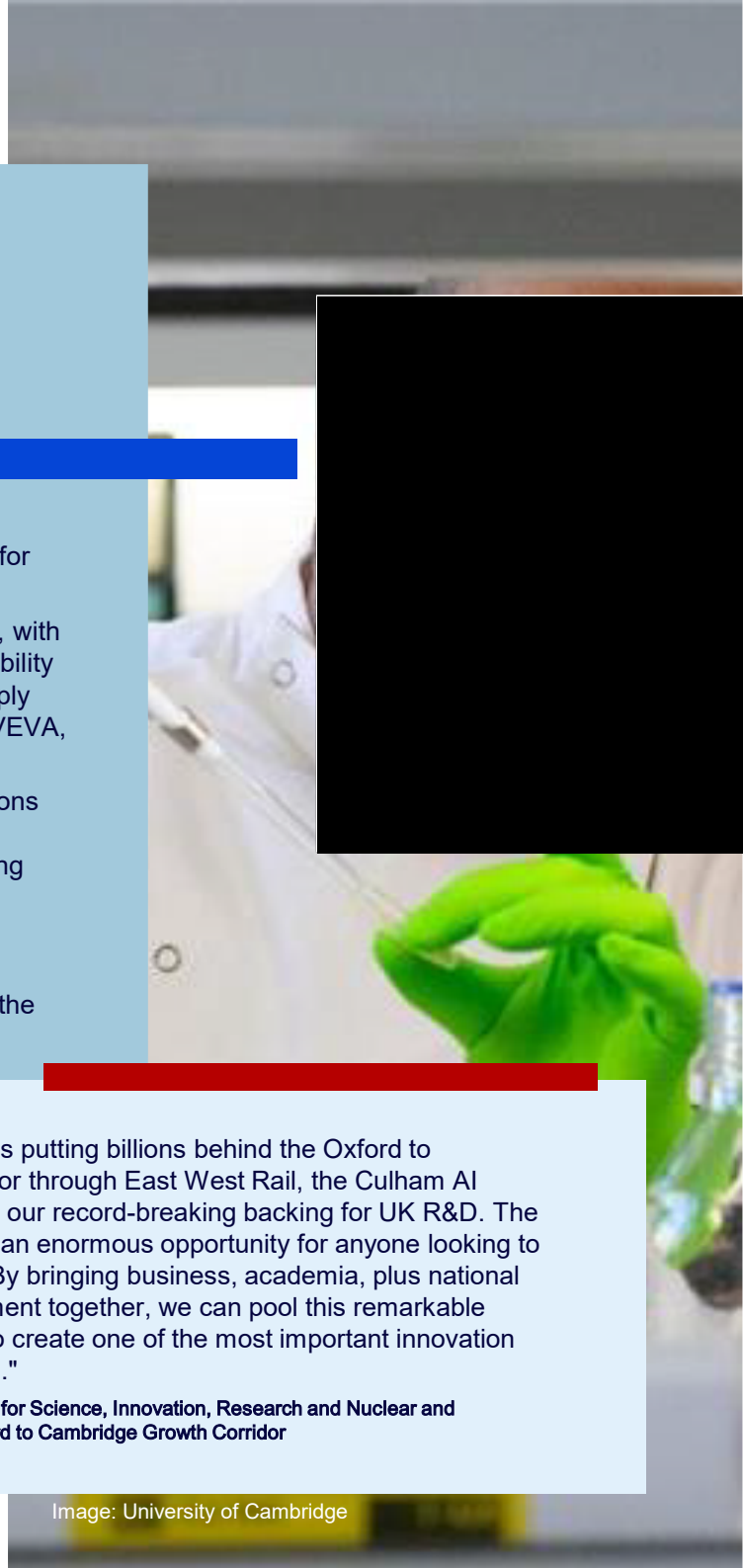
The Corridor is one of the world's most productive science and technology systems, globally recognised for translating research into high-growth companies and real-world impact.

Its strength is the full system: Oxford, Cambridge and the places between them, including Milton Keynes, with its exceptional GVA growth, Bedford, the site of the new Universal Resort, and the green-energy accessibility brought by Chelveston Energy and Innovation Park in North Northamptonshire, providing the space, supply chains and infrastructure for companies to scale. The Corridor is already home to AstraZeneca, GSK, AVEVA, BMW, Mini, Oxford Biomedica, Immunocore, and eight F1 teams including Red Bull and Mercedes.

Its reach extends far beyond its boundaries. In the last decade, OxCam-based venture capital organisations have invested over £150 million in UK businesses outside the Corridor, leveraging over £1 billion in total investment. Cambridge's growing partnerships with Manchester and Oxford's with Liverpool are deepening these connections, backed by £4.8m of Research England funding to forge new links between research, business and place.

The Corridor is also within easy reach of London's fast-growing AI and technology cluster around King's Cross, one of Europe's densest concentrations of AI and data science activity, reinforcing its position as the connective tissue of the UK's wider knowledge economy.

For investors, this means access to:
Innovation engine: Strong pipeline of IP-rich spin-outs and R&D drives demand for lab and scale-up space.
Skilled talent: Universities and research institutes supply a deep STEM workforce.
Quality of place: Attractive locations help firms recruit and retain global talent.
Market access: Strong links to London and UK innovation hubs support partnerships and supply chains.
Deliverability: Rail, planning, grid and energy upgrades are unlocking build-ready sites.



> The Government is putting billions behind the Oxford to Cambridge Corridor through East West Rail, the Culham AI Growth Zone, and our record-breaking backing for UK R&D. The Corridor presents an enormous opportunity for anyone looking to invest in the UK. By bringing business, academia, plus national and local government together, we can pool this remarkable area's strengths to create one of the most important innovation zones in the world."
>
> Lord Vallance, **Minister for Science, Innovation, Research and Nuclear and Champion for the Oxford to Cambridge Growth Corridor**

Image: University of Cambridge

1st

Leader in spin-outs

Together, the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge have produced over 400 spin-outs – the highest of any UK academic institutions[1]

184

Nobel Prizes

Awarded to alumni from Oxford (58)[5] and Cambridge (126)[6]

£27.5bn

FDI super hub

In the last 10 years, Greenfield investments in the Corridor have created over 43,000 jobs with a total capex value of £27.5 billion[2]

£143bn GVA

Productive workforce

Regional GVA is driven by world-class research and productivity[7]

2nd

Start-up environment

Ranked second in the world for mean start-up deal size among global tech clusters[3]

30%

Highly skilled

On average, 30% of all jobs in the corridor are in Knowledge Intensive Sectors, almost triple the average for Britain[4]

40%

Faster growth

In employment in the Corridor than national average, providing talent to innovative companies[4]

1st and 2nd

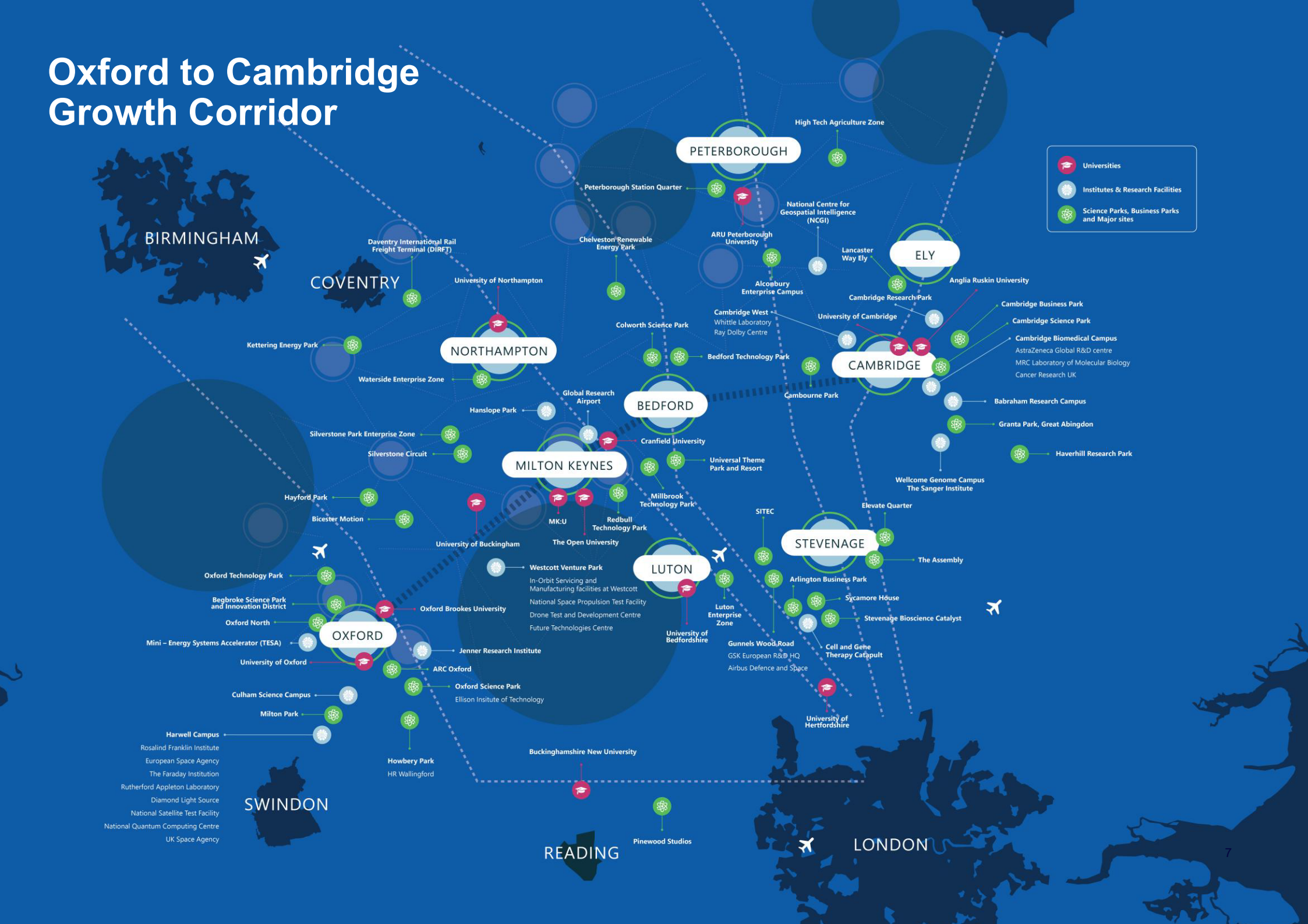
Europe's innovation engine

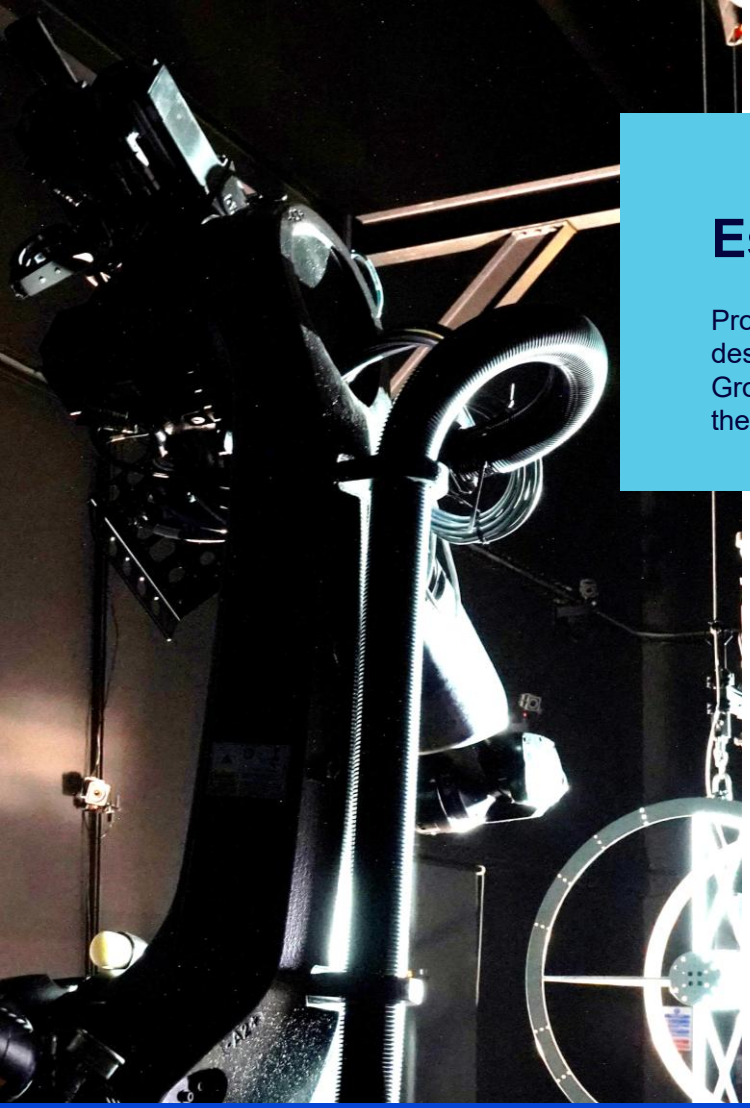
Cambridge ranked **1st** in Europe in Global Innovation Index 2025 (2nd globally) for science and technology cluster intensity, with Oxford 2nd (5th globally)[8]

Recent investment news across the Corridor

- AstraZeneca has made a £300m recommitment to the UK including at Cambridge Biomedical Campus
- Ellison Institute of Technology is building a major new global science and innovation campus part of a £10bn UK investment
- Universal Resort in Bedford is investing billions to support growth in advanced manufacturing and visitor economy
- Nike is opening a new UK logistics centre in Corby in 2028 creating hundreds of jobs
- Prologis has made a £3bn investment into UK logistics and industrial capacity
- BioNTech has made a major UK life sciences investment reinforcing the Corridor's global attractiveness for biotech and R&D
- Cadillac is a new entrant to the high-performance engineering cluster at Silverstone signalling continued sector growth
- Central corridor selected for UKRI's £500m Local Innovation Partnership Fund (LIPF) – national backing for innovation-led growth

Oxford to Cambridge Growth Corridor





Established industries and high-growth sectors

Productive industries, dynamic sectors and skilled workforce make this the destination of choice for many global companies. The Oxford to Cambridge Growth Corridor offers an ideal base for many of the key sectors outlined in the Government's Modern Industrial Strategy.

2 of the top 5

Global universities in the Oxford to Cambridge Growth Corridor[1]



Image: Westcott Space Cluster

Advanced manufacturing

Unmatched opportunities where global brands, pioneering SMEs, and elite research institutes collaborate.

Driven by premier innovation

The Silverstone Technology Cluster, with Silverstone Technology Park and Advanced Engineering Campus at its heart, boasts 8 of the 11 F1 teams and their supply chain[2], pushing innovation in advanced engineering. Bicester Motion is home to innovators like YASA, the electric motor manufacturer.

Most concentrated space cluster in Europe[3]

Harwell is home to a vibrant space sector, including over 100 space organisations[3]. Westcott Space Cluster is also in the region, supporting scale-ups through the Satellite Communications Catapult.

Leading on autonomous vehicles

The Corridor is leading the UK's push for global prominence in connected autonomous vehicles, through RACE at Culham Science Centre and Millbrook Proving Ground, and in Milton Keynes.

Clean energy industries

The UK's premier destination for clean energy research with an advanced commercial ecosystem to drive the transition to net zero.

Nationally important cluster

Chelveston in Northamptonshire is the UK's largest combined renewable energy and innovation park[4], producing green hydrogen and engaged in commercial trials.

Unique partnerships

UK Atomic Energy Authority and Eni are constructing a unique tritium fuel cycle facility for fusion energy at the Culham Campus.

Pioneering facilities

The Culham Campus houses world-leading fusion energy research facilities, working closely with industrial partners to develop this exciting new energy opportunity. The Faraday Institution in Harwell is the leading electrochemical energy storage research institute in the UK, supporting the commercialisation of new battery concepts to the global energy storage market.

Established industries and high-growth sectors

Businesses in the Oxford to Cambridge Growth Corridor are at the forefront of the life sciences and technology sectors.

Life sciences

Europe's premier biomedical research hub, and an integral part of the Golden Triangle, successfully competing with San Francisco and Boston-Cambridge[1].

Commercialising world-first technologies

Moderna selected Harwell for its Innovation and Technology Centre and BioNTech selected Cambridge Biomedical Campus for their new R&D hub. Companies born from the area's world-class research, like Bicycle Therapeutics, Oxford Nanopore, and CMR Surgical, are choosing to stay and scale locally, drawn by the strength of its innovation ecosystem.

Derisking novel science

Flagship public-private partnerships and key infrastructure (including Diamond Synchrotron and Rosalind Franklin Institute) are reducing companies' costs to innovate.

Accelerating drug discovery

Complementary strengths in data science, AI and genomics have created an ideal discovery ecosystem.

Digital and technologies

Home to Bletchley Park, the birthplace of modern computing, the Corridor continues to add to its legacy as an innovator with a unique blend of talent, infrastructure, and investment.

Europe's quantum leader[2]

Advancing computing, sensing, and materials through world-class research at the National Quantum Computing Centre in Harwell, pioneering firms, and major commercialisation investment.

Access frontier AI and talent

Cambridge University's Dawn AI supercomputer – the UK's fastest – offers compute to SMEs[3]. The region is growing its AI talent and nurturing next generation start-ups through the UK's first AI Growth Zone at Culham. A leader in AI and data, Milton Keynes offers one of the largest deployments of robotics (Starship robots). In2tec UK's leader in sustainable electronics innovation based in Kettering and award winning ReUSE® and ReCYCLED® products.

Global reputation

Cambridge's Arm is of global importance to the semiconductor industry with market penetration of 99% in mobile application processors[4].



£1 billion+ campus

Ellison Institute of Technology, opening 2027 as a collaboration between Larry Ellison and University of Oxford, driving innovation across life sciences, food security, clean energy and AI, uniting research talent and entrepreneurs[5]



Cambridge Biomedical Campus

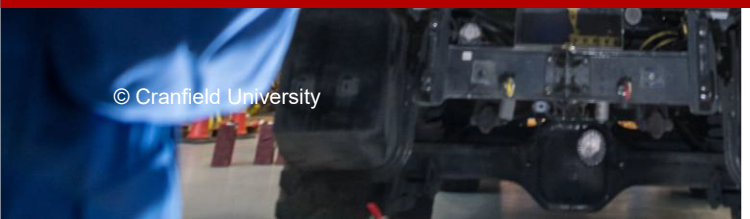


Established industries and high-growth sectors

Highly productive and innovative partnerships between industry and universities in the defence and creative industry sectors.

Unique in Europe

Cranfield University, with its own fully-operational airport, aircraft and air navigation service provider is supporting cutting-edge research into aircraft electrification and urban air mobility.[1]



© Cranfield University

Defence and security

Rapidly emerging as one of the UK's most dynamic defence and security innovation corridors. This sector is anchored by global research universities and a high density of defence tech companies, from Leonardo in Luton to Blue Bear in Bedford.

Strategic investments

BAE Systems' partnership with Harwell-based Oxford Dynamics is scaling next-generation AI for defence platforms.

Unique skills base

Cranfield University specialises in post-graduate industrial innovation, applied research, and aerospace.

Government-academic-private collaboration

Milton Keynes is home to the UK's national security engineering centre (HMGCC), a leading force in security and tech innovation.

Creative industries

Artistic tradition married with a thriving, high-tech creative ecosystem, attracting global investment including the planned Universal Resort in Bedford.

Historic reputation

Pinewood Studio's creative cluster is globally renowned for its state-of-the-art film, TV and gaming production and development, and Cardington Film Studios in Bedford continues this tradition.

Chosen by sector giants

Microsoft's first Research Lab outside of the US[2] is pioneering AI, data storage in glass, game AI, and teachable tools in Cambridge, located alongside Google, Apple and Amazon.

Collaborative environment

Established strengths in publishing, gaming and AI provide enabling support for growth, encouraging companies such as AVEVA, JagEx, Rebellion, and Sophos to expand.

Opportunities for Occupiers

If you are establishing, expanding or relocating operations

This section looks at locations across the Oxford to Cambridge Growth Corridor that are well suited to corporate occupiers. These places offer opportunities for companies that want to move to the UK, grow, or set up new operations, with easy access to research expertise, skilled workers, testing facilities and established industry networks.



Image: Milton Keynes - Unsplash

"Milton Keynes sits right in the middle of the Oxford-Cambridge Innovation Arc — it's a hotbed of talent, only 30 minutes from London, and a third of the cost of a London office. That meant we could build our purpose-built 5,000 sq ft collaboration space. It just wouldn't have been possible anywhere else."

— Steve Salvin, CEO, Aiimi"

Milton Keynes Central

Milton Keynes offers a unique city-scale urban testbed for digital, autonomous and technology-enabled services, enabling real-world deployment across transport, energy, data and city systems. Key opportunities include the MK Gateway / Saxon Court area, a mixed-use gateway location with Grade A office and innovation space, alongside Lower Westside and associated innovation sites aligned to long-term, technology-led growth plans. Together, these sites support integrated innovation — combining research, commercial space and live urban deployment — and position Milton Keynes as a focal point for scaling technologies from pilot to market.

- **Sector:** Digital, autonomous and technology-enabled services
- **Status:** Priority innovation areas identified and supported through local partner strategies
- **Opportunity:** Occupier and investment opportunities within a city-scale testbed, offering innovation space, mixed-use development and real-world deployment at scale

New Towns

The UK is revisiting large scale new town development for the first time in over 50 years. Renewed interest is driven by the need for major housing supply expansion, economic growth, and coordinated long-term planning. In the Corridor two locations have been named in consultation on the next generation of new towns —Tempsford, and Milton Keynes.

Opportunity: Opportunities for early-stage investors in land assembly, master planning, core infrastructure; and private capital to co-fund transport, utilities, social infrastructure

Model: Joint-Venture/SPV/direct equity investment/ development partners

Chelveston Renewable Energy & Innovation Park Northamptonshire

The UK's largest combined Renewable Energy Park, with Direct Wire Feed to a large-scale Innovation Park. Currently generating up to 200GWh from existing wind & solar, combined with large scale on-site 'second life' battery storage & green hydrogen production. Existing buildings providing for over 100,000 sq ft (let & occupied) with detailed & outline planning for further phase of circa 400,000 sq ft.

Sector: Advanced Manufacture, Digital Technologies, Defence, Clean Energy, R&D

Status: Operational. 800 acres. Planning consent for further development.

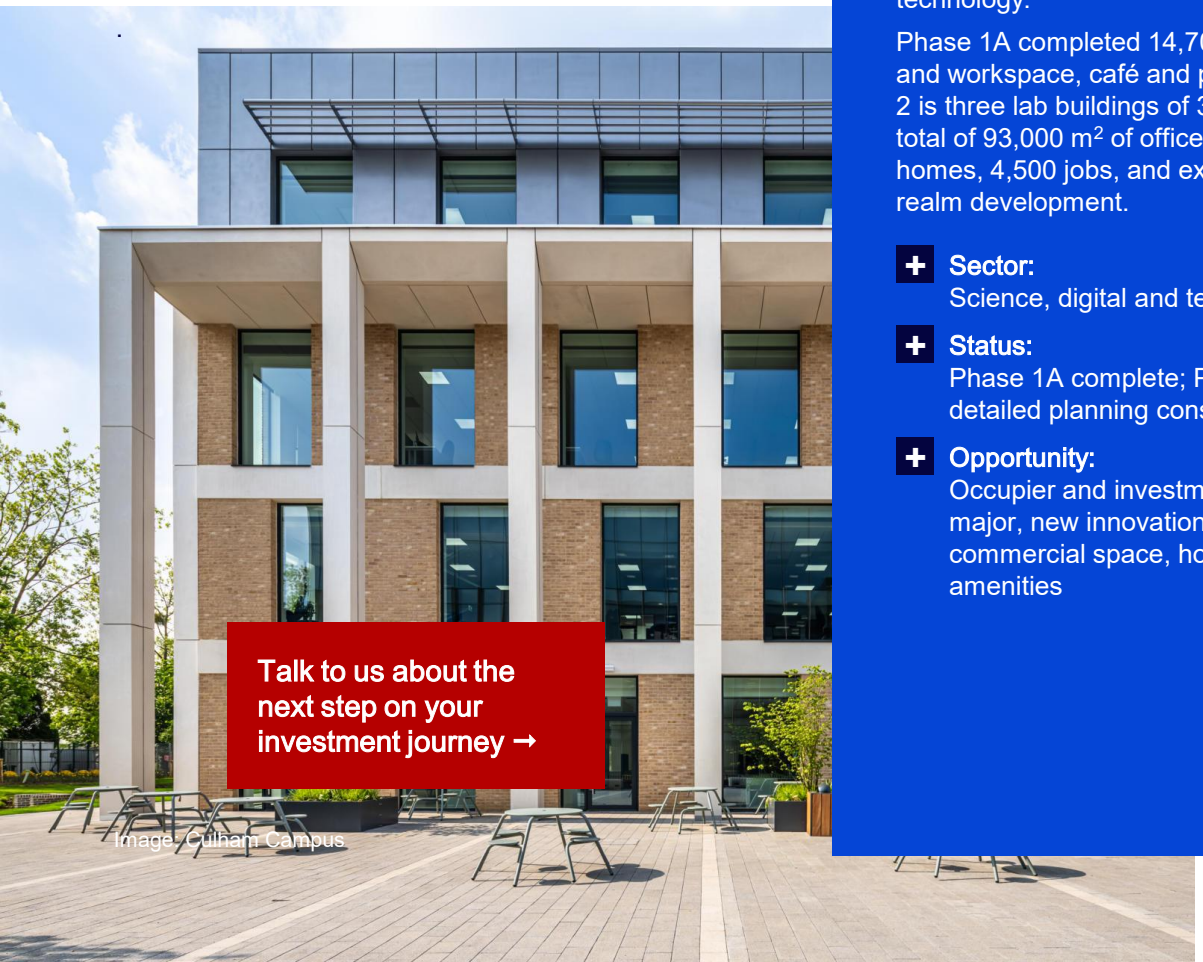
Opportunity: World class facilities & technologies available to occupier market via Design & Build contracts.

Opportunities for Occupiers

If you are establishing, expanding or relocating operations

This section looks at locations across the Oxford–Cambridge Growth Corridor that are well suited to corporate occupiers. These places offer opportunities for companies that want to move to the UK, grow, or set up new operations, with easy access to research expertise, skilled workers, testing facilities and established industry networks.

.



Talk to us about the next step on your investment journey →

Image: Culham Campus

Oxford North
Oxfordshire

£1.2 billion, 26-hectare innovation district purposefully designed for discovery.

Integrating laboratory and commercial space with new homes, amenities, parks, public art and sustainable transport initiatives to create a new mixed-use community for science and technology.

Phase 1A completed 14,700m^2 of new labs and workspace, café and public park. Phase 2 is three lab buildings of 34,782 m^2, with a total of 93,000 m^2 of office and labs, 480 homes, 4,500 jobs, and extensive new public realm development.

- **Sector:** Science, digital and technologies
- **Status:** Phase 1A complete; Phase 2 with detailed planning consent
- **Opportunity:** Occupier and investment opportunities in major, new innovation hub with labs, commercial space, housing and amenities

Culham Campus
Oxfordshire

The UK's national centre for fusion energy and a major hub for AI innovation. Designated as the UK's first AI Growth Zone; a prime site for building out UK strategic AI infrastructure. Culham is growing into a sustainable science village combining clean energy, digital innovation, and adjacent opportunities for residential development.

Potential for employment-led growth with 3,000+ new jobs. To support talent retention, associated investment in housing and placemaking is progressing.

- **Sector:** Clean energy, digital & technology, advanced research
- **Status:** Nearby Culham No.1 development (115,000m^2 employment space) awaiting determination
  AI Growth zone – expression of Interest completed 2025; invitation to participate launching shortly
- **Opportunity:**

UK's first AI growth zone, and science village expansion FDI into clean energy, AI, and advanced technology

Opportunities for Occupiers

If you are establishing, expanding or relocating operations

This section looks at locations across the Oxford–Cambridge Growth Corridor that are well suited to corporate occupiers. These places offer opportunities for companies that want to move to the UK, grow, or set up new operations, with easy access to research expertise, skilled workers, testing facilities and established industry networks.



> “I worked in Silicon Valley for eight years. I think Harwell is the closest place in the UK to that Google Campus feel.”
>
> Aiden Crawley, **CEO and Co-Founder, Amber Therapeutics**

Harwell Science and Innovation Campus

Harwell Science and Innovation Campus
Oxfordshire

Multidisciplinary research and innovation campus, housing £3+ billion state-funded research infrastructure alongside a dynamic commercial ecosystem of 200+ organisations and 7,500+ skilled professionals.

Research facilities: Diamond Light Source Synchrotron, National Satellite Test Facility, Rosalind Franklin Institute, and National Quantum Computing Centre. University teams, start-up incubators, and a thriving community include global businesses such as Moderna, Oxford Nanopore, Agilent and Thales.

- **Sector:** Life sciences, AI, quantum computing, digital & technology, clean energy, space and satellites, advanced manufacturing
- **Status:** Active expansion programme into 2030s
- **Opportunity:** New facilities from high-spec labs and R&D facilities to advanced manufacturing space for expansion or relocation
  Proximity to research infrastructure for commercial partnerships and licensing
  Capital investment into start-ups and scale-ups from Seed to Series C

Cambridge Biomedical Campus
Cambridgeshire

Globally unique community of academics, industry leaders and NHS hospital researchers and clinicians. Home to world-class biomedical research and health science companies, MRC Laboratory of Molecular Biology, eight Cambridge University research institutes, clinical trial facilities, three research driven hospitals, and a Cancer Research UK research institute.

Currently contributing £4.7 billion GVA annually to the UK economy which is forecast to double within 10 years, with 2050 vision planning for an additional 1 million m^2 for life sciences development alongside world-class amenities and infrastructure. The campus is an active life sciences growth market, with substantial expansion coming forward through multi-billion-pound investment by Prologis. Cambridge South railway station is opening in June 2026 with direct services to London and future connectivity to East West Rail.

- **Sector:** Life sciences
- **Status:** To 2050+ Operational with vision for expansion
- **Opportunity:** Co-locate with world leading biomedical and health science organisations and collaborate with companies like AstraZeneca, Abcam and BioNTech.

Opportunities for Occupiers

If you are establishing, expanding or relocating operations

This section looks at locations across the Oxford–Cambridge Growth Corridor that are well suited to corporate occupiers. These places offer opportunities for companies that want to move to the UK, grow, or set up new operations, with easy access to research expertise, skilled workers, testing facilities and established industry networks.



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Image: Cranfield University

Wellcome Genome Campus
Cambridgeshire

World recognised and established life science cluster, with anchor institutes Wellcome Sanger Institute, EMBL-EBI, and coming soon the new NHS Health Data Research Service and a highly skilled, international workforce. Expanding with opportunities for global firms and spin-outs to scale alongside major research institutes, as part of a growing community and ecosystem of organisations and experts.

Expanding to 178 hectares with new, flexible R&D and translational science buildings (150,000 m^2), residential developments (1,500 campus worker homes), retail, leisure, and community uses plus microgrid power, ambient loop heat, data centre and other infrastructure.

- **Sector:**
  Life sciences
- **Status:**
  Outline planning permission granted; Phase 1 detailed permission and delivery underway
- **Opportunity:**
  Capital investment in facilities and infrastructure at scale
  Ideal for life sciences companies across genomics, personalised medicine, biodata, health data and data science, machine learning and AI

Cranfield University Campus
Bedfordshire

Cranfield University and King's College London have announced the news that the two universities have signed an agreement as the first step towards a merger, with the aim of bringing the two institutions together from August 2027.

Businesses can partner with Cranfield University, a world-leading specialist postgraduate university focused on science, technology and engineering. Cranfield has its own airport and numerous direct links to aerospace and defence supply chains and a local and regional skills pipeline.

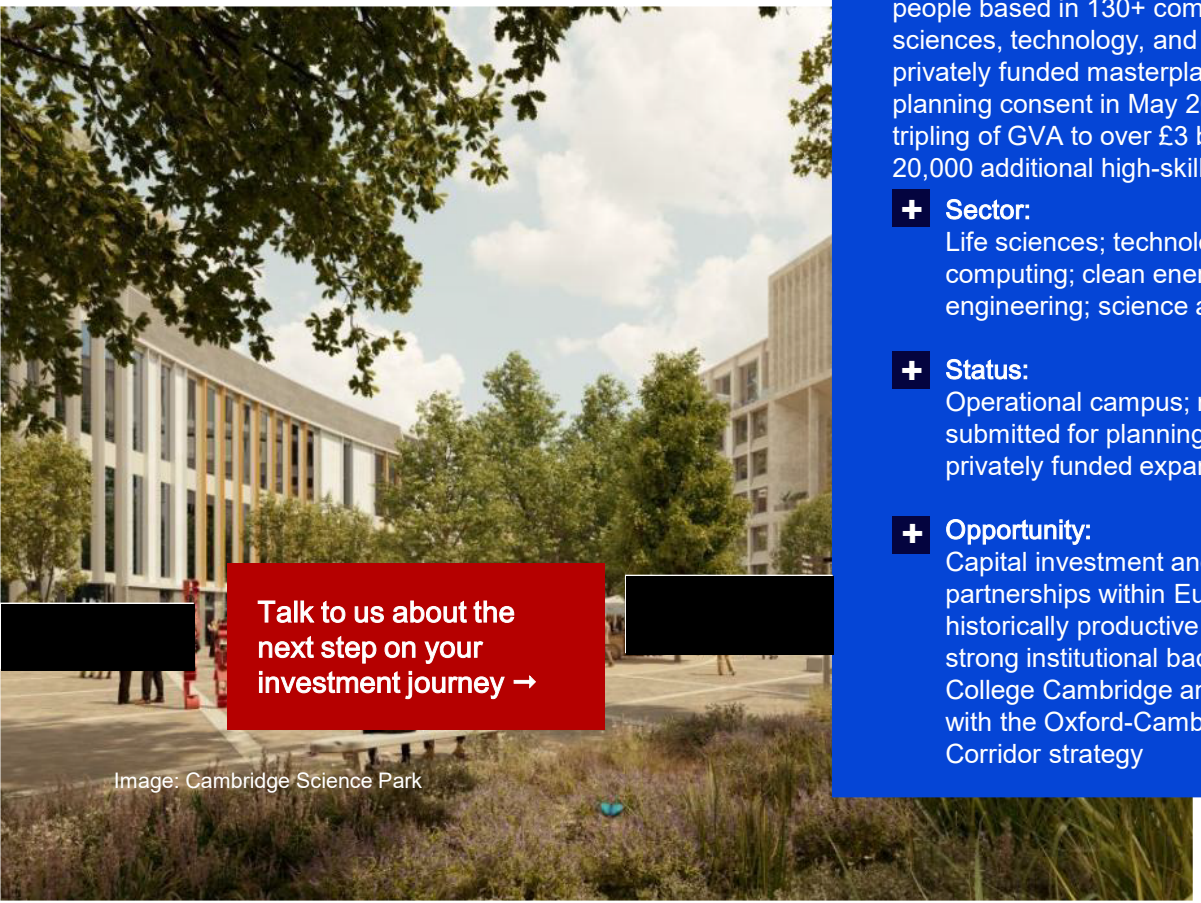
- **Sector:**
  Defence and security, advanced manufacturing, clean energy R&D
- **Status:**
  Cranfield has outline planning agreement for an approx. 36-hectare commercial development adjacent to the campus and airport. In addition, a c.20-hectare site, with a three storey 5,500m2 building supported by Central Bedfordshire Council's Local Plan.
- **Opportunity:**
  Capital investment in aerospace, clean energy (inc. hydrogen), environmental science, defence facilities, defence technologies, advanced manufacturing, and other areas of science and innovation.

Opportunities for Occupiers

If you are establishing, expanding or relocating operations

This section looks at locations across the Oxford–Cambridge Growth Corridor that are well suited to corporate occupiers. These places offer opportunities for companies that want to move to the UK, grow, or set up new operations, with easy access to research expertise, skilled workers, testing facilities and established industry networks.

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Talk to us about the next step on your investment journey →

Image: Cambridge Science Park

Cambridge Science Park
Cambridgeshire

Europe's oldest science park and a cornerstone of the Cambridge Phenomenon, now embarking on a generational expansion to cement its place as a world-leading innovation hub.

Founded by Trinity College Cambridge in 1970, the Park generates approximately £1 billion in annual GVA and is home to 7,000 people based in 130+ companies across life sciences, technology, and clean energy. A privately funded masterplan submitted for planning consent in May 2026 targets a tripling of GVA to over £3 billion and up to 20,000 additional high-skilled jobs.

Sector:
Life sciences; technology and computing; clean energy; advanced engineering; science and innovation

Status:
Operational campus; masterplan submitted for planning consent with privately funded expansion programme

Opportunity:
Capital investment and occupier partnerships within Europe's most historically productive science park, with strong institutional backing from Trinity College Cambridge and direct alignment with the Oxford-Cambridge Growth Corridor strategy

ARC Oxford (Innovation Campus)
Oxfordshire

A nationally significant science and innovation campus at the heart of one of the world's leading university cities.

ARC Oxford is an 88-acre science and innovation campus in east Oxford.

The site brings together life sciences, health technology, and digital innovation businesses in a thriving community campus, anchored by world-class collaborative workspace, state-of-the-art laboratories, and a rich programme of community and cultural activity.

Sectors:

Life sciences; health technology; digital and data; science and innovation

Status:

Operational campus with an active and growing tenant community, and a long-term investment programme underway to expand and enhance science and innovation capacity

Opportunity:

Capital investment and occupier partnerships within an established, amenity-rich innovation campus, with significant development potential and proximity to world-class academic and clinical institutions

Capital opportunities across strategic sites

This section sets out investment opportunities across the Oxford to Cambridge Growth Corridor, focusing on major sites and infrastructure projects that are well suited to long-term investors such as institutions, developers, infrastructure funds and sovereign wealth funds.



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Image: Silverstone Technology Park and Advanced Engineering Campus

Luton Airport
Central Corridor

A nationally significant aviation-led growth opportunity, with the approved expansion of Luton Airport providing long-term planning certainty and reinforcing its role at the heart of the regional economy. Strategically located within the London–Oxford–Cambridge Golden Triangle, and complemented by the Universal Studios investment at Bedford, Luton is well positioned for large-scale capital investment, skills growth and innovation-led development across infrastructure, commercial and mixed-use sectors.

- **Sector:**
  Aviation; advanced manufacturing; aerospace; science and innovation; transport and logistics; creative industries; visitor economy
- **Status:**
  London Luton Airport growth has been consented via Development Consent Order, with delivery planning and investment mobilisation underway.
- **Opportunity:**
  Infrastructure-led capital investment supported by planning certainty, with associated commercial real estate, hospitality, logistics and supply-chain development, strong potential for integrated development responding to aviation growth and destination-driven demand

Silverstone Park Technology and Advanced Engineering Campus
Northamptonshire/Buckinghamshire

115-hectare estate encircling the iconic Silverstone Grand Prix Circuit. A campus for future innovation, hosting three centres of excellence and 90+ businesses across 89,300m^2 of commercial space. Additional 30 hectares to be developed over the next decade to expand capacity and capabilities.

A founding member of Silverstone Technology Cluster, boasting around 3,000 advanced engineering, electronics and software businesses. Uniquely situated at the intersection of high-performance engineering supply chains and a robust skills pipeline and primed to become a global centre of excellence for next-generation mobility solutions.

- **Sector:**
  Advanced manufacturing, clean energy, digital & technology
- **Status:**
  Expansion plans under way
- **Opportunity:**
  Capital investment into innovation hubs, R&D facilities, and scale-up spaces to support high-growth technology ventures

Capital opportunities across strategic sites

This section sets out investment opportunities across the Oxford to Cambridge Growth Corridor, focusing on major sites and infrastructure projects that are well suited to long-term investors such as institutions, developers, infrastructure funds and sovereign wealth funds.



Talk to us about the next step on your investment journey →

Image: Cambridge West

Cambridge West
Cambridgeshire

Nationally significant innovation district co-locating world-class University of Cambridge facilities, global industry partners, national research institutes /infrastructure facilities, scaling companies and investors. Flagship projects: Ray Dolby Centre (Cavendish Laboratory); UK National Centre for Propulsion & Power within New Whittle Laboratory, Rokos School of Government. Strong industry partnerships with Rolls-Royce, Siemens, Hitachi, Mitsubishi and Raspberry Pi.

£500+ million invested in academic and research facilities over the last 10 years plus significant additional investments from philanthropic and industrial partners. Clear deliverability and capacity for up to 383,300 m² of new R&D and commercial space within a curated and activated campus. Post-doctoral researchers are housed in nearby high-quality, residential neighbourhood, Eddington.

- **Sector:** Multi-disciplinary, deep tech and beyond advanced manufacturing, digital and technologies
- **Status:** Outline consent 2024; Ray Dolby Centre completed 2024; Whittle Laboratory due 2026. Recent acquisition of a state-of-the-art IonQ 256-qubit quantum computer.
- **Opportunity:** Master developer, joint venture, equity partner, major occupiers, entrepreneurial start-up, co-location, large-scale R&D and innovation space

White Horse Reservoir
Oxfordshire

A nationally significant water infrastructure project critical to enabling long-term growth and resilience across the Corridor.

White Horse Reservoir is a proposed strategic water storage reservoir in Oxfordshire designed to secure long-term water supply for the South East of England, serving up to 15 million people.

The project is a RAPID Strategic Resource Option (SRO) and a priority scheme within Ofwat's Major Water Infrastructure Programme (MWIP), aligned with the PR24 price control period.

- **Sector:** Water infrastructure
- **Status:** Major reservoir scheme entering procurement phases for contractors and investment in the next 12 - 24 months, expected to progress as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project
- **Opportunity:** to growth-enabling water security investment

Capital opportunities across strategic sites

This section sets out investment opportunities across the Oxford to Cambridge Growth Corridor, focusing on major sites and infrastructure projects that are well suited to long-term investors such as institutions, developers, infrastructure funds and sovereign wealth funds.



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Image: EXOq

EXOq (Exeter Oxford Quantum Innovation District)

Oxfordshire

A nationally significant digital and research campus proposed at scale on the northern edge of Oxford.
EXOq is a c.3 million sq.ft. mixed-use research and innovation development proposed on land adjacent to Oxford Parkway Station and promoted by Exeter College. The site is centred around a proposal for integrated quantum, AI and classical sovereign high-performance compute infrastructure at Tier-1 scale.
It is intended to support advanced research and commercialisation in quantum, AI, science and technology.

Sector:
Quantum computing; digital and technologies; science and innovation

Status:
Strategic site proposal advanced by the landowner, with planning and environmental assessment and investment/partnering programme under development

Opportunity:
Capital investment into a large-scale Quantum and AI innovation district, including specialist research infrastructure and advanced computing facilities

Duxford AvTech

Cambridgeshire

An advanced aviation technology research and manufacturing campus adjacent to Duxford Airfield, the working airfield of IIWM Duxford.

Duxford AvTech is planned as a specialist campus supporting aviation innovation, testing, manufacturing and employment, making use of the adjacent airfield for development and validation of new technologies. The site sits at the intersection of advanced manufacturing, technology and creative industries.

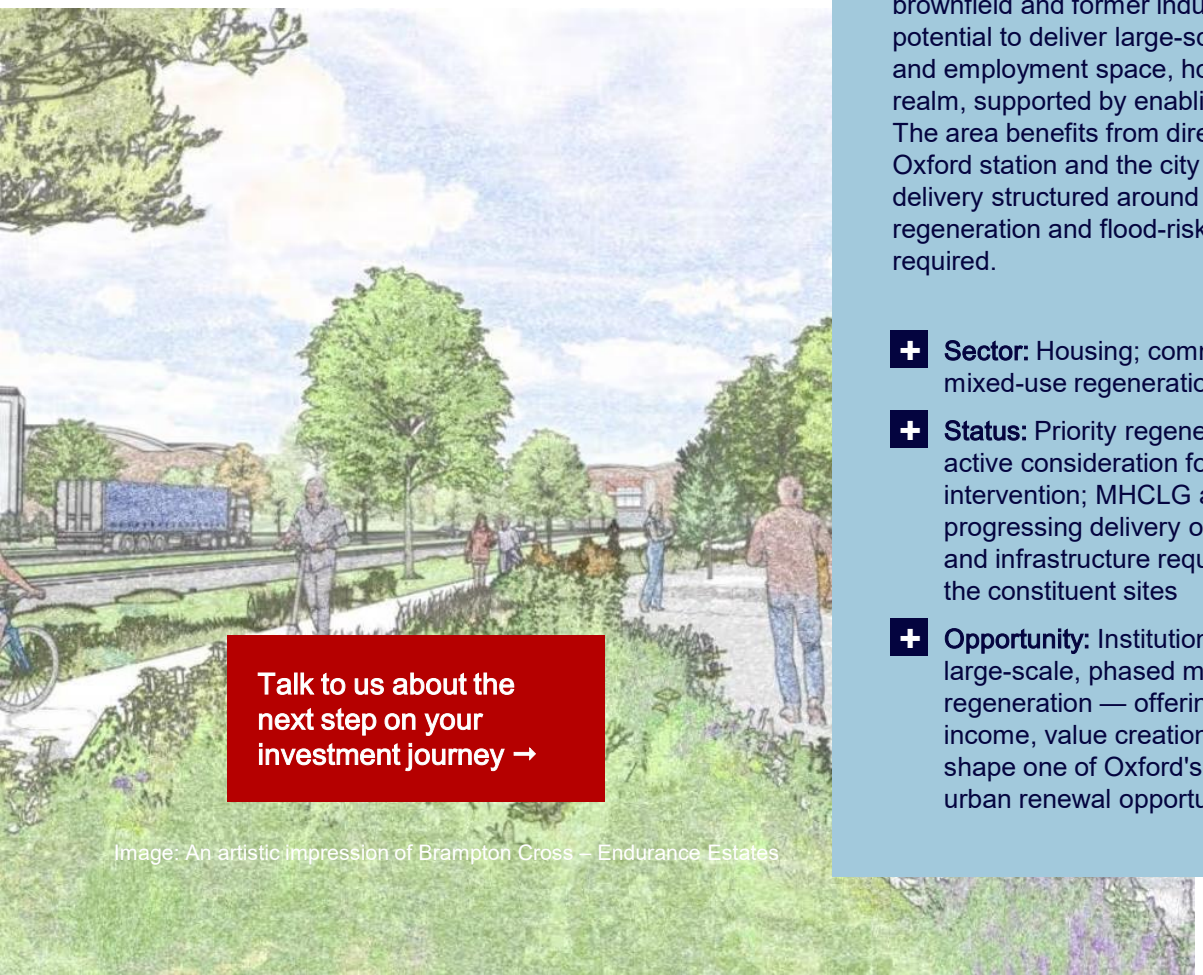
Sector:
Creative industries; advanced manufacturing; aviation technologies; advanced air mobility (AAM)

Status:
Proposed advanced aviation technology campus progressing through regional investment pipelines, with site concept and occupier proposition under development

Opportunity:
Capital investment into specialist innovation and commercial space supporting aviation and advanced manufacturing

Capital opportunities across strategic sites

This section sets out investment opportunities across the Oxford to Cambridge Growth Corridor, focusing on major sites and infrastructure projects that are well suited to long-term investors such as institutions, developers, infrastructure funds and sovereign wealth funds.



Talk to us about the next step on your investment journey →

Image: An artistic impression of Brampton Cross – Endurance Estates

Oxford West End

Oxfordshire

A major mixed-use regeneration opportunity at the western edge of Oxford city centre, with scale comparable to leading national regeneration schemes. The Oxford West End encompasses a number of projects including Osney Mead and Oxpens — a cluster of brownfield and former industrial sites with the potential to deliver large-scale commercial and employment space, housing and public realm, supported by enabling infrastructure. The area benefits from direct proximity to Oxford station and the city centre, with delivery structured around phased regeneration and flood-risk mitigation where required.

- **Sector:** Housing; commercial real estate; mixed-use regeneration
- **Status:** Priority regeneration area under active consideration for strategic intervention; MHCLG and partners are progressing delivery options, phasing and infrastructure requirements across the constituent sites
- **Opportunity:** Institutional capital for large-scale, phased mixed-use regeneration — offering long-term income, value creation and the chance to shape one of Oxford's most significant urban renewal opportunities

Brampton Cross

Cambridgeshire

A large-scale, net-zero-aligned enterprise and innovation proposition in Huntingdonshire.

Brampton Cross is proposed as a c. 1,000-acre enterprise centre capable of accommodating businesses across multiple priority innovation sectors. Early work has focused on financing options, infrastructure requirements and a proposed battery research centre, with initial enabling investment identified.

- **Sector:**
  Clean energy; advanced manufacturing; research and innovation
- **Status:**
  Early-stage enterprise proposition identified through regional investment work, with initial engagement underway on financing and infrastructure requirements
- **Opportunity:**
  Capital investment into a large-scale clean-energy-aligned enterprise and research campus

Innovation, scale-up and venture

The Oxford to Cambridge Growth Corridor is one of the world's most productive systems for turning research into companies, and companies into global leaders.

It has already produced globally scaled technology leaders including Arm, Darktrace, Oxford Nanopore and CMR Surgical. These are not outliers. They are the product of a system that continuously generates IP-rich spin-outs, attracts international capital, and provides the conditions for companies to scale from first funding to global market.

The Corridor is home to one of the highest concentrations of high-technology companies anywhere in Europe.

The next generation is already here. Companies including Riverlane (quantum error correction), Nu Quantum (quantum networking), Oxford Ionics (trapped-ion quantum computing), PragmatIC (flexible semiconductors), Oxford PV (perovskite solar), Immunocore (immunotherapy), T-Therapeutics (oncology and autoimmune) and OrganOx (organ preservation) represent the current wave of high-potential businesses moving through the system — each with deep IP, strong founding teams and clear routes to scale.



Case Study: DMC (Digital Manufacturing Centre)

DMC is an advanced manufacturing business based at Silverstone Park, working across sectors including motorsport, defence and aerospace. DMC applies digital engineering and precision manufacturing to produce high-performance components at speed and scale. Its location within the Silverstone cluster provides access to specialist skills, supply chains and testing environments, supporting innovation-led manufacturing.

Image: Cambridge Biomedical Campus

Innovation, scale-up and venture

What makes the system work:

Research depth: Two of the world's top universities, alongside institutes including the Wellcome Genome Campus, Babraham and Culham, generate a continuous flow of commercially viable IP across life sciences, AI, quantum and clean energy.

Clinical adjacency: The Corridor offers direct proximity to world-class patient cohorts, clinical trial infrastructure and NHS research hospitals. The ability to test in patients — not just in labs — compresses development timelines and de-risks investment.

Scale-up infrastructure: Science parks, research campuses and incubators across the Corridor provide space for companies at every stage, from earliest spin-out to pre-IPO growth.

The central corridor advantage: Real-world testbed environments around Milton Keynes, Silverstone and Bedford allow technologies to move from lab to live deployment — including the UK's leading urban testbed for autonomous vehicles and one of the world's largest commercial robotics deployments..

Capital connectivity: Proximity to London's financial markets supports later-stage fundraising, M&A and internationalisation, while a growing local venture ecosystem means early-stage capital is increasingly available within the Corridor itself.



> “At EIT we’re building a new kind of institute which will speed up the path from discovery science to real-world impact. The clear-headed leadership of the Oxford to Cambridge Growth Corridor has helped us advocate for the infrastructure changes we need to make the wider science ecosystem a success. By amplifying the business community's aspirations and overcoming key obstacles, the Corridor has been able to present a bold vision for economic growth which benefits the whole of the UK.”
>
> Lisa Flashner, **Chief Operating Officer, the Ellison Institute of Technology, Oxford**

Innovation in Action: Pragmatic Semiconductor

Pragmatic Semiconductor exemplifies the power of connected UK innovation clusters. Built on IP from the University of Manchester, headquartered at Cambridge Science Park, and manufacturing at scale in the North East (Durham), it is one of the UK’s largest semiconductor companies producing ultra-low-cost, flexible chips. Backed by investors from both regions (Cambridge Innovation Capital and Northern Gritstone), it demonstrates how integrated ecosystems can accelerate breakthrough companies.

Image: Culham Campus

How to engage:

This is the start of the conversation.

Contact the Office for Investment at OxCam@officeforinvestment.gov.uk - your entry point into the Oxford to Cambridge Growth Corridor.

For infrastructure and development investors

OfI will coordinate the first conversation and connect you to the organisations delivering specific projects.

For venture capital, growth equity and corporate venture

OfI will help you navigate the innovation ecosystem and make relevant introductions across the Corridor.

For companies looking to locate, expand or enter the UK market

OfI will connect you with local partners on sites, skills, infrastructure and market entry.



Image: Ray Dolby Centre

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Appendix F

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Passenger rail usage

April to June 2026

1 October 2026

Background:

This quarterly statistical release contains information on passenger rail usage in Great Britain. It covers **passenger journeys**, **passenger kilometres**, **revenue**, **passenger train** and **vehicle kilometres**.

Statistics are presented by **ticket type** and **train operator**.

Sources: LENNON ticketing and revenue system, train operators, TfL and Network Rail.

To account for inflation, historic quarterly revenue data has been adjusted to April to June 2026 prices using the Consumer Prices Index (CPI). Numbers in this release are rounded.

Latest quarter: 1 April to 30 June 2026

Contents:

Journeys – p3
Revenue – p5
Other passenger rail usage measures – p7
Annexes – p8

Responsible statistician:
L Al-Ajeel

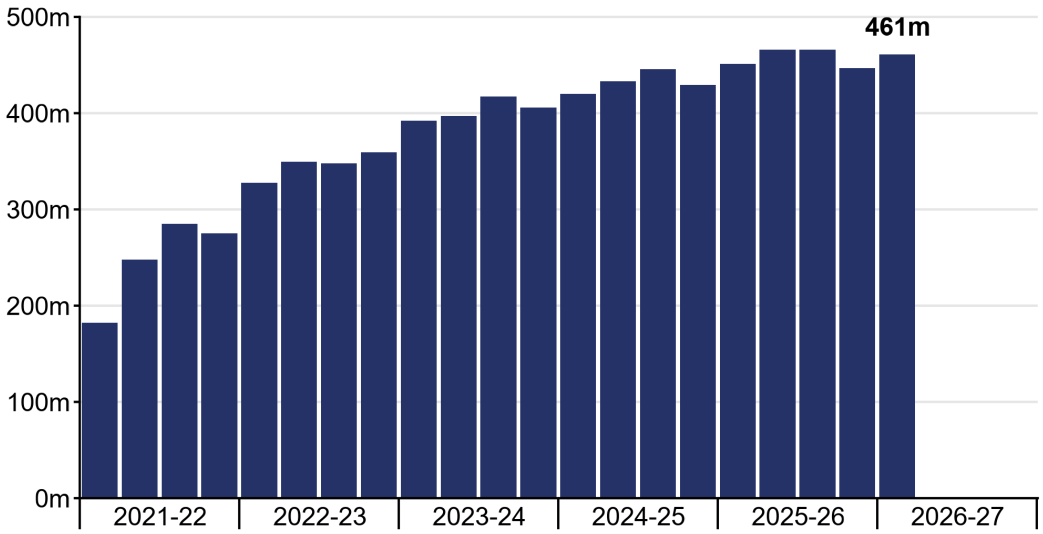
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Next publication:
17 December 2026

A total of **461 million journeys** were made by rail passengers in Great Britain in the latest quarter (April to June 2026). This is a 2% increase on the 451 million journeys in the same quarter in the previous year (April to June 2025).

Figure 1 Passenger journeys, Great Britain, quarterly data, April 2021 to June 2026



Total **passenger revenue** was **£3.2 billion** in the latest quarter. This is a 1% decrease from the revenue generated in the same quarter in the previous year (when adjusted for inflation).

Recent increases in journeys and revenue reflect a trend that has continued since the end of the pandemic. Figures have also been impacted by the opening of the Elizabeth line in May 2022. Note that passenger journey data in recent years may be overstated due to the impact of split ticketing. More details can be found on page 2.

All data tables, a quality and methodology report and an interactive dashboard associated with this release are published on the passenger rail usage page of the ORR data portal. Key definitions are in Annex 1 of this release.

Context for these statistics

Recent changes to this release

Following proposed changes in our last publication, we have removed analysis on passenger usage by rail sector and on passenger kilometres by operator from this release.

Data on passenger revenue, journeys and kilometres by rail sector can be found in Table 1211, Table 1221 and Table 1231 respectively on the ORR data portal.

Data on passenger kilometres by operator can be found in Table 1233.

Split ticketing

As estimates of passenger journeys are primarily based on ticket sales, there are limitations that users should be aware of. One example of this is that some train operators' journeys may be overestimated due to the impact of passengers buying 'split tickets' (this is where a passenger completes a single journey using two or more tickets). Split ticketing has become more prevalent in recent years, therefore the extent to which it affects rail usage statistics has increased. It may be that the recovery of journeys relative to before the pandemic is overstated. Rail Delivery Group (RDG) estimates that overall, around 5% of passenger journeys between April 2023 and March 2024 were made using split tickets (it was around 4% in the previous year).

More information on the limitations of the data used to produce these statistics and what we are doing to improve our published estimates can be found in the Annexes of this statistical release and the associated Quality and methodology report.

Concessionary tickets

We have recently been made aware that some journeys made using concessionary tickets are not captured in the source data used to produce these statistics. We are currently investigating the extent of this issue and will provide an update on this in our next quarterly statistical release.

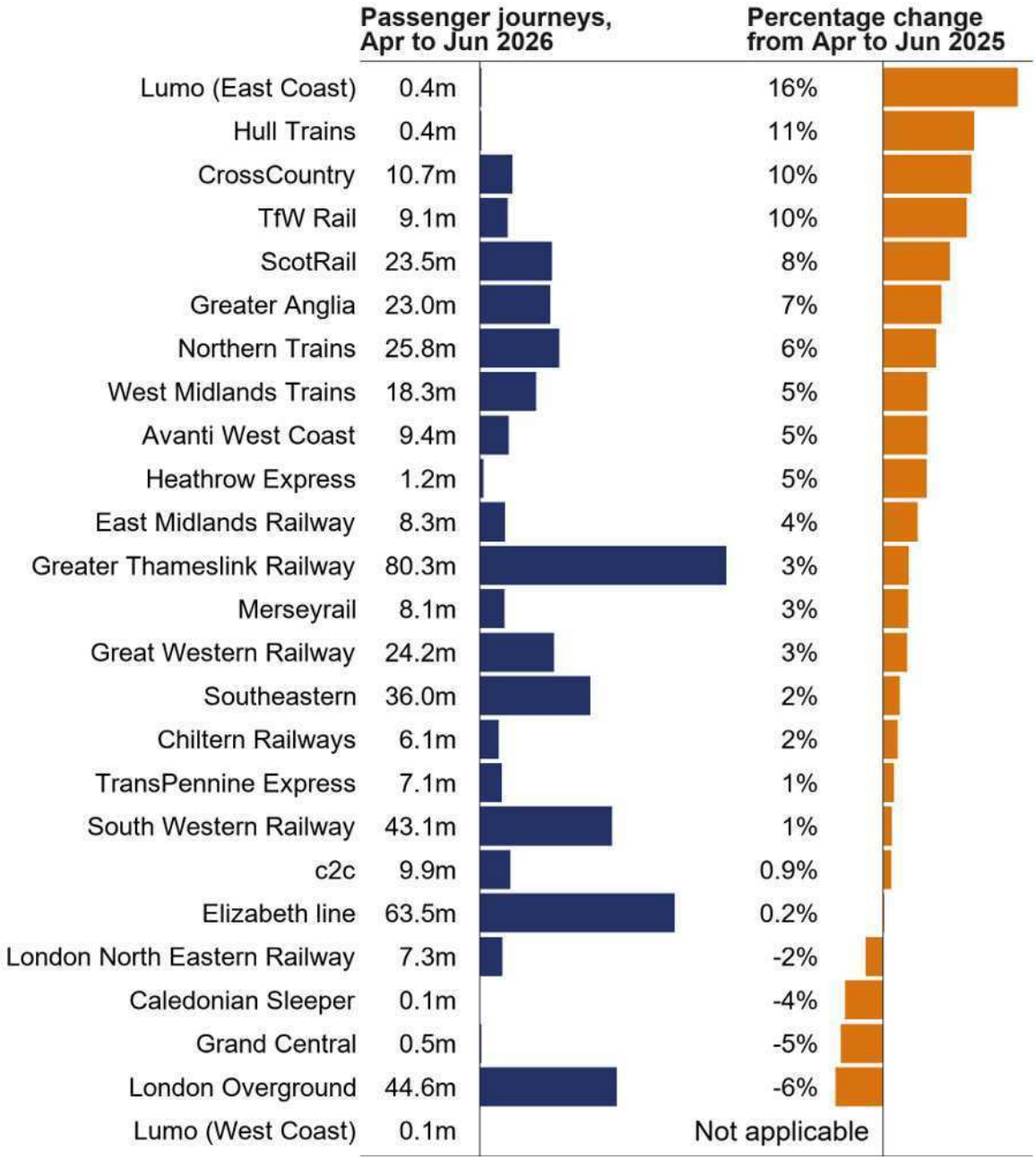
1. Passenger journeys

Passenger journeys by operator

In the latest quarter, there were 461 million passenger journeys made in Great Britain. This is a 2% increase on the 451 million journeys in the same quarter in the previous year.

Figure 1.1 Passenger journeys increased for all but four operators

Passenger journeys by operator, April to June 2026, and the percentage change from April to June 2025 (Table 1223)



Note: Lumo (West Coast) began operations on 25 May 2026, so the journeys presented for this operator do not reflect a full quarter.

Passenger journeys increased for 20 operators compared with the same quarter in the previous year. Lumo (East Coast) (up 16%) had the largest increase in passenger journeys, followed by TfW Rail and CrossCountry (both up 10%). There were decreases in passenger journeys for four operators, with London Overground (down 6%), Grand Central (down 5%) and Caledonian Sleeper (down 4%) recording the largest decreases.

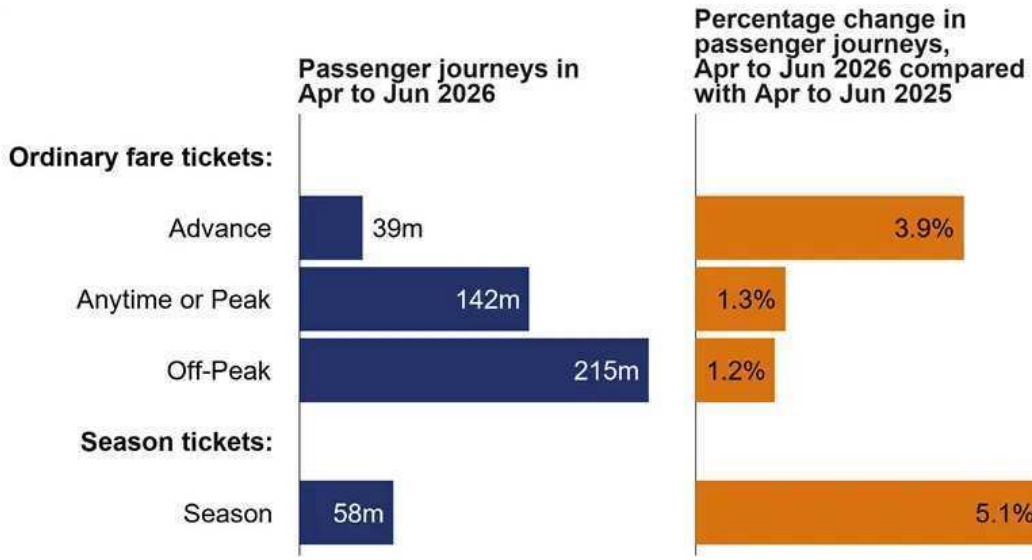
Public service operator journeys by ticket type

There were 58 million public service operator[1] passenger journeys made using Season tickets in the latest quarter, a 5.1% increase on the 55 million journeys made in the same quarter in the previous year. Season tickets made up 14% of total public service operator ticket sales in the latest quarter, similar to the proportion in the same quarter in the previous year.

There were 401 million journeys made using ordinary fare tickets in the latest quarter. This is a 2% increase compared with the 394 million journeys made in the same quarter in the previous year. Journeys using all ordinary fare ticket types increased compared with the same quarter in the previous year. Journeys made using Advance tickets in the latest quarter increased 3.9% compared with the same quarter in the previous year. Journeys using Anytime or Peak and Off-Peak tickets increased by 1.3% and 1.2% respectively.

Figure 1.2 Usage increased for all ticket types

Public service operator passenger journeys in April to June 2026 and percentage change compared with April to June 2025, by ticket type (Table 1222)



Note: The Other ticket type category is excluded, as this includes refunds and other miscellaneous tickets and purchases, which can lead to negative numbers. However, this data can be found in Table 1222.

[1] Public service operators are train operators which are publicly contracted (or owned). These are referred to as 'franchised' operators in some of our data tables and previous releases

2. Passenger revenue

In the latest quarter, passenger revenue was £3.2 billion in Great Britain. This is a 1% decrease from the revenue generated in the same quarter in the previous year.

Historically, regulated rail fares have increased annually based on the Retail Price Index (RPI) in July of the previous year. Fares in England were frozen by the government for 2026. ScotRail and Transport for Wales fares were also frozen for 2026. Rail fares across Great Britain in 2026 saw no change. See our Rail fares index statistics for more information.

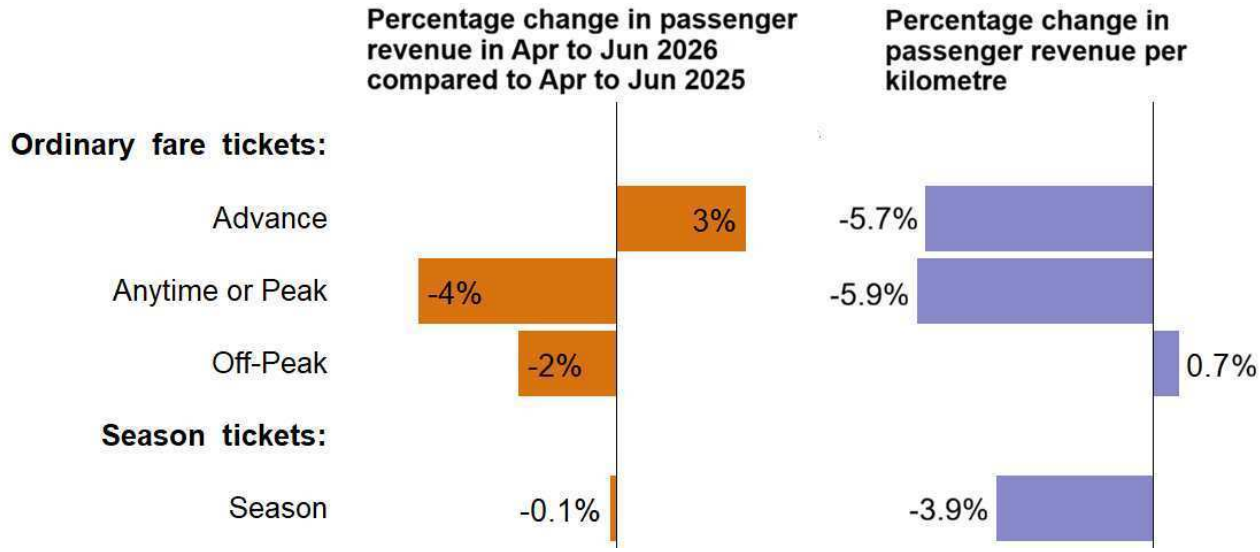
To account for inflation, historic data and comparisons presented in this release have been adjusted to prices for the latest quarter (April to June 2026), using the Consumer Price Index (CPI). For further information see the quality and methodology report.

Public service operator revenue by ticket type

In the latest quarter, a total of £2.8 billion was generated across all public service operator ordinary fare tickets, a decrease of 1% compared with the £2.9 billion in the same quarter in the previous year. The percentage decrease in revenue generated varied across all ticket types. There was a 3% increase in revenue from Advance tickets, while Anytime or Peak (down 4%) and Off-Peak (down 2%) revenue decreased compared with the previous year. Season tickets generated £240 million in revenue, a 0.1% decrease compared with same quarter the previous year.

Figure 2.1 Revenue decreased for all ticket types except Advance

Percentage change in public service operator passenger revenue and revenue per kilometre, by ticket type, in April to June 2026 compared with April to June 2025 (April to June 2026 prices; Tables 1232 and 1212)



Note: The Other ticket type category is excluded, as this includes refunds and other miscellaneous tickets and purchases, which can lead to negative numbers. However, this data can be found in Table 1212.

Revenue per kilometre decreased for journeys using Advance and Anytime or Peak tickets, down 5.7% and 5.9%, respectively, compared with the same quarter in the previous year. For journeys using Off-Peak tickets, revenue per kilometre increased by 0.7% compared with the same quarter in the previous year. Revenue per kilometre decreased by 4% for Season tickets.

3. Other passenger rail usage measures

Passenger kilometres

Passenger kilometres is defined as the total number of kilometres that passengers travelled. In the latest quarter, there were 17.5 billion passenger kilometres travelled in total in Great Britain. This is a 2% increase compared with the 17.1 billion travelled in the same quarter in the previous year. Passenger kilometres travelled per journey increased by 0.2% compared with the same quarter in the previous year.

In the latest quarter, passenger kilometres travelled increased for all public sector operator ticket types except Off-Peak tickets (excluding the 'Other' ticket type), compared with the same quarter in the previous year.

Data on passenger kilometres by rail sector can be found in Table 1231 on the ORR data portal.

Passenger train kilometres

Passenger train kilometres includes only the distance covered by a locomotive itself and does not account for the number of carriages. In the latest quarter, there were 138 million passenger train kilometres travelled. This is a 1% increase on the 136 million recorded in the same quarter in the previous year.

Data on passenger train kilometres by operator can be found in Table 1243.

Passenger vehicle kilometres

Passenger vehicle kilometres includes both the distance covered by locomotives and the carriages they transport. In the latest quarter, there were 842 million passenger vehicle kilometres operated. This is a 1% increase on the 831 million kilometres in the same quarter in the previous year.

Data on passenger vehicle kilometres by operator can be found in Table 1253.

4. Annexes

Annex 1 – Definitions

- **Passenger journeys** are estimated using ticket sales data. For the purpose of these statistics, where travel requires one or more changes of train, each train used is counted as one journey. For example, a journey from Leicester to Manchester would be classed as two journeys due to the need to change trains. This differs from the definition used in the Regional rail usage statistics, which would class this example as one journey. Furthermore, the estimates in this publication do not account for split ticketing, whereas journey estimates in Estimates of station usage include an adjustment. Split ticketing is where two or more tickets are purchased to complete a single journey. In such cases, each ticket is counted individually in the passenger journey statistics, in this publication.
- **Passenger kilometres** are calculated by multiplying the number of passenger journeys on a particular flow by the number of corresponding track kilometres between stations**.**
- **Passenger revenue** statistics include all ticket revenue and miscellaneous charges associated with passenger travel on national railways.
- **Passenger train kilometres** refers to the number of train kilometres travelled by passenger trains. Empty coaching stock movements are included. Sourced from the Track Access Billing System (TABS) it includes train kilometres operated on Network Rail infrastructure and other railway networks including Core Valley Lines, HS1, and TfL infrastructure.
- **Passenger vehicle kilometres** refer to the number of vehicle kilometres travelled by passenger vehicles. They are calculated on the same basis and using the same database (TABS) as passenger train kilometres. A train with a locomotive and four carriages travelling one kilometre will generate one train kilometre and five vehicle kilometres.
- **Average passenger journey length** can be calculated by dividing the total number of passenger kilometres travelled by the total number of passenger journeys.
- The data presented in this release is for **mainline operators** in Great Britain. The data does not include Eurostar, London Underground, light rail, heritage and charter services. **Public service operators** are train operators which are publicly contracted (or owned). These are referred to as ‘franchised’ operators in some of our data tables and previous releases. Data for such operators is also presented for three **sectors**:

- **London and South East** – based on the British Rail Network South East services, this sector includes commuter trains in the London area and inter-urban services in South East England. It extends as far west as Bristol and Exeter (both South Western Railway) and as far northwest as Kidderminster (Chiltern Railways). All Greater Anglia services are included in this sector for passenger rail usage purposes. Southeastern high speed services are included too.
- **Long Distance** – based on the British Rail InterCity services, this sector covers Long Distance services on the East Coast, West Coast, Midland, and Great Western mainlines. Some CrossCountry services are also included.
- **Regional** – based on the British Rail Regional Railways services, this sector covers other services. This includes both the ScotRail and TfW Rail[2] franchises. TransPennine Express and Caledonian Sleeper are included in this sector for passenger rail usage purposes. Some CrossCountry services are also included.

- **Open access operators** – licenced by ORR to run services on specific routes. The data tables that accompany this publication contain data for such operators: **Grand Central**, **Heathrow Express**, **Hull Trains**, **Lumo (East Coast)** (began running services on 25 October 2021), **Lumo (West Coast)** (began running services on 25 May 2026), and **Wrexham and Shropshire** (ceased trading 28 January 2011).
- **Ticket types:**
  - **Advance** (ordinary ticket) – single one-way tickets for a specific train. They are usually cheaper than other ticket types.
  - **Anytime or Peak** (ordinary ticket) – fully flexible tickets that can be used on most trains and at most times. They are usually more expensive.
  - **Off-Peak** (ordinary ticket) – cheaper than anytime fares, but cannot be used during busier times of day.
  - **Other** (ordinary ticket) – includes usage on regional products, rover tickets, some group tickets, and package products (e.g. includes accommodation or onward travel with other forms of transport). Non-travel income (e.g. car parking) is also included in this category for passenger revenue, as too are **refunds**, which can result in this category showing negative numbers.
  - **Season** – allows unlimited travel between two locations for a specified period (from a week up to a year). Such tickets are generally cheaper than daily return tickets for those travelling more than three times a week. The number of journeys estimated for a season ticket varies by the length of the period. For example, 480 journeys are assumed to have been made for each annual season ticket sold.

[2] Includes journeys made on TfW Rail services operated on the Core Valley Lines.

Flexi season tickets are also included here, these allow 8 days of travel in 28 days, any time between two named stations. The pandemic necessitated the use of an alternative methodology for estimating usage with season tickets between 1 April 2020 and 31 March 2021, please see the Passenger rail usage quality and methodology report.

Further information on the operators in each of the three sectors as well as the journey factors for the main season tickets can be found in the Passenger rail usage quality and methodology report.

Annex 2 – Quality and methodology

Primary data source – LENNON

Most of the data contained within this statistical release is sourced from the rail industry's LENNON (Latest Earnings Networked Nationally Over Night) ticketing and revenue system. The statistics presented here use the post-allocation dataset within LENNON that distributes passenger journeys, kilometres and revenue to the train operators. Where travel includes one or more changes of train, each train used is counted as one journey. This is different to Estimates of station usage that uses the pre-allocation dataset. For that release, journeys are based on the origin and destination named on a ticket and do not take into account any changes of train. It therefore produces slightly lower estimates than the total journeys in this Passenger rail usage statistical release.

LENNON is primarily an accounting tool, which inevitably faces limitations for estimating usage precisely. For further information on the limitations of the data and changes made to the methodology between April 2020 and March 2021 due to the pandemic, please see the Passenger rail usage quality and methodology report.

Elizabeth line and overestimate of journeys and kilometres

Prior to May 2022, TfL Rail operated services which ran between Paddington and Reading or Heathrow Airport, and between Liverpool Street and Shenfield. These have subsequently been branded as 'Elizabeth line' services. Since the central section of the Elizabeth line opened in May 2022, we have seen substantial changes in journey patterns which have impacted these statistics.

Contactless and Oyster Pay As You Go (PAYG) travel within the London and South East sector is submitted to LENNON at a level which considers the possible routes customers could have made on their journey. Due to system constraints in how the data is ingested into LENNON, this can result in an overstatement of journey count where multiple routes exist for a single passenger journey. The launch of the Elizabeth line resulted in a particular increase in routing possibilities, most notably from the launch of Phase 5b in November 2022 and therefore increasing the level of overstatement in journey count outputted from LENNON. This overstatement is seen particularly for the Elizabeth line as an operator, as journeys on the Elizabeth line have effectively 'replaced' some journeys that were previously taken on other modes (i.e. not mainline rail) that are not recorded in LENNON, such as London Underground and Docklands Light Railway (DLR). However, some residual impact exists for other operators in the London and South East sector particularly on flows outside of London where contactless is now available.

Elizabeth line correction

In order to correct the overestimation, we contacted TfL, who manage Elizabeth line, to request access to the data it holds on the number of journeys travelled. TfL provided us

with an extract of the internal database used to monitor journey numbers across the Elizabeth line. This data was only available from 24 May 2022, when the central section of the line opened. From 24 May 2022 onwards, this data was used as a direct replacement for the LENNON data. For estimates of journeys before this date, we used the existing LENNON data. For April 2024 to March 2025, only data from April to May was available from TfL, so we incorporated an adjustment to estimate the number of journeys in June.

From July 2024 onwards, we have used the percentage overstatement of LENNON journeys used for June 2024 and applied that to the LENNON journey numbers to generate an estimate of Elizabeth line journeys. To generate the point-to-point journey data, we attributed Elizabeth line journey data based on the distribution of journeys made using actual TfL data from the previous year. Having calculated the point-to-point journey data, we used our passenger kilometre matrix to calculate the passenger kilometres associated with those journeys. See the Passenger rail usage quality and methodology report for more information.

Split ticketing

As estimates of passenger journeys are primarily based on ticket sales, there are limitations that users should be aware of, see Annex 1 of this statistical release and the associated Quality and methodology report for more information. In particular, some train operators' journeys may be overestimated due to the impact of passengers buying 'split tickets' (this is where a passenger completes a single journey using two or more tickets). Rail Delivery Group (RDG) estimates that overall, around 5% of passenger journeys between April 2023 and March 2024 were made using split tickets (it was around 4% in the previous year). Split ticketing has become more prevalent in recent years, therefore the extent to which it affects rail usage statistics has increased. It may be that the recovery of journeys relative to before the pandemic is overstated. Passenger kilometres are not affected by trends in split ticketing.

We are working with RDG to improve our published estimates of passenger journeys by incorporating an adjustment for split ticketing to more accurately reflect the actual number of journeys made. We will continue work to incorporate split ticketing adjustments as soon as possible. This will include revisions to historic passenger journey data back to April 2020.

Other data sources

The passenger journey and kilometre data from LENNON is supplemented by data provided directly to ORR from five train operators as LENNON does not contain all journeys and associated passenger kilometres. These include journeys made on tickets such as operator specific tickets and Passenger Transport Executive (PTE) multi-modal tickets. Most of the revenue associated with such journeys is captured by the LENNON system.

The estimates for London Overground passenger journeys and kilometres are adjusted to align with data captured by the operator's train load weight system. As described above, Elizabeth line passenger journeys and kilometres are largely based on data from TfL.

Actual passenger train and vehicle kilometre data is sourced from the Track Access Billing System (TABS). The data is provided by Network Rail.

Recent changes to train operators

Lumo are now referred to as Lumo (East Coast). This to differentiate the services to and from London King's Cross from the Lumo (West Coast) services to and from London Euston which commenced in May 2026.

On 31 May 2026, Govia Thameslink Railway was transferred to public control and was rebranded as Greater Thameslink Railway.

Further information on individual operators, including route maps, can be found via the Rail Delivery Group website.

Revisions

There have been no revisions to previously published data.

Data presented in this release is correct at the time of publication but may change due to subsequent revisions.

Details on previous revisions can be found in the Revisions log.

How these statistics can be used



- Monitoring the number of quarterly passenger journeys and kilometres travelled by mainline rail in Great Britain
- Comparing passenger journeys and kilometres by sector, train operator, and ticket type
- Comparing passenger revenue by sector and ticket type
- Monitoring passenger train and vehicle kilometres by train operator

How these statistics cannot be used



- Monitoring the number of annual journeys within and between Scotland, Wales and Regions of England (refer to Regional rail usage statistics)
- Monitoring the number of entries and exits or interchanges at individual stations (refer to Estimates of station usage)
- Exploring rail journey flows between origin and destination stations (refer to the Origin Destination Matrix on the Rail Data Marketplace)
- Comparing passenger revenue by train operator (refer to Rail industry finance)

Annex 3 – List of data tables associated with this release and other related statistics

Data tables

All data tables can be accessed on the ORR data portal free of charge in OpenDocument Spreadsheet (.ods) format. We can also provide data in csv format on request.

All tables associated with this release can be found under the Data tables heading at the bottom of the Passenger rail usage page.

Passenger journeys

- Passenger journeys - annual – Table 1220
- Passenger journeys by sector - quarterly – Table 1221
- Passenger journeys by ticket type - quarterly – Table 1222
- Passenger journeys by operator - quarterly – Table 1223

Passenger kilometres

- Passenger kilometres - annual – Table 1230
- Passenger kilometres by sector - quarterly – Table 1231
- Passenger kilometres by ticket type - quarterly – Table 1232
- Passenger kilometres by operator - quarterly – Table 1233

Passenger revenue

- Passenger revenue by sector - quarterly – Table 1211
- Passenger revenue by ticket type - quarterly – Table 1212
- Revenue per passenger kilometre and per passenger journey (franchised only) - quarterly – Table 1210

Passenger train and vehicle kilometres

- Passenger train kilometres by operator - quarterly – Table 1243
- Passenger vehicle kilometres by operator - quarterly – Table 1253

Other related data

We publish annual Estimates of station usage statistics, which includes the number of entries, exits and interchanges at all open mainline stations in Great Britain.

We also publish annual statistics on Regional rail usage, which includes the number of rail journeys between and within regions. The Origin and Destination Matrix, which is the source for this and the station usage publication, contains the estimated number of journeys between each pair of mainline stations in Great Britain. Datasets for each of the last five years are available on the Rail Data Marketplace.

The Department for Transport (DfT) also publishes some rail statistics. For example, rail passenger numbers and overcrowding on weekdays in major cities.

DfT also publishes statistics on public transport including statistics on the usage of the Channel Tunnel.

Great British Railways Transition Team previously published rail related news, including quarterly statistics on the breakdown of journey types into leisure and business.

European comparisons

Data on passenger journeys by European country is published by Eurostat. Data on other measures of passenger usage are published in the IRG-Rail fourteenth Annual Market Monitoring Report.

Annex 4 – ORR's statistical publications

Our statistical practice is regulated by the Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR). OSR sets the standards of trustworthiness, quality and value in the Code of Practice for Statistics that all producers of official statistics should adhere to. You are welcome to contact us directly with any comments about how we meet these standards by emailing rail.stats@orr.gov.uk. Alternatively, you can contact OSR by emailing regulation@statistics.gov.uk or via the OSR website.

Statistical Releases

This publication is part of ORR's 'accredited official statistics', which consist of seven annual publications: **Estimates of station usage; Rail industry finance (UK); Rail fares index; Rail safety; Rail infrastructure and assets; Rail environment; Regional rail usage**; one biannual publication: **Passenger rail service complaints;** and three quarterly publications: **Passenger rail performance; Freight rail usage and performance; Passenger rail usage.**

ORR also publishes a number of other official statistics, which consist of five annual publications: **Common Safety Indicators; Passenger satisfaction with complaints handling; Train operating company key statistics; Occupational health; Rail trends (formerly Rail statistics compendium);** one biannual publication: **Passenger lifts at stations** (official statistics in development); and four quarterly publications: **Signals passed at danger (SPADs); Delay compensation claims; Disabled Persons Railcards (DPRC); Passenger assistance**.

All the above publications are available on the data portal along with a list of publication dates for the next 12 months.

Accredited official statistics

Accredited official statistics are called National Statistics in the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007. They are official statistics that have been independently reviewed by the Office for Statistics Regulation and found to comply with the standards of trustworthiness, quality and value in the Code of Practice for Statistics.

The majority of our statistical releases were independently reviewed by the OSR in June 2012. They comply with the standards of trustworthiness, quality and value in the Code of Practice for Statistics and are labelled accredited official statistics.

Since our review we have improved the content, presentation and quality of our statistical releases. In addition, in July 2019 we launched our new data portal. Therefore, in late 2019 we worked with the OSR to conduct a compliance check to ensure we are still meeting the standards of the Code. On 5 November 2019, OSR published a

letter confirming that ORR's statistics should continue to be accredited official statistics. OSR found many positive aspects in the way that we produce and present our statistics and welcomed the range of improvements made since the statistics were last assessed.

Estimates of station usage statistics were independently reviewed by OSR in November 2020 and their accreditation was confirmed on 1 December 2020.

For more information on how we adhere to the Code please see our compliance statements.

If you have any feedback or questions, please email rail.stats@orr.gov.uk.

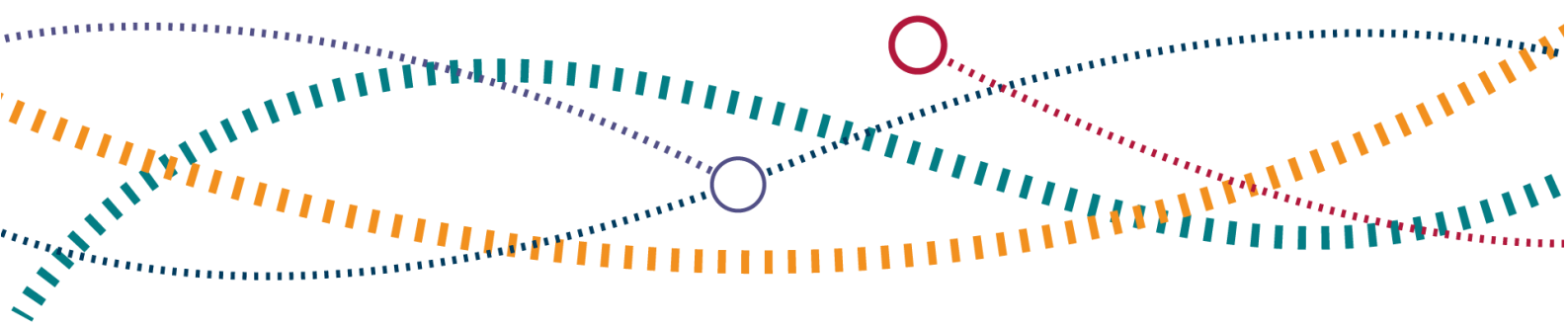
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This publication is available at dataportal.orr.gov.uk

Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at orr.gov.uk/contact-us



Appendix G

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Freight rail usage and performance

April to June 2026

22 September 2026

Background:

This quarterly statistical release contains information on the usage and performance of rail freight in Great Britain.

It also contains more detailed information by freight operator.

Numbers presented in this release are rounded.

Sources: Network Rail, freight operators, Department for Transport

Latest quarter: 1 April to 30 June 2026

Contents:

Context – page 2
Freight moved – page 3
Freight lifted – page 5
Freight train and vehicle kilometres – page 6
Freight market indicators – page 9
Freight cancellations – page 10
Freight delay per 100 train kilometres – page 12
Annexes – page 13

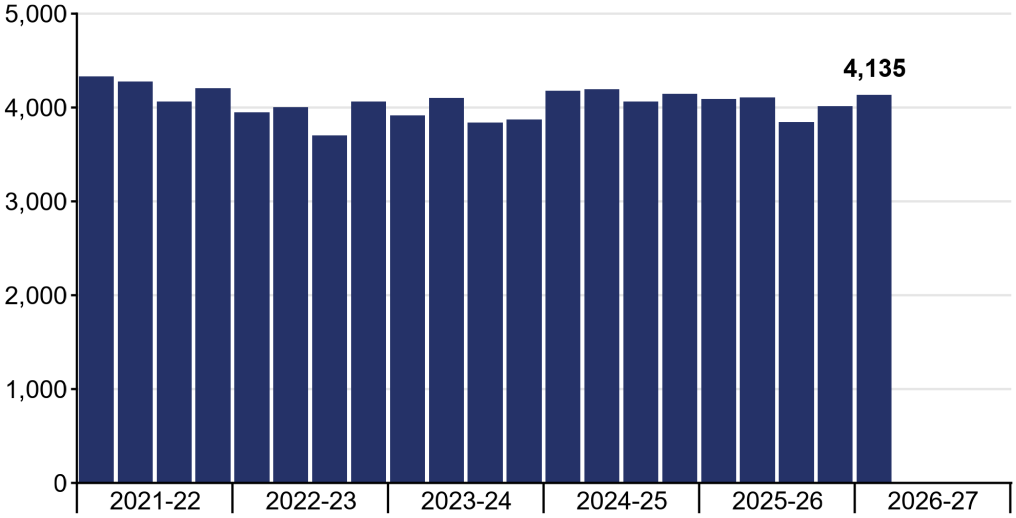
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Next publication:
15 December 2026

In the latest quarter (April to June 2026), total **freight moved** was **4,135 million net tonne kilometres**. This was up 1% compared with the same quarter last year. Of this, by commodity, intermodal maritime had the largest impact on the overall increase.

Figure 1 Freight moved increased compared with the same quarter the previous year

Freight moved (million net tonne kilometres), Great Britain, quarterly data, April 2021 to June 2026 (Table 1310)



Total **freight lifted** was **17.6 million tonnes** in the latest quarter, a decrease of 1% compared with the same quarter in the previous year.

Freight cancellations was **1.1%** in the latest quarter. This was 0.1 percentage points higher (i.e. worse) than the same quarter in the previous year.

We are proposing changes to this publication. Details can be found on page 2. For feedback or questions, please email rail.stats@orr.gov.uk.

All data tables, a quality and methodology report and an interactive dashboard associated with this release are published on the Freight rail usage and performance page on the ORR data portal.

Context

Proposed changes to these statistics

We propose the following changes to the freight rail usage and performance statistics from the Quarter 2 (July to September 2026) publication onwards:

- Remove content relating to **freight delay per 100 train kilometres**. There has been a shift away from the use of freight delay per 100 train kilometres in the rail industry, with freight cancellations considered the primary measure of freight performance. The existing data table on freight delay per 100 train kilometres (Table 1325) has a low number of downloads. We are therefore proposing to remove this table from the data portal and exclude this section in future statistical releases.

- Remove Table 1320: Freight Delivery Metric and Table 1324: Freight Delivery Metric by Region (FDM-R) – updates to these tables were ceased after March 2024.

Please provide any feedback on this proposal by contacting us at rail.stats@orr.gov.uk by 31 October 2026.

In the previous quarterly release, we proposed to remove content relating to **freight cancellations and lateness (FCaL)** from this publication. Following user feedback, we have retained this within the freight cancellations section of this release.

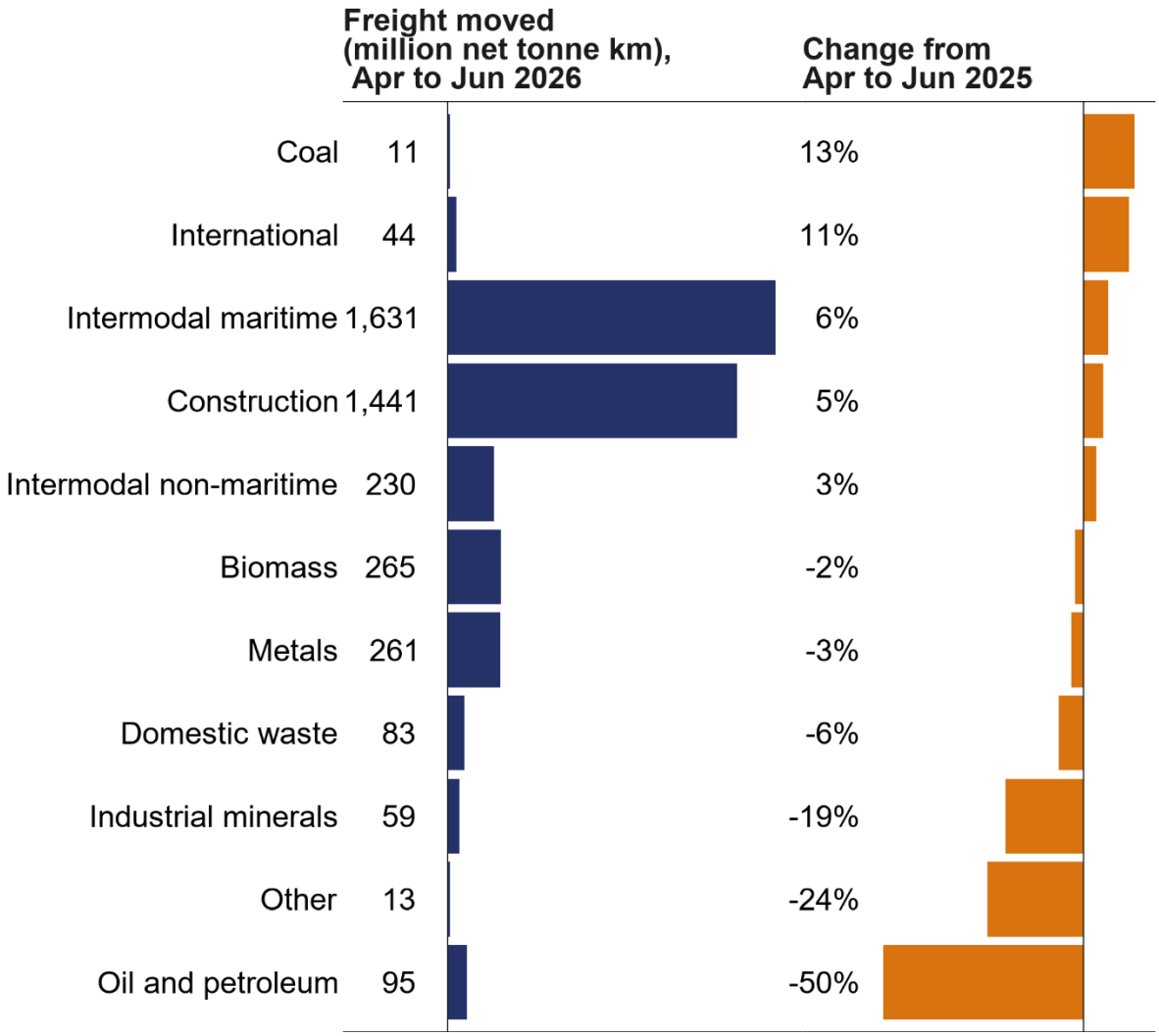
1. Freight moved

Freight moved measures the amount of freight moved on the railway network, taking into account the weight of the load and the distance carried, measured in net tonne kilometres.

In the latest quarter, total freight moved was 4,135 million net tonne kilometres. This was an increase of 1% compared with the same quarter in the previous year.

Figure 1.1 Intermodal maritime and construction both increased this quarter

Freight moved (million net tonne kilometres) by commodity, Great Britain, April to June 2026 and percentage change (rounded) from April to June 2025 (Table 1310)



Freight moved increased for five commodities compared with the same quarter in the previous year. Of this, intermodal maritime (up 6%) had the largest impact on the overall increase. This was also the highest April to June quarter for intermodal maritime freight since 2010. This can be attributed in part to the high load utilisation of services at the

London Gateway deep sea container port due to the terminal's constraints on total train numbers.

There was also a notable increase in the movement of construction freight (up 5%). This was the highest April to June quarter since the start of the time series in 1998. This reflects the continued building of HS2 and the construction of Sizewell C nuclear power station. There was increased urban residential and commercial activity in the Midlands and North West indicative of the reported increase in construction sector confidence.

Freight moved decreased for six commodities compared with the same quarter in the previous year. This includes oil and petroleum (down 50%) which had the largest percentage reduction. This follows the closure of the Lindsey Oil Refinery which has led to the cessation of more freight services related to this commodity. As a result, this was the lowest quarter for oil and petroleum since the time series began.

More information on the commodity groups can be found in the Freight quality and methodology report.

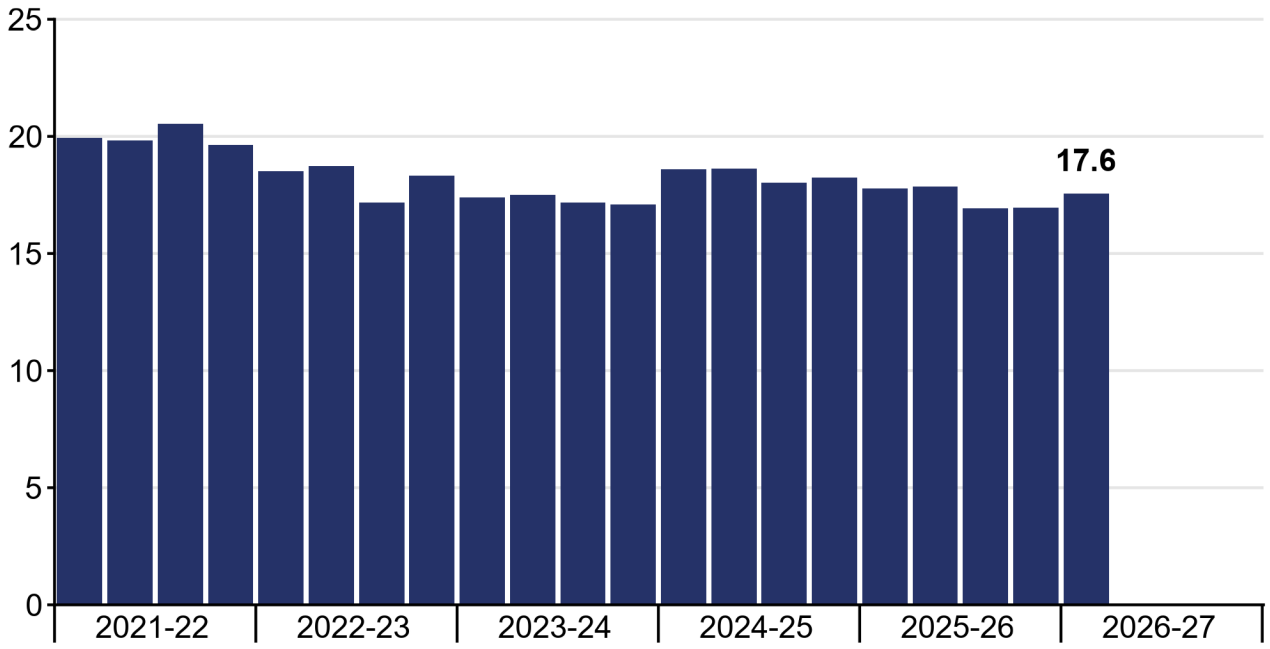
2. Freight lifted

Freight lifted is the mass of goods carried on the rail network measured in tonnes, excluding the weight of the locomotives and wagons.

The total amount of freight lifted in the latest quarter was 17.6 million tonnes. This was down 1% compared with the same quarter in the previous year.

Figure 2.1 Freight lifted was the lowest April to June quarter since 2023

Freight lifted (million tonnes), Great Britain, quarterly data, April 2021 to June 2026 (Table 1315)



Of total freight lifted, 1.1 million tonnes was coal, which was down 0.1% compared with the same quarter in the previous year. The remaining 16.5 million tonnes was other commodities. This was down 1% compared with the previous year.

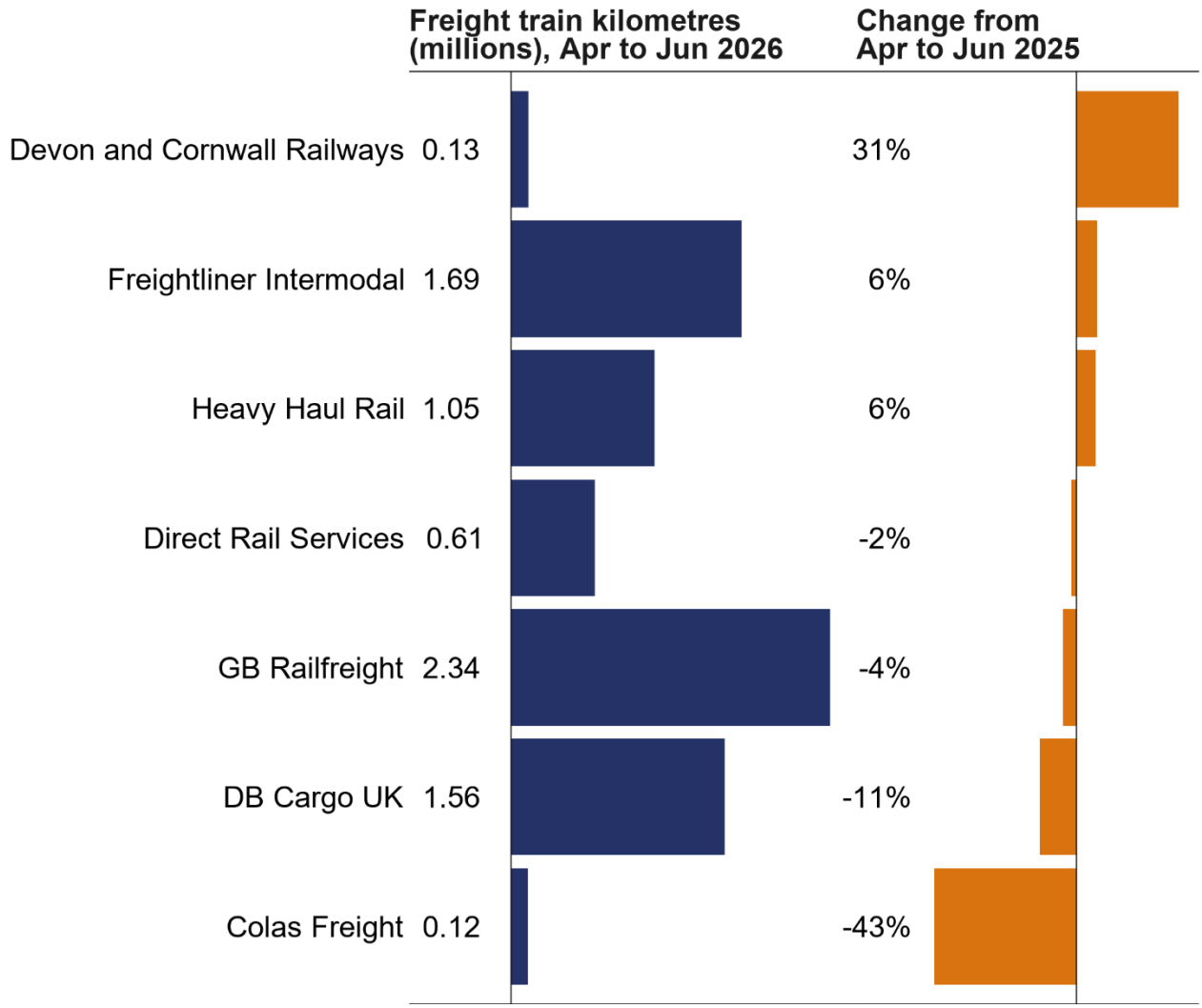
3. Freight train and vehicle kilometres

Freight train kilometres is the actual kilometres travelled by freight operators on all mainline infrastructure, terminals and yards.

In the latest quarter, freight operators recorded 7.5 million train kilometres. This was down 3% compared with the same quarter in the previous year. It was the second lowest April to June quarter since the start of the time series in 2010 (the lowest was during the pandemic in 2020).

Figure 3.1 Colas Freight had the largest percentage decrease in train kilometres compared with the previous year

Freight train kilometres (millions) by operator, Great Britain, April to June 2026 and percentage change (rounded) from April to June 2025 (Table 1333)

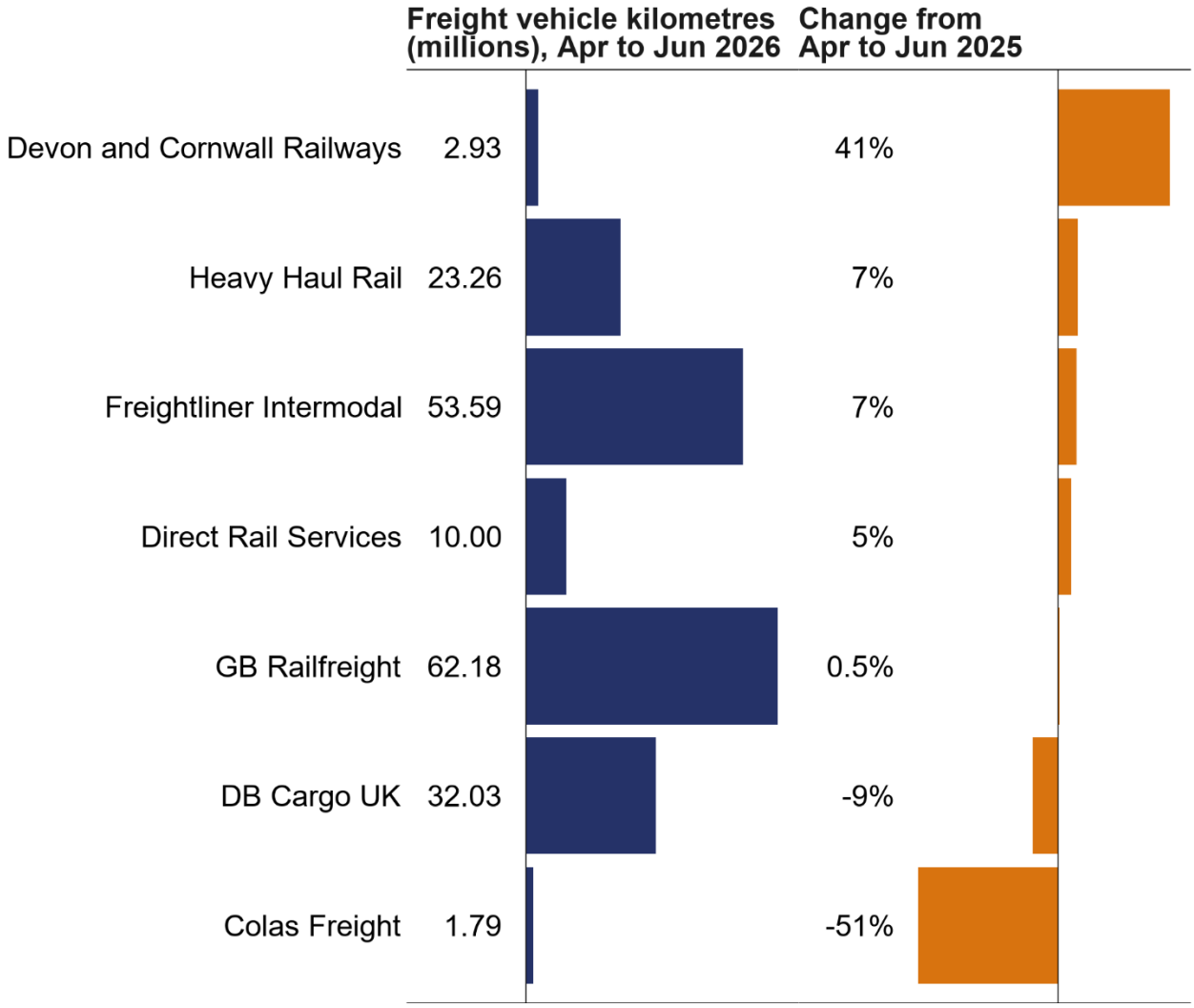


Freight vehicle kilometres is the actual vehicle kilometres travelled by freight operators on all mainline infrastructure, terminals and yards. This is calculated by multiplying the number of rail vehicles (e.g. coaches) by the distance travelled.

A total of 185.8 million freight vehicle kilometres was recorded in the latest quarter. This was up 1% compared with the same quarter in the previous year.

Figure 3.2 Freight vehicle kilometres increased for most operators compared with the previous year

Freight vehicle kilometres (millions) by operator, Great Britain, April to June 2026 and percentage change (rounded) from April to June 2025 (Table 1343)



In the latest quarter, the freight operator with the largest percentage increase in train and vehicle kilometres was Devon and Cornwall Railways. It had the highest train and vehicle kilometres of any quarter since the time series began in 2010. There was also an increase in both train and vehicle kilometres for Freightliner Intermodal and Heavy Haul Rail. For all these operators, the increase in vehicle kilometres was larger than in train kilometres,

which suggests there were more vehicles (i.e. longer trains) in the latest quarter compared with the same quarter in the previous year.

Direct Rail Services and GB Railfreight had a decrease in train kilometres, alongside an increase in vehicle kilometres. They both had the highest vehicle kilometres of any quarter since the start of the time series.

Meanwhile, freight train and vehicle kilometres decreased for Colas Freight and DB Cargo UK. This was the lowest train kilometres of any quarter recorded by DB Cargo UK since the time series began.

Data broken down by traction type (electric or diesel) is available on the data portal. Table 1333 shows the breakdown for freight train kilometres and Table 1343 shows the breakdown for freight vehicle kilometres.

4. Freight market indicators

Rail freight impact on road haulage (April 2024 to March 2025 annual)

There were 5.63 million lorry journeys avoided in April 2024 to March 2025 through transporting freight by rail rather than road.

Between April 2024 to March 2025, the number of lorry kilometres which would be required to transport the volumes of freight moved by rail was 1.42 billion kilometres, a 9% increase compared with the previous year.

Rail freight market share (2024)

Figure 4.1: Rail accounted for 8% of freight moved by all transport modes

Rail freight moved market share, Great Britain, annual data, 2024 (Table 1350)

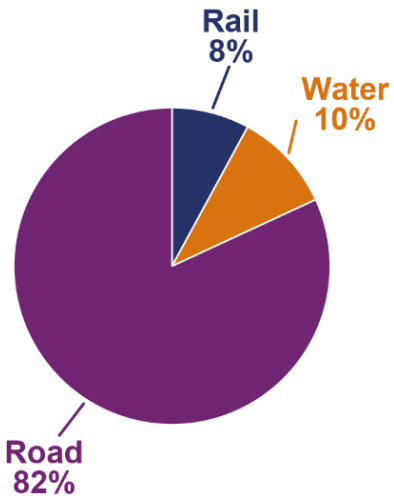
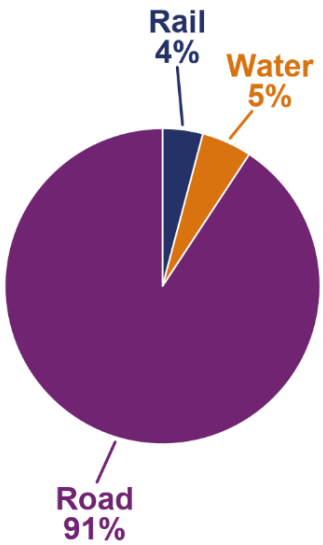


Figure 4.2: Rail accounted for 4% of freight lifted by all transport modes

Rail freight lifted market share, Great Britain, annual data, 2024 (Table 1350)



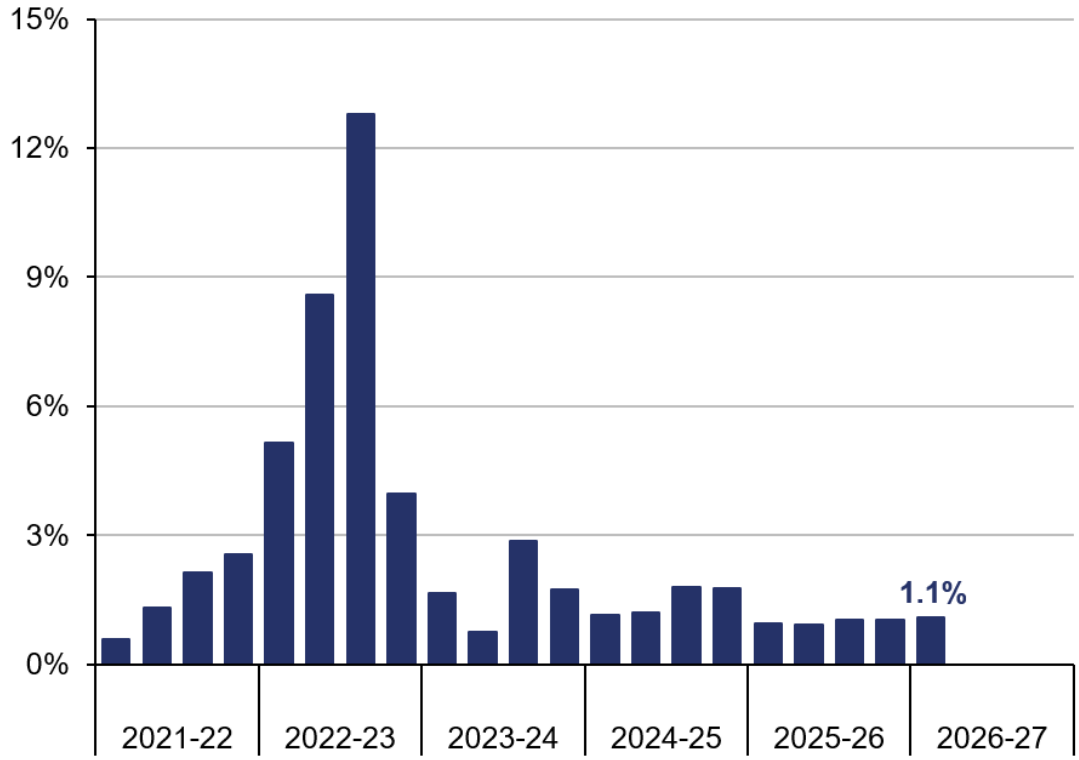
5. Freight cancellations

Freight cancellations measures the percentage of commercial freight services that are cancelled by the infrastructure manager or another operator that is not a commercial freight operator.

In the latest quarter, freight cancellations was 1.1%. This was up 0.1 percentage points (i.e. worse) compared with the same quarter in the previous year.

Figure 5.1 Freight cancellations has increased compared with the same quarter in the previous year

Freight cancellations (percentage), Great Britain, quarterly data, April 2021 to June 2026 (Table 1355)

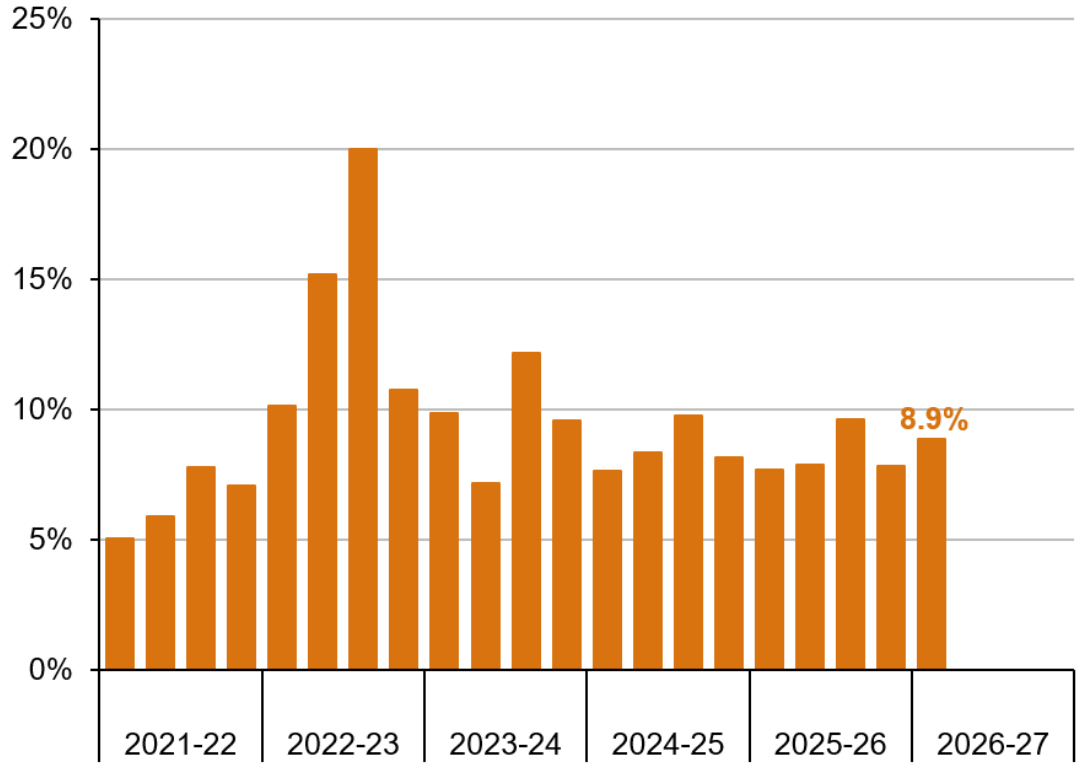


Freight cancellations and lateness (FCaL) is the percentage of commercial freight services that are *either*: cancelled by the infrastructure manager or another operator that is not a commercial freight operator; *or* arrive at their planned destination 15 minutes or more after their booked arrival time with 15 minutes or more delay caused by the infrastructure manager or another operator that is not a commercial freight operator.

In the latest quarter, the proportion of freight trains cancelled or arriving after 15 minutes was 8.9% (FCaL). This was up 1.2 percentage points (i.e. worse) compared with the same quarter in the previous year. This was the highest April to June quarter for FCaL since 2023.

Figure 5.2 Freight cancellations and lateness (FCaL) has also increased

FCaL (percentage), Great Britain, quarterly data, April 2021 to June 2026 (Table 1365)



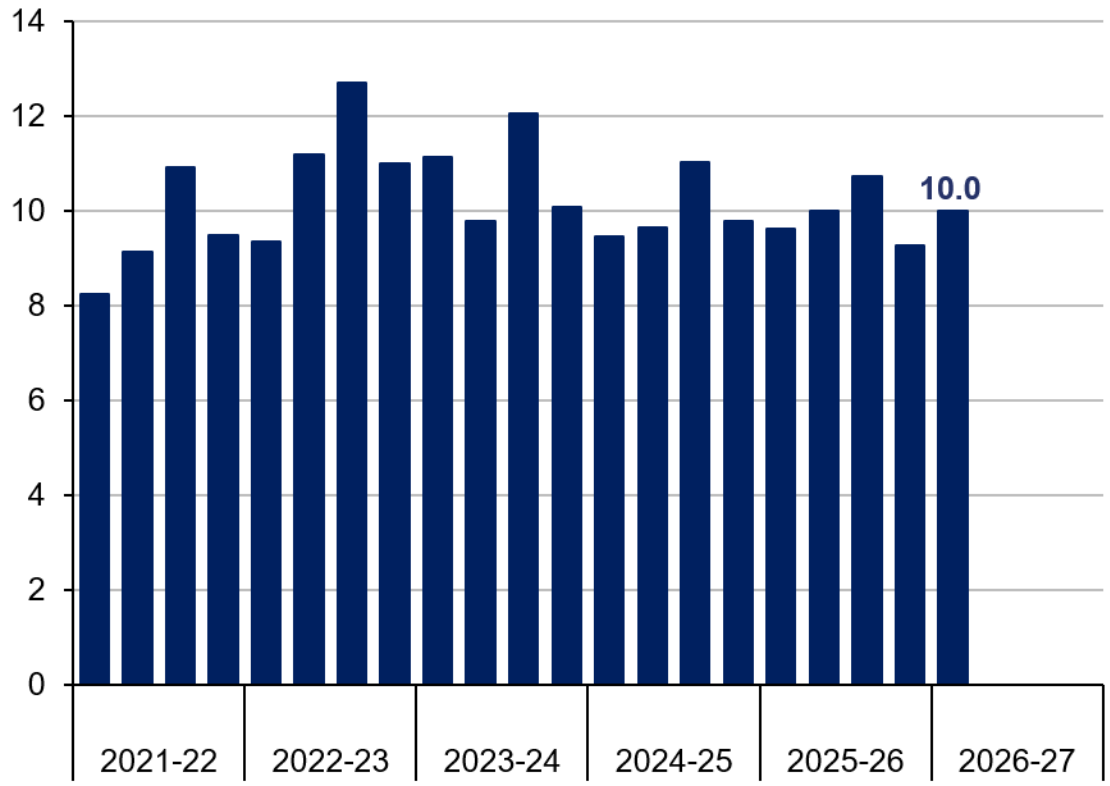
6. Freight delay per 100 train kilometres

Freight delay per 100 train kilometres is a normalised measure of delay experienced by freight operators. It is calculated from the total delay experienced by all Great Britain freight operators divided by their train mileage.

In the latest quarter, freight operators experienced 10.0 minutes of delay per 100 train kilometres. This was 4% higher (i.e. worse) than the same quarter the previous year. It was the highest April to June quarter since 2023.

Figure 6.1 Freight delay has increased compared with the same quarter in the previous year

Freight delay per 100 train kilometres (minutes), Great Britain, quarterly data, April 2021 to June 2026 (Table 1325)



7. Annexes

Annex 1 – Definitions

- **Freight moved** measures the amount of freight moved on the railway network, taking into account the weight of the load and the distance carried. It is measured in net tonne kilometres. It is based on the contracted distance, which is the number of kilometres agreed upon between Network Rail and the freight operator, regardless of whether a train is diverted onto a route with a different distance.

- **Freight lifted** is the mass of goods carried on the rail network measured in tonnes, excluding the weight of the locomotives and wagons. Unlike freight moved it takes no account of the distance travelled.

- **Freight train kilometres** is the actual kilometres travelled by freight operators on all mainline infrastructure, terminals and yards**.** The data in the table covers electric, diesel and all traction. Competition between freight operators means we would expect a greater level of variation in mileage from year to year than in the passenger market.

- **Freight vehicle kilometres** is the actual vehicle kilometres travelled by freight operators on all mainline infrastructure, terminals and yards. This is calculated by multiplying the number of rail vehicles (e.g. coaches) by the distance travelled. A train with a locomotive and four carriages travelling one kilometre will generate one **train kilometre** and five **vehicle kilometres**. The data in the table covers electric, diesel and all traction. Competition between freight operators means we would expect a greater level of variation in mileage from year to year than in the passenger market.

- **Freight cancellations** measures the percentage of commercial freight services that are cancelled by the infrastructure manager or another operator that is not a commercial freight operator. *A lower score indicates better performance.* **Moving annual average (MAA)** reflects the proportion of freight cancellations in the past 12 months. In the final quarter of the year (January to March), the MAA also represents the freight cancellations for the financial year.

- **Freight cancellations and lateness (FCaL)** is the percentage of commercial freight services that are *either*: cancelled by the infrastructure manager or another operator that is not a commercial freight operator; *or* arrive at their planned destination 15 minutes or more after their booked arrival time with 15 minutes or more delay caused by the infrastructure manager or another operator that is not a commercial freight operator. *A lower score indicates better performance.* **Moving annual average (MAA)** reflects the FCaL performance in the past 12 months. In the final quarter of the year (January to March), the MAA also represents the FCaL percentage for the financial year.

- **Freight delay per 100 train kilometres** is a normalised measure of delay experienced by freight operators. It is calculated from the total delay experienced by all Great Britain freight operators divided by their train mileage. Freight train mileage can fluctuate depending on demand so a normalised measure allows for comparison over time regardless of changing levels of freight traffic on the network. *A lower score indicates better performance.*

The remaining measures are updated on the data portal annually and usually included in the January to March quarter statistical release and associated data tables.

- **Freight train movements** measures the number of freight trains run on the mainline rail network. The data is sourced from Network Rail annually and covers only trains that are chargeable. Each freight train is designated into a chargeable or non-chargeable category. Non-chargeable categories include empty trains to/from depots, operators moving equipment to/from site for Network Rail engineering work and unplanned train schedules (i.e. last minute).

- Rail freight impact on road haulage is measured using two metrics:

  - **Rail freight lorry kilometres equivalent** measures the distance that road vehicles (HGVs) would need to travel to move the volumes of freight carried on rail.

  - **Avoided lorry journeys** measures the number of road vehicle trips that would need to be made to move freight carried on rail.

- **Rail freight market share** compares the volumes of freight lifted (tonnes) and freight moved (net tonne kilometres) on road (HGVs), waterways and rail. These shares are calculated using Department for Transport's annual figures published in Transport Statistics Great Britain.

Further information on each of these measures and other definitions can be found in the Freight quality and methodology report.

Annex 2 – Quality and methodology

Data sources and methodology

Most of the quarterly data, and annual data on freight train movements, is sourced from Network Rail, with the exception of freight lifted data. This data is sourced directly from the seven largest freight operators (DB Cargo UK, Freightliner Intermodal, Heavy Haul Rail, GB Railfreight, Direct Rail Services, Colas Freight, and Devon and Cornwall Railways).

Annual data used to calculate rail freight impact on road haulage and rail freight market share is sourced from Department for Transport. This is included in the final quarter of the financial year (January to March) releases only.

Due to a methodology change, data calculated using Department for Transport's domestic road freight statistics pre-2021 and post-2021 is not directly comparable. We have continued to present the full time series within our supporting data tables (tables 1340 and 1350) but have marked the relevant years with a series break to indicate that data pre and post series break should not be compared. For more details on the change, please see Department for Transport's methodology note.

To provide more comprehensive coverage of the freight market, estimates of freight lifted have been calculated for Colas Freight (April 2010 to March 2020) and Devon and Cornwall Railways (April 2011 to March 2024). From April 2020 Colas Freight are providing actual freight lifted data, and from April 2024 Devon and Cornwall Railways are also providing actual freight lifted data. The estimates were based on calculating the number of freight train movements in a quarter for each operator (estimated from their actual train mileage data) and multiplying that by the average tonnes lifted per train for the latest full year, at a national level.

Network Rail provides data to ORR within 21 days of the end of each of the 13 railway reporting periods (each period lasts four weeks). The quarterly data in this release sourced from Network Rail are derived by splitting the periodic data according to the number of days of the period that fall within each quarter.

The latest freight train kilometres data, freight vehicle kilometres data and freight delay per 100 train kilometres data should be treated as provisional. Freight operators can provide Network Rail with additional data (e.g. cancellations) and Network Rail may re-attribute delays over time.

Further development of these statistics

Our freight lifted statistics are currently disaggregated between Coal and Other. Following the slowdown in Coal traffic, this split has limited value. We investigated the possibility of

providing a more disaggregated set of commodities in future, however we have been unable to source the required data.

Revisions

Data presented in this release is correct at the time of publication but may change due to subsequent revisions.

There have been revisions to previously published data:

- Table 1310: Quarterly data has been revised from April 2010 onwards due to a calculation error.
- Table 1315: Data has been revised for 2024-25 and 2025-26 due to refreshed data from two freight operators.
- Table 1340: Data for April 2023 to March 2024 have been revised for Rail freight lorry kilometres equivalent due to revisions in freight moved data. Data for Avoided lorry journeys has also been revised for the same year due to revisions in freight lifted data by one operator.
- Table 1350: Water freight lifted data has been revised for January to December 2021, resulting in a small change in the market share value. Rail freight moved data has been revised for January to December 2023 following receipt of refreshed data from one freight operator.

Details of previous revisions can be found in the revisions log.

Further information on data sources, quality, and the methodology used to calculate the data within the release can be found in the Freight quality and methodology report.

How these statistics can be used



- Measuring rail freight volumes and market share by commodity over time
- Comparing distances run by freight operators over time
- Monitoring the impact of Network Rail and passenger operator caused delay on freight reliability
- Comparing the size of the rail freight market relative to other modes

How these statistics cannot be used



- Using freight trains ran as an indication of freight volumes due to train lengthening schemes and more efficient use of the network
- Using freight train kilometres by operator as a proxy for market share of volumes due to the variation in freight train distances
- Identifying origin and destination of freight flows
- Estimating freight revenues (refer to rail industry finance)
- Estimating freight emissions (refer to rail environment)

Annex 3 – List of data tables associated with this release and other related statistics

Data tables

All data tables can be accessed on the ORR data portal free of charge in OpenDocument Spreadsheet (.ods) format. We can also provide data in csv format on request.

All tables associated with this release can be found under the Data tables heading at the bottom of the Freight rail usage and performance page.

Freight usage

- Freight moved by commodity (quarterly) – Table 1310
- Freight moved by Network Rail region (periodic) – Table 1311
- Freight moved by commodity (periodic) – Table 1314
- Freight lifted (quarterly) – Table 1315
- Freight trains run (annual) – Table 1330
- Freight train kilometres by operator (quarterly) – Table 1333
- Rail freight impact on road haulage (annual) – Table 1340
- Freight vehicle kilometres by operator (quarterly) – Table 1343
- Rail freight market share (annual) – Table 1350

Freight performance

- Freight delays per 100 train kilometres (quarterly) – Table 1325
- Freight cancellations by Network Rail region (periodic) – Table 1351
- Freight cancellations by Network Rail route (periodic) – Table 1352
- Freight cancellations (quarterly) – Table 1355
- Freight cancellations and lateness by Network Rail region (periodic) – Table 1361
- Freight cancellations and lateness by Network Rail route (periodic) – Table 1362
- Freight cancellations and lateness (quarterly) – Table 1365

Other related statistics

Passenger rail usage statistics are published on the Passenger rail usage page on the data portal.

Passenger rail performance statistics are published on the Passenger rail performance page on the data portal.

Estimates of passenger and freight energy consumption and carbon dioxide equivalent (CO2e) emissions are published on the Rail environment page on the data portal.

The Department for Transport (DfT) also publishes some multimodal freight statistics as part of the Transport Statistics Great Britain publication.

European comparisons

Due to differences in how freight punctuality is measured in other countries, opportunities to make direct comparisons with statistics in this release are limited. Data from other European countries is published in the IRG-Rail Fourteenth Annual Market Monitoring Report, including comparable traffic volume data based on freight train kilometres.

Annex 4 – ORR's statistical publications

Our statistical practice is regulated by the Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR). OSR sets the standards of trustworthiness, quality and value in the Code of Practice for Statistics that all producers of official statistics should adhere to. You are welcome to contact us directly with any comments about how we meet these standards by emailing rail.stats@orr.gov.uk. Alternatively, you can contact OSR by emailing regulation@statistics.gov.uk or via the OSR website.

Statistical releases

This publication is part of ORR's 'accredited official statistics', which consist of seven annual publications: **Estimates of station usage; Rail industry finance (UK); Rail fares index; Rail safety; Rail infrastructure and assets; Rail environment; Regional rail usage**; one biannual publication: **Passenger rail service complaints**; and three quarterly publications: **Passenger rail performance; Freight rail usage and performance; Passenger rail usage.**

ORR also publishes a number of other official statistics, which consist of five annual publications: **Common Safety Indicators; Passenger satisfaction with complaints handling; Train operating company key statistics; Occupational health**; **Rail trends (formerly Rail statistics compendium)**; one biannual publication: **Passenger lifts at stations** (official statistics in development); and four quarterly publications: **Signals passed at danger (SPADs); Delay compensation claims; Disabled Persons Railcards (DPRC); Passenger assistance.**

All the above publications are available on the data portal along with a list of publication dates for the next 12 months.

Accredited official statistics

Accredited official statistics are called National Statistics in the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007. They are official statistics that have been independently reviewed by the Office for Statistics Regulation and found to comply with the standards of trustworthiness, quality and value in the Code of Practice for Statistics.

The majority of our statistical releases were independently reviewed by the OSR in June 2012. They comply with the standards of trustworthiness, quality and value in the Code of Practice for Statistics and are labelled accredited official statistics.

Since our review we have improved the content, presentation and quality of our statistical releases. In addition, in July 2019 we launched our new data portal. Therefore, in late 2019 we worked with the OSR to conduct a compliance check to ensure we are still meeting the standards of the Code. On 4 November 2019, OSR published a

letter confirming that ORR's statistics should continue to be accredited official statistics. OSR found many positive aspects in the way that we produce and present our statistics and welcomed the range of improvements made since the statistics were last assessed.

Estimates of station usage statistics were independently reviewed by OSR in November 2020 and their accreditation was confirmed on 1 December 2020.

For more information on how we adhere to the Code please see our compliance statements.

If you have any feedback or questions please email rail.stats@orr.gov.uk.

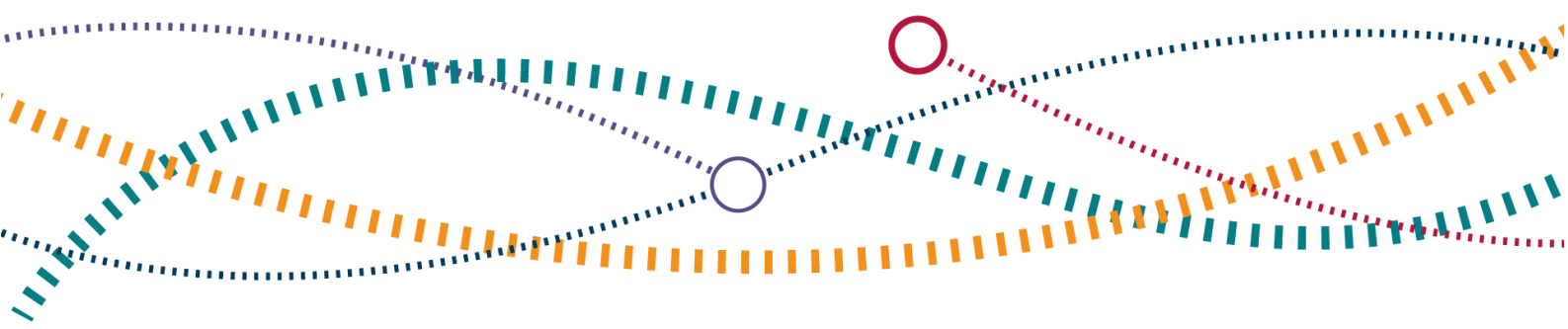
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Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at orr.gov.uk/contact-us



Appendix H

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Framework Capacity Statement 2024

Network Rail

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1. Purpose

1.1 Purpose

This statement is published alongside Network Rail's Network Statement in order to meet the requirements of European Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2016/545 of 7 April 2016 on procedures and criteria concerning framework agreements for the allocation of rail infrastructure capacity.

Although the United Kingdom has left the European Union, the regulation has been incorporated into UK legal requirements by way of the UK's own withdrawal arrangements and therefore remains a statutory requirement. The third 'recital' prefacing the regulation includes the following:

> *"Potential applicants need transparency concerning the allocated framework capacity and the remaining indicative capacity on a line. With a view to avoiding administrative burden related to framework agreements, potential applicants should get a first impression of how likely it is that their applications will be approved."*

Framework capacity is any capacity contracted for sale for more than one (annual) timetable period. Therefore, any firm rights under a Track Access Contract fall within this definition, until towards the end of the term of the contract.

This Framework Capacity Statement has been produced to improve the clarity and transparency of those rights, and their implications for parties seeking new or additional capacity on Network Rail infrastructure. This fits well with Network Rail's current transformation programme, to make the company more focused on and accessible to its customers.



Due to the nature of framework capacity, which legally must not specify a train path, it is not possible to be precise about the quantity of capacity that is used by these rights, and consequently the capacity that remains available for use. That can only be identified once the rights are used to create train paths in a timetable. Potential applicants are urged to use the information in this document as an initial guide, to be read in conjunction with the advice in our Network Statement, and to contact us directly at the earliest opportunity to discuss capacity requirements more specifically.

2.1 Infrastructure covered by this statement.

The national rail network in Great Britain operated by Network Rail is defined in our Network Statement which can be found at Network Statement - Network Rail

We are customer focused. We run the company through devolved route businesses that understand how to meet customer needs. They operate, maintain and renew infrastructure to deliver a safe and reliable railway for passengers and freight customers. Routes and Regions Network Rail is changing how it operates. We're pushing devolution further, making routes more responsive to local needs and cutting through red tape and bureaucracy. Our new structure enables us to be more responsive to the needs of train operators, passengers and freight users by bringing our people closer to those we serve.

We've created 14 routes which are supported by five Network Rail regions, each led by a managing director. The five Network Rail regions are Eastern, North West & Central, Scotland's Railway, Southern and Wales & Western. These five regions were formed in June 2019.



The routes are responsible for operations, maintenance and minor renewals, including the day-to-day delivery of train performance and the relationship with their local train operating companies.

Other infrastructure

Infrastructure belonging to other Infrastructure Managers is excluded from this statement: adjacent networks include High Speed One, Nexus, Eurotunnel and the Cardiff Valley Lines.

Some railway infrastructure is outside the scope of the Regulation, for example light rail systems and the London Underground. A full list of adjacent infrastructure is given in section 2.2.2 of the Network Statement.



Specialised Infrastructure

Network Rail has declared some of its network as ***specialised infrastructure*** under Regulation 25 of the 2016 Railways Regulations. Currently the two railway test tracks at High Marnham (Nottinghamshire) and Old Dalby (Leicestershire/ Nottinghamshire) fall into this category. These are subject to bespoke access arrangements as set out in section 2.4.1 of the Network Statement, which do not constitute framework capacity and the test tracks are therefore excluded from this statement.

Congested Infrastructure

Parts of the network included in this statement are currently declared as congested infrastructure under Regulation 26 of the 2016 Railways Regulations. These are detailed in section 4.6 of the Network Statement, and also under 'Management of Congested Infrastructure' published on the Network Rail site within the Information for Operators page.

Information for operators - Network Rail

2.2 Framework Agreements in Great Britain

Regulation 3 of the 2016 Railways Regulations defines a framework agreement as:

> "*either (a) an access contract described in section 18(2)(a) of the* [1993 Railways] *Act* [as amended] *which satisfies one of the conditions in sub-section (1) of that section; or (b) a legally binding agreement made other than in pursuance of section 17 or 18 of the* [1993 Railways] *Act* [as amended] *setting out the rights and obligations of an applicant and the infrastructure manager or, as the case may be, allocation body in relation to the infrastructure capacity to be allocated and the charges to be levied over a period in excess of one working timetable period*".



In respect of Network Rail's network, this means all track access contracts. However, some contracts include only contingent rights, i.e. for some freight operators and for all passenger charter train operators. These do not constitute framework capacity, because the capacity is not allocated prior to the timetable planning processes; effectively these contracts provide only a right to request capacity rather than a right to receive capacity. These contracts are identified separately in the list below.

Consolidated, redacted copies of the contracts in the list may be found on the Office of Rail & Road website at https://www.orr.gov.uk/rail-guidance-compliance/networkaccess/regulated-networks/network-rail/consolidated-agreements, except where noted otherwise by footnote.

Passenger services (firm rights)
Abellio East Anglia, t/a Greater Anglia
Abellio East Midlands, t/a East Midlands Railway (formerly East Midlands Trains)
Arriva Rail London, t/a Overground
Chiltern Railway Company, t/a Chiltern Railways
Chinnor & Princes Risborough Railway Company (no quantified firm rights)
East Coast Trains, t/a Lumo
Eurostar International, t/a Eurostar
Festiniog Railway Company (no quantified firm rights)
First Greater Western, t/a Great Western Railway
First MTR South Western Trains, t/a South Western Railway
First Transpennine Express, t/a TransPennine Express
First Trenitalia West Coast Rail, t/a Avanti West Coast
Govia Thameslink Railway, t/a Gatwick Express, Great Northern, Southern or Thameslink
Grand Central Railway Company, t/a Grand Central
Heathrow Express Operating Company, t/a Heathrow Express[1]
Hull Trains Company, t/a Hull Trains
London & South Eastern Railway, t/a Southeastern
London North Eastern Railway
London Underground[1]
Merseyrail Electrics 2002, t/a Merseyrail
MTR Crossrail, t/a Elizabeth Line
Nexus (Tyne & Wear Passenger Transport Executive), t/a Metro
North Yorkshire Moors Railway Enterprises, t/a North Yorkshire Moors Railway
Northern Trains, t/a Northern (formerly Arriva Rail North)
Peak Rail (no quantified firm rights)
Scotrail Trains, t/a ScotRail (formerly Abellio Scotrail)
Serco Caledonian Sleepers, t/a Caledonian Sleeper
South Yorkshire Supertram
Transport for Wales (formerly Arriva Trains Wales)
Trenitalia c2c Rail, t/a c2c
West Coast Railway Company, t/a West Coast Railways (for "The Jacobite")
West Midlands Trains, t/a London Northwestern Railway or West Midlands Railway
XC Trains, t/a CrossCountry

Freight services (firm rights)
Colas Rail
DB Cargo
Direct Rail Services
Freightliner
Freightliner Heavy Haul
GB Railfreight

Passenger charter services (contingent rights only)
Direct Rail Services
First Greater Western
GB Railfreight
Grand Central Railway Company
Locomotive Services (TOC)
RailAdventure UK
Rail Express Systems, t/a DB Cargo
Rail Operations Group
Vintage Trains
West Coast Railway Company, t/a West Coast Railways

Freight or freight customer services (contingent rights only)
Associated British Ports
Devon and Cornwall Railways
Hanson and Hall Rail Service Solutions
Harsco Rail
Legge Infrastructure Services
Locomotive Services (TOC)
London Gateway Port
Loram UK
Rail Operations Group
SLC Operations
Tarmac Trading
Varamis
Victa Railfreight
Victoria Harbour
Vintage Trains
West Coast Railway Company

[1] Unregulated contract, not on ORR website.

Applicants or potential applicants for new or amended framework agreements are encouraged to contact Network Rail as early as possible, to enable us to help identify where capacity exists that could meet the applicant's requirements and to consider all potential users where capacity is scarce.

We will undertake consideration of access requests in accordance with our Access Rights Policy which can be found at https://www.networkrail.co.uk/industry-andcommercial/information-for-operators/sale-of-access-rights/.

Access rights are now expressed with more flexibility than has historically been the case in Great Britain. It is common for passenger rights to be expressed as a quantum for each 24-hour period, and for freight rights to be expressed in a time 'window' for departure and arrival times.

This approach is consistent with Network Rail's Access Rights Policy and ORR's guidance on track access contracts, which can be found at https://www.orr.gov.uk/rail-guidance-compliance/networkaccess/guidance-policies/track-access-guidance



2.3 Capacity allocation

Each Track Access Contract incorporates the Network Code, which is a common set of provisions relating to the functioning of the railway system. Part D of the Network Code relates to timetable change. It sets out the processes for the twice-yearly timetable revision and for variations subsequent to that revision. These are means by which access the rights are given effect as train paths in the timetable. The Network Code can be found at https://www.networkrail.co.uk/industry-andcommercial/information-for-operators/network-code/.

3. Presenting the data

3.1 Categorisation of levels of capacity availability

The concept of the new format requires informed judgement by people familiar with the capacity committed and available on each section of route, and the degree of flexibility around those capacity commitments within the relevant track access contracts.

Our Regional strategic planners, working with support from capacity planners in the System Operator, have tested the following broad categories:

Where different categories could apply to different parts of a route section, the more restrictive category is used. The categories are deliberately broad, to minimise the scope for misleading readers, but (as discussed in our 2021 consultation document) there are inevitable approximations in presenting this type of data on a complex network.

Recognising this, we have included comments in the tables in section 3.3 where we think they will add clarity.



3.2 Presentation format

Once the categories have been applied to geographical sections of route, at Strategic Route Section level, the results have been presented below as tables. These are subdivisions of the 24 Strategic Routes shown on the map (right).

Each SRS is categorised according to the worst of the following.

1 Some spare capacity at most times
2 Some spare capacity at certain times
3 Very little spare capacity
4 Congested

Section 3.3 presents tables of current data for 2024.



3.3 Data

Strategic Route A: Kent

SRS Name		Lead Region	Lead Route	Comments
A.01	Victoria Lines	Southern	Kent	
A.02	Otford - Sevenoaks	Southern	Kent	
A.03	London (Charing Cross and Cannon Street) - Chislehurst	Southern	Kent	
A.04	Chislehurst - Tonbridge	Southern	Kent	
A.05	Chislehurst - Ashford (via Maidstone East)	Southern	Kent	
A.06	Tonbridge - Hastings	Southern	Kent	Single line sections
A.07	Dartford Lines to Gravesend and Hayes Branch	Southern	Kent	
A.08	Bromley North Branch	Southern	Kent	
A.09	Gravesend/Swanley - Margate	Southern	Kent	
A.10	Sheerness Branch	Southern	Kent	
A.11	Strood - Paddock Wood	Southern	Kent	
A.12	East Kent Routes	Southern	Kent	
A.13	Hastings - Ashford	Southern	Kent	Singe line sections
A.14	Tonbridge - Continental Junction	Southern	Kent	
A.99	Freight Routes	Southern	Kent	

Each SRS is categorised according to the worst of the following.

1 Some spare capacity at most times
2 Some spare capacity at certain times
3 Very little spare capacity
4 Congested

Strategic Route B: Sussex

SRS	Name	Lead Region	Lead Route	Comments
B.01	London Victoria - Windmill Bridge Junction	Southern	Sussex	South and West London Line ESG 2026 expected timetable changes.
B.02	Windmill Bridge Junction - Brighton	Southern	Sussex	South and West London Line ESG 2026 expected timetable changes.
B.03	London Bridge - Windmill Bridge Junction	Southern	Sussex	South and West London Line ESG 2026 expected timetable changes.
B.04	Three Bridges - Arundel Junction	Southern	Sussex	
B.05	Brighton - Havant	Southern	Sussex	
B.06	Brighton /Wivelsfield - Seaford/Hastings	Southern	Sussex	
B.07	South Central Inner Suburban	Southern	Sussex	South and West London Line ESG 2026 expected timetable changes.
B.08	South Central Sutton Lines	Southern	Sussex	
B.09	Dorking - Horsham	Southern	Sussex	
B.10	Hurst Green - Uckfield	Southern	Sussex	Single line sections
B.11	Tattenham Corner and Caterham Lines	Southern	Sussex	
B.12	East Grinstead Line	Southern	Sussex	
B.13	West London Line	Southern	Sussex	South and West London Line ESG 2026 expected timetable changes.
B.14	Thameslink Core	Southern	Sussex	South and West London Line ESG 2026 expected timetable changes.
B.15	Redhill - Tonbridge	Southern	Sussex	
B.99	Freight Routes	Southern	Sussex	

Each SRS is categorised according to the worst of the following.

1 Some spare capacity at most times
2 Some spare capacity at certain times
3 Very little spare capacity
4 Congested

Strategic Route C: Wessex

SRS	Name	Lead Region	Lead Route	Comments
C.01	London Waterloo - Woking	Southern	Wessex	South and West London Line ESG 2026 expected timetable changes.
C.02	Woking - Basingstoke	Southern	Wessex	
C.03	Basingstoke - Southampton	Southern	Wessex	
C.04	Southampton - Weymouth	Southern	Wessex	Singe line sections
C.05	Lymington Branch	Southern	Wessex	Singe line sections
C.06	Woking - Portsmouth	Southern	Wessex	
C.07	Main Line Suburban Lines	Southern	Wessex	
C.08	Redhill - Guildford	Southern	Wessex	
C.09	Guildford - Wokingham	Southern	Wessex	
C.10	Isle of Wight	Southern	Wessex	
C.11	Cosham - St Denys/Eastleigh	Southern	Wessex	Single line sections
C.12	Inner Windsor Lines	Southern	Wessex	
C.13	Outer Windsor Lines	Southern	Wessex	
C.14	Basingstoke - Salisbury	Southern	Wessex	
C.15	Salisbury - Exmouth Junction	Southern	Wessex	Single line sections
C.16	Redbridge/Eastleigh - Salisbury	Southern	Wessex	
C.17	Brookwood - Alton	Southern	Wessex	
C.99	Other Freight Lines	Southern	Wessex	

Each SRS is categorised according to the worst of the following.

1 Some spare capacity at most times
2 Some spare capacity at certain times
3 Very little spare capacity
4 Congested

Strategic Route D: East Anglia

SRS	Name	Lead Region	Lead Route	Comments
D.01	Bethnal Green - Stansted Airport	Eastern	Anglia	
D.02	Hackney Downs - Cheshunt/Enfield Town	Eastern	Anglia	
D.03	Hertford East Branch	Eastern	Anglia	
D.04	Chingford Branch	Eastern	Anglia	
D.05	Stansted Junctions - Ely	Eastern	Anglia	
D.06	Ely - Kings Lynn	Eastern	Anglia	If Ely North Jn to Ely excl, probably cat 1
D.07	Peterborough - Stowmarket	Eastern	Anglia	
D.08	Cambridge - Chippenham Junction	Eastern	Anglia	Due to single line sections
D.09	Ely - Norwich	Eastern	Anglia	If Ely North Jn to Ely excl, probably cat 2
D.10	London Liverpool Street - Shenfield	Eastern	Anglia	
D.11	Shenfield - Ipswich	Eastern	Anglia	
D.12	Ipswich - Norwich	Eastern	Anglia	
D.13	Shenfield - Southend/Southminster	Eastern	Anglia	
D.14	Braintree Branch	Eastern	Anglia	Due to single line sections
D.15	Harwich Branch	Eastern	Anglia	Or could be cat 1
D.16	Walton and Clacton Branches	Eastern	Anglia	Based on Walton branch and Thorpe-le-Soken
D.17	Upminster Branch	Eastern	Anglia	Due to single line sections
D.18	Sudbury Branch	Eastern	Anglia	Due to single line sections
D.19	East Suffolk Line and Norfolk Branches	Eastern	Anglia	Due to single line sections
D.20	Felixstowe - Ipswich	Eastern	Anglia	
D.99	Other Freight Lines	Eastern	Anglia	

Each SRS is categorised according to the worst of the following.

1 Some spare capacity at most times
2 Some spare capacity at certain times
3 Very little spare capacity
4 Congested

Strategic Route E: North London Lines

SRS	Name	Lead Region	Lead Route	Comments
E.01	Richmond - Willesden Junction	Eastern	Anglia	
E.02	Willesden Junction - Gospel Oak	Eastern	Anglia	
E.03	Gospel Oak - Stratford	Eastern	Anglia	
E.04	Gospel Oak - Woodgrange Park	Eastern	Anglia	
E.05	Forest Gate Junction - Barking	Eastern	Anglia	
E.91	Dudding Hill Line	Eastern	Anglia	
E.99	Other Freight Lines	Eastern	Anglia	

Strategic Route F: Thameside

SRS	Name	Lead Region	Lead Route	Comments
F.01	London Fenchurch Street - Shoeburyness	Eastern	Anglia	Fenchurch Street - Barking section
F.02	Tilbury Loop	Eastern	Anglia	
F.99	Other Freight Lines	Eastern	Anglia	

Each SRS is categorised according to the worst of the following.

1 Some spare capacity at most times
2 Some spare capacity at certain times
3 Very little spare capacity
4 Congested

Strategic Route G: East Coast and North East

SRS	Name	Lead Region	Lead Route	Comments
G.01	London King's Cross - Peterborough	Eastern	East Coast	
G.02	Moorgate Branch	Eastern	East Coast	
G.03	Hertford Loop	Eastern	East Coast	
G.04	Hitchin - Cambridge	Eastern	East Coast	Excluding Shepreth Branch Jn to Cambridge, see D.05
G.04	Peterborough - Doncaster	Eastern	East Coast	
G.05	Doncaster - Leeds (via Wakefield Westgate)	Eastern	North and East	Also East Coast
G.06	Doncaster - Colton Junction	Eastern	East Coast	
G.07	Colton Junction - Northallerton	Eastern	East Coast	Based on Colton to York (incl)
G.08	Northallerton - Newcastle	Eastern	East Coast	Cat. 2 if only firm rights considered, but includes contingent rights because of local access policy
G.09	Newcastle - Border (near Berwick-upon-Tweed)	Eastern	East Coast	Cat. 2 if only firm rights considered, but includes contingent rights because of local access policy
G.10	Border (near Berwick-upon-Tweed) - Edinburgh	Scotland's Railway	Scotland	
G.11	North Berwick Branch	Scotland's Railway	Scotland	
G.12	Newcastle - Carlisle	Eastern	North and East	
G.13	Darlington - Bishop Auckland	Eastern	North and East	Cat 3, Based on single line contstraints
G.14	Middlesbrough - Whitby	Eastern	North and East	Based on Middlesbrough-Nunthorpe and Grosmont-Whitby single lines
G.15	Northallerton - Eaglescliffe	Eastern	North and East	
G.16	Eaglescliffe - Newcastle via Durham Coast	Eastern	North and East	
G.17	Darlington - Eaglescliffe	Eastern	North and East	
G.18	Eaglescliffe - Saltburn	Eastern	North and East	Based on Eaglescliffe to Middlesbrough (incl)
G.19	Doncaster - Lincoln	Eastern	North and East	
G.20	Newark - Barnetby	Eastern	East Midlands	Excluding Newark Flat Crossing
G.21	Gainsborough - Barnetby	Eastern	North and East	
G.22	Lincoln - Peterborough (via Spalding)	Eastern	East Midlands	
G.23	Stillington Branch	Eastern	North and East	
G.90	Blyth and Tyne Network	Eastern	North and East	Now Cat 2 due to passenger traffic
G.91	Freight Trunk Routes	Eastern	North and East	Also East Coast
G.99	Other Freight Lines	Eastern	North and East	Also East Coast

Strategic Route H: Cross-Pennine, Yorkshire & Humber and North West

SRS	Name	Lead Region	Lead Route	Comments
H.01	Leeds - Holbeck Junction	Eastern	North and East	
H.02	Leeds - York via Harrogate	Eastern	North and East	
H.03	Leeds - Skipton/Ilkley	Eastern	North and East	
H.04	Leeds - Halifax via Bradford	Eastern	North and East	
H.05	North Transpennine: Leeds - Guide Bridge	Eastern	North and East	Shared with NW&C but mostly Eastern
H.06	Leeds - Colton Junction	Eastern	North and East	
H.07	Hull - Micklefield	Eastern	North and East	
H.08	Gilberdyke - Hatfield & Stainforth/Knottingley and Church Fenton - Moorthorpe	Eastern	North and East	
H.09	Knottingley - Mirfield via Crofton Junction and via Castleford; Leeds - Altofts Junction/Whitwood Junction	Eastern	North and East	Based on Castleford and Woodlesford corridor
H.10	Manchester Victoria - Mirfield (via Rochdale)/Stalybridge	North West & Central	North West	Shared with Eastern but mostly NW&C
H.11	Hull - Seamer	Eastern	North and East	
H.12	York - Scarborough	Eastern	North and East	
H.13	Chesterfield - Swinton via Sheffield	Eastern	North and East	
H.14	Swinton - Brocklesby Junction	Eastern	North and East	
H.15	South Kirkby Junction - Swinton	Eastern	North and East	
H.16	Sheffield - Gainsborough	Eastern	North and East	Excluding Sheffield to Nunnery Main Line Jn (see H.13)
H.17	South Transpennine: Dore - Hazel Grove	North West & Central	North West	
H.18	Sheffield Meadowhall - Horbury Junction	Eastern	North and East	
H.19	Brocklesby Junction - Cleethorpes	Eastern	North and East	Based on single line section to Cleethorpes
H.20	Penistone Line	Eastern	North and East	
H.21	Barton-on-Humber Branch	Eastern	North and East	Would be Cat. 1 if not for Ulceby
H.22	Manchester Piccadilly - Crewe	North West & Central	North West	
H.23	Manchester Piccadilly - Deansgate	North West & Central	North West	Declaration of Congested Infrastructure for Castlefield Corridor in 2019, yet to be removed.

Continues overleaf

SRS	Name	Lead Region	Lead Route	Comments
H.24	Deansgate - Liverpool South Parkway	North West & Central	North West	
H.25	Liverpool Lime Street - Liverpool South Parkway	North West & Central	North West	
H.26	North Transpennine: Manchester Piccadilly - Guide Bridge	North West & Central	North West	
H.27	Deansgate - Euxton Junction (via Bolton)	North West & Central	North West	
H.28	Ashburys/Hyde North - New Mills Central/Rose Hill	North West & Central	North West	
H.29	Guide Bridge - Glossop/Hadfield	North West & Central	North West	
H.30	Guide Bridge - Chester (via Stockport)	North West & Central	North West	
H.31	Manchester Airport - Wilmslow/Slade Lane Junction	North West & Central	North West	
H.32	Blackpool North Branch	North West & Central	North West	
H.33	Edge Hill - Manchester Victoria (via Earlestown)/Wigan	North West & Central	North West	
H.34	Southport/Kirkby - Wigan Wallgate	North West & Central	North West	
H.35	Wigan Wallgate - Manchester Victoria	North West & Central	North West	
H.36	Buxton Branch	North West & Central	North West	
H.37	Bolton - Blackburn	North West & Central	North West	
H.38	Hazel Grove - Edgeley Junction	North West & Central	North West	
H.39	Cumbrian Coast	North West & Central	North West	
H.40	Settle and Carlisle Line	North West & Central	North West	
H.41	Windermere Branch	North West & Central	North West	
H.42	Carnforth - Long Preston	North West & Central	North West	
H.43	Morecambe/Heysham Port Branch	North West & Central	North West	
H.44	Roses Line and Branches (including Preston - Ormskirk and Blackburn - Hellifield)	North West & Central	North West	
H.45	Chester/Ellesmere Port - Warrington Bank Quay	North West & Central	North West	
H.46	Blackpool South Branch	North West & Central	North West	
H.90	Immingham and Killingholme Docks	Eastern	North and East	
H.91	Yorkshire Freight Routes	Eastern	North and East	
H.98	Freight Trunk Routes	Eastern	North and East	Rylstone, Drax Branch etc
H.99	Other Freight Routes	North West & Central	North West	Shared with Eastern but mostly NW&C

Strategic Route I: East Midlands

SRS Name		Lead Region	Lead Route	Comments
I.01	London St Pancras - Bedford	Eastern	East Midlands	
I.02	Bedford - Nottingham	Eastern	East Midlands	
I.03	Wichnor Junction/Long Eaton - Chesterfield (via Derby)	Eastern	East Midlands	Based on Derby to Trent Jns
I.04	Worksop/Chesterfield - Nottingham	Eastern	East Midlands	Excluding Mansfield Jn to Nottingham (see I.02)
I.05	Nottingham - Newark Crossing	Eastern	East Midlands	Although ecs moves at Eastcroft might make it Cat. 3
I.06	Matlock Branch	Eastern	East Midlands	Due to single line
I.07	Netherfield - Grantham	Eastern	East Midlands	
I.08	Skegness - Grantham	Eastern	East Midlands	
I.09	Nuneaton - South Wigston	Eastern	East Midlands	
I.10	Syston Junctions - Peterborough/Corby	Eastern	East Midlands	
I.11	North Stafford Junction - Stoke-on-Trent	Eastern	East Midlands	Excludes Stoke Jn to Stoke-on-Trent
I.88	Freight Trunk Routes	Eastern	East Midlands	
I.99	Other Freight Routes	Eastern	East Midlands	

Each SRS is categorised according to the worst of the following.

1 Some spare capacity at most times
2 Some spare capacity at certain times
3 Very little spare capacity
4 Congested

Strategic Route J: London and West

SRS Name		Lead Region	Lead Route	Comments
J.01	London Paddington - Heathrow Airport Junction	Wales & Western	Western	
J.02	Heathrow Airport Junction - Reading	Wales & Western	Western	
J.03	Reading - Didcot	Wales & Western	Western	
J.04	Didcot - Border (near Pilning)	Wales & Western	Western	Based on Didcot to Wootton Bassett Jn
J.05	Reading - Newbury	Wales & Western	Western	
J.06	Newbury - Cogload Junction	Wales & Western	Western	
J.07	Didcot - Oxford	Wales & Western	Western	ESG active for Dec 24
J.08	Greenford Lines	Wales & Western	Western	
J.09	Reading - Basingstoke	Wales & Western	Western	
J.10	Swindon - Standish Junction	Wales & Western	Western	
J.11	Cotswolds Line (Wolvercot Junction - Norton Junction)	Wales & Western	Western	
J.12	Henley-on-Thames Branch	Wales & Western	Western	
J.13	Marlow Branch	Wales & Western	Western	
J.14	Windsor & Eton Branch	Wales & Western	Western	
J.15	Bicester Town Branch (no longer used)	North West & Central	WCML South	SRS will become part of WCS once completed.
J.16	Heathrow Airport	Wales & Western	Western	
J.98	Freight Trunk Routes	Wales & Western	Western	
J.99	Other Freight Lines	Wales & Western	Western	

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1 Some spare capacity at most times
2 Some spare capacity at certain times
3 Very little spare capacity
4 Congested

Strategic Route K: West of England

SRS	Name	Lead Region	Lead Route	Comments
K.01	Bristol Temple Meads - Exeter St Davids	Wales & Western	Western	
K.02	Exeter St Davids - Plymouth	Wales & Western	Western	
K.03	Plymouth - Penzance	Wales & Western	Western	
K.04	Salisbury (Wilton Junction) - Bathampton Junction/Thingley Junction	Wales & Western	Western	Likely to become Cat. 3 for 2024
K.05	Castle Cary - Dorchester	Wales & Western	Western	
K.06	Exeter - Exmouth Junction	Wales & Western	Western	
K.07	Paignton Line	Wales & Western	Western	
K.08	Barnstaple/Okehampton Branches	Wales & Western	Western	
K.09	St Ives Branch	Wales & Western	Western	
K.10	Looe Branch	Wales & Western	Western	
K.11	Exmouth Branch	Wales & Western	Western	
K.12	Falmouth Docks Branch	Wales & Western	Western	
K.13	Newquay Line	Wales & Western	Western	
K.14	Gunnislake Branch	Wales & Western	Western	
K.15	Swindon (via Bath Spa)/Filton and Patchway Junctions - Bristol Temple Meads	Wales & Western	Western	
K.16	Bristol - Birmingham Line	Wales & Western	Western	
K.17	Weston-super-Mare Loop	Wales & Western	Western	
K.18	Severn Beach Branch	Wales & Western	Western	
K.98	Freight Trunk Routes	Wales & Western	Western	
K.99	Other Freight Lines	Wales & Western	Western	

Each SRS is categorised according to the worst of the following.

1 Some spare capacity at most times
2 Some spare capacity at certain times
3 Very little spare capacity
4 Congested

Strategic Route L: Wales and Borders

SRS	Name	Lead Region	Lead Route	Comments
L.01	Border (near Pilning) - Swansea	Wales & Western	Wales	Very busy but with sufficient headroom ad-hoc requirements can be met. ESG active for Dec 24
L.02	Gloucester - Chepstow	Wales & Western	Wales	Note level crossing constraint. ESG active for Dec 24
L.03	Chepstow - Severn Tunnel Junction	Wales & Western	Wales	ESG active for Dec 24
L.04	Newport - Border (near Pontrilas)	Wales & Western	Wales	ESG active for Dec 24
L.05	Border (near Pontrilas) - Crewe	Wales & Western	Wales	ESG active for Dec 24
L.06	Heart of Wales Line: Craven Arms - Knighton	Wales & Western	Wales	Full but no competition
L.07	Heart of Wales Line: Knighton - Llanelli	Wales & Western	Wales	Full but no competition
L.08	Cambrian Lines: Shrewsbury - Border (near Middletown)	Wales & Western	Wales	
L.09	Cambrian Lines: Border (near Middletown) - Aberystwyth/Pwllheli	Wales & Western	Wales	
L.10	Shrewsbury - Border (near Chirk)	Wales & Western	Wales	ESG active for Dec 24
L.11	Border (near Chirk) - Border (near Pulford)	Wales & Western	Wales	ESG active for Dec 24
L.12	Border (near Pulford) - Saltney Junction	Wales & Western	Wales	Impact of declaration of congestion Wrexham to Bidston; ESG active for Dec 24
L.13	Chester - Saltney Junction	Wales & Western	Wales	ESG active for Dec 24
L.14	Saltney Junction - Holyhead	Wales & Western	Wales	Impact of declaration of congestion Wrexham to Bidston; ESG active for Dec 24. Freight growth at Llandudno Jn could change this but appears to be sufficient headroom
L.15	Bidston - Border (near Hawarden Bridge)	Wales & Western	Wales	Currently declared congested
L.16	Border (near Hawarden Bridge) - Wrexham Central	Wales & Western	Wales	Currently declared congested
L.17	Newport - Ebbw Vale	Wales & Western	Wales	Subject to upgrade to support 2tph commissioning 2023
L.18	South Wales Valleys	Wales & Western	Wales	Freight v passenger however the busiest bits are not NR infrastructure and most of the freight is not running in reality
L.19	Bridgend - Maesteg	Wales & Western	Wales	
L.20	Swansea - Milford Haven	Wales & Western	Wales	
L.21	Whitland - Pembroke Dock	Wales & Western	Wales	Constrained by round trip taking slightly over an hour
L.22	Clarbeston Road - Fishguard Harbour	Wales & Western	Wales	
L.23	Llandudno - Blaenau Ffestiniog	Wales & Western	Wales	
L.99	Other Freight Lines	Wales & Western	Wales	However note GUT vs freight on District Line may change things in 2025

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1 Some spare capacity at most times
2 Some spare capacity at certain times
3 Very little spare capacity
4 Congested

Strategic Route M: West Midlands and Chilterns

SRS Name	Lead Region	Lead Route	Comments
M.01 Marylebone - Aynho Jcn	North West & Central	Route	
M.02 Neasden South Jcn - Harrow	North West & Central	Central	
M.03 Amersham - Aylesbury Vale	North West & Central	Central	
M.04 Princes Risborough - Aylesbury	North West & Central	Central	
M.05 Rugby - Birmingham New Street	North West & Central	WCML South	
M.06 Birmingham New Street - Wolverhampton	North West & Central	Central	
M.07 Wolverhampton - Stafford	North West & Central	Central	
M.08 Birmingham New Street - Barnt Green	North West & Central	Central	Midlands rail hub programme focus
M.09 Barnt Green - Stoke Works Jcn	North West & Central	Central	Midlands rail hub programme focus
M.10 Birmingham - Wichnor Jcn	Eastern	East Midlands	Midlands rail hub programme focus
M.11 Oxford - Coventry	Wales & Western	Western	Capacity available between Oxford and Leamington Spa. No capacity between Leamington Spa and Coventry
M.12 Leamington Spa - Birmingham Snow Hill	North West & Central	Central	Midlands rail hub programme focus. Some capacity available. MRH programme only affects Bordeseley - Moor Street
M.13 Stechford - Wolverhampton via Aston	North West & Central	Central	Capacity available but power supply limitations on Grand Junction Lines
M.14 Birmingham Snow Hill - Stourbridge Junction	North West & Central	Central	
M.15 Stourbridge Junction - Hereford	North West & Central	Central	Midlands rail hub programme focus
M.16 Stratford-upon-Avon Lines	North West & Central	Central	
M.17 Cross City North	North West & Central	Central	
M.18 Rugeley - Bescot	North West & Central	Central	
M.19 Redditch - Barnt Green	North West & Central	Central	
M.20 Wolverhampton – Shrewsbury	North West & Central	Central	
M.21 Camp Hill Line	North West & Central	Central	Midlands rail hub programme focus
M.22 Water Orton - Nuneaton	North West & Central	Central	Midlands rail hub programme focus
M.23 Nuneaton - Coventry	North West & Central	Central	Capacity on route is limited by lack of capacity at Coventry
M.24 Soho Jcns - Perry Barr Jcns	North West & Central	Central	
M.25 Stourbridge Branch	North West & Central	Central	One train in section, no way to run trains around passenger service.
M.88 Miscellaneous Sidings/non running lines	North West & Central	Central	
M.99 Other Freight Lines	North West & Central	WCML South	

Strategic Route N: West Coast Main Line

SRS Name	Region	Route	Comments
N.01 Euston - Rugby	North West & Central	WCML South	Congested Infrastructure Declared. Fast Lines (Camden South Junction to Ledburn Junction Inclusive)
N.02 Rugby - Stafford	North West & Central	WCML South	HS2 programme consequences
N.03 Stafford - Crewe	North West & Central	WCML South	HS2 programme consequences
N.04 Crewe - Preston	North West & Central	North West	HS2 programme consequences
N.05 Preston - Border [nr Gretna]	North West & Central	North West	HS2 programme consequences
N.06 Border [nr Gretna] - Carstairs	Scotland's Railway	Scotland	
N.07 Weaver Jcn - Liverpool South Parkway	North West & Central	North West	HS2 programme consequences
N.08 Norton Bridge / Colwich Jcn - Cheadle Hulme	North West & Central	North West	HS2 programme consequences
N.09 Crewe - Kidsgrove	North West & Central	WCML South	HS2 programme consequences
N.10 Watford Junction - St Albans Abbey	North West & Central	WCML South	One train in section so no room to run anything other than the branch service.
N.11 Euston - Watford Junction (DC Lines)	North West & Central	WCML South	
N.12 Bletchley - Bedford	North West & Central	WCML South	
N.13 Crewe - Chester	North West & Central	North West	
N.99 Other Freight Lines	North West & Central	North West	

Strategic Route O: Merseyrail

SRS Name	Region	Route	Comments
O.01 Merseyrail	North West & Central	North West	

Each SRS is categorised according to the worst of the following.

1 Some spare capacity at most times
2 Some spare capacity at certain times
3 Very little spare capacity
4 Congested

Strategic Route P: Scotland East

SRS Name	Region	Route	Comments
P.01 Glasgow - Edinburgh	Scotland's Railway	Scotland	
P.02 Carstairs - Edinburgh	Scotland's Railway	Scotland	
P.03 Edinburgh - Drumgelloch	Scotland's Railway	Scotland	West of Newbridge capacity available
P.04 Dunblane / Alloa - Polmont Jcn / Greenhill Upper Jcn	Scotland's Railway	Scotland	
P.05 Newcraighall - Portobello Jcn	Scotland's Railway	Scotland	
P.06 Fife Loop	Scotland's Railway	Scotland	
P.07 Dundee - Dunblane	Scotland's Railway	Scotland	
P.08 Dundee / Perth - Thornton Jcns	Scotland's Railway	Scotland	
P.09 Dundee - Aberdeen	Scotland's Railway	Scotland	
P.10 Aberdeen - Inverness	Scotland's Railway	Scotland	
P.11 Perth - Inverness	Scotland's Railway	Scotland	
P.12 Far North and Kyle Line	Scotland's Railway	Scotland	
P.97 Edinburgh Suburban Lines	Scotland's Railway	Scotland	
P.99 Other Freight Lines	Scotland's Railway	Scotland	

Each SRS is categorised according to the worst of the following.

1 Some spare capacity at most times
2 Some spare capacity at certain times
3 Very little spare capacity
4 Congested

Strategic Route Q: Scotland West

SRS Name	Region	Route	Comments
Q.01 WCML: Glasgow Central - Carstairs	Scotland's Railway	Scotland	
Q.02 Midcalder Jcn - Holytown Jcn	Scotland's Railway	Scotland	
Q.03 Glasgow - Ayr / Largs / Wemyss Bay / Gourock	Scotland's Railway	Scotland	
Q.04 Glasgow North Electric Routes	Scotland's Railway	Scotland	
Q.05 Stranraer - Ayr	Scotland's Railway	Scotland	
Q.06 Paisley Canal Branch	Scotland's Railway	Scotland	
Q.07 Muirhouse Jcn - East Kilbride / Kilmarnock	Scotland's Railway	Scotland	Single line constraints
Q.08 Scotland Boundary - Barassie Jcn	Scotland's Railway	Scotland	
Q.09 Eglinton Street Jcn - Neilston / Newton including Cathcart Circl	Scotland's Railway	Scotland	
Q.10 Newton - Gartsherrie South / Rutherglen Jcn	Scotland's Railway	Scotland	
Q.11 Lanark Branch	Scotland's Railway	Scotland	
Q.12 Anniesland - Greenhill Lower Jcn	Scotland's Railway	Scotland	
Q.13 Gretna - Boundary [nr Gretna]	North West & Central	North West	
Q.14 West Highland Line	Scotland's Railway	Scotland	
Q.99 Other Freight Lines	Scotland's Railway	Scotland	

Each SRS is categorised according to the worst of the following.

1 Some spare capacity at most times
2 Some spare capacity at certain times
3 Very little spare capacity
4 Congested

Appendix I

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GOV·UK

Department for Transport

Policy paper

Rail freight: House of Commons Railway Bill factsheet

Updated 9 October 2026

Contents

What will the Railways Bill do?

What are the benefits for freight operators?

How will you ensure that access decisions are taken fairly?

OGL

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This publication is available at https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/railways-bill/railways-bill-rail-freight

Rail freight is a key method of transporting goods around the country. The government is committed to growing rail freight to realise its significant economic and environmental potential to the UK alongside its critical role in preserving the resilience of our logistics sector.

There are significant economic and environmental benefits of rail freight. It is an attractive sector for investors, bringing international investment that creates jobs and careers, supports the wider UK supply chain, and can have positive impacts on overall living standards.

It is also critical to supporting key government priorities, for example, a single freight train can transport enough materials to build 30 houses (https://www.raildeliverygroup.com/about-us/publications/archive/133-2018-06-rail-freight-working-for-britain/file.html) or 9 houses and all their supporting infrastructure such as roads, pavements and utilities (https://rfg.org.uk/meet-manchesters-material-needs-by-rail-new-report/). This will help the government reach its target of building 1.5 million homes over the next 5 years. We also need rail freight to meet our environmental targets: a diesel-hauled rail freight service reduces carbon emissions by 76% per tonne compared to road haulage (https://www.networkrailmediacentre.co.uk/news/britain-relies-on-rail-freight-new-study-confirms), so that is an essential factor in the government's commitment to support the growth of rail freight across the UK.

What will the Railways Bill do?

The Railways Bill will:

- **Require the SoS to set out a Long-Term Rail Strategy**: the strategy will set out the government's long term ambitions for the rail sector, including freight. See more information in the Long Term Rail Strategy factsheet (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/railways-bill).
- **Place a duty on Great British Railways (GBR), ministers and the Office of Rail and Road (ORR) to promote the use of rail freight**: the delivery of rail freight services will remain mainly in the private sector, but freight operators will need to run their services on GBR's tracks and infrastructure. GBR will decide who can run train services on the tracks and how much they should pay for it. Therefore, this duty will ensure that the promoting the freight sector is a central goal of GBR's decision making – and that it is considered by other key players in the industry as well.
- **Require the Secretary of State to set a rail freight growth target (or targets) for GBR**: the bill will require the SoS to set a rail growth target. The government has confirmed that there will be an overall target of 75% increase in rail freight moved by 2050 alongside other targets which will

be announced prior to the stand up of Great British Railways. GBR will be expected to consider how it will support growth and work to achieve the target when designing and developing its business plans.

What are the benefits for freight operators?

Within GBR, there will be a central freight team to provide rail freight users with a clear single point of contact, responsible for championing the sector and with the flexibility to offer targeted discounts to stimulate growth.

GBR, acting as the directing mind, will be able to provide greater long-term direction in terms of infrastructure strategy and its Access and Use Policy for the freight industry. This will in turn increase certainty for industry, providing the confidence for investment in the sector (in particular in the adoption of innovative technologies to create greater efficiency and decarbonisation of the logistics sector).

How will you ensure that access decisions are taken fairly?

The Railways Bill will ensure fairness across the network for all users, including when GBR is making access decisions. GBR's decisions will be made in accordance with the duties and priorities set out above and will be supported by a robust appeals process run by the Office of Rail and Road – to whom freight and other operators can appeal if GBR has acted unfairly. See more information in the making best use of the rail network factsheet (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/railways-bill).

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Appendix J

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National Highways
Three Snowhill
Snow Hill Queensway
Birmingham
B4 6GA

[redacted]

Our Reference: EIR2025/02297

Via email: [redacted]

Dear [redacted]

Environmental Information Regulations Request: EIR2025/02297

Thank you for your information request dated 12 December 2025 regarding M40 Junction 10 Cumulative Developments Impacts. We have dealt with your request under the provisions of the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR).

This is because the information requested concerns measures and activities affecting or likely to affect elements of the environment or affect factors such as noise, pollution discharges and other releases into the environment.

Your Request:

Your Reference: EIR2025/02127
I submitted a request for agendas and minutes of meetings between the developers around Junction 10 of the M40 motorway.

My original request:
I have been asked represent the Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood Forum for a FOI request. The forum was formed to represent the collective input of 11 Parishes within the vicinity of M40 Junction 10 for the purposes of developing policies for a Neighbourhood Plan under the 2011 Localism Act. There are several major projects being considered in this area:
Under District Council Planning (Cherwell District Council)
- Albion Land Application for 270,000m2 Warehousing at Baynards Green,
- Tritax Symmetry Park for 325,000m2 Warehousing East of Baynards Green,
- Puy Du Fou Theme Park
- Heyford Park "New Town" proposal for 9,000-13,500 houses
Under PINS (a proposed NSIP)

- Oxford Strategic Rail Freight Interchange for 603,870m2 Warehousing and supporting marshalling yards and terminal

Our specific FOI request is for copies of all of the agendas and minutes of the meetings convened between representatives of those commercial organisations representing the above projects, with the public bodies including National Highways, Cherwell District Council and Oxfordshire District Council.

My understanding from Puy Du Fou is that there have been only a small number of meetings that have been JOINTLY convened between these organisations, and that have only taken place since May 2025. We are not looking for individual meeting minutes agendas between National Highways and these individual projects (we understand that this would be onerous) - simply those meetings that have been jointly or severally convened between these parties to discuss the cumulative impact of these projects on the road system around Junction 10 of the M40 Motorway.

Clarification received on 25 December 2025:

Our interest is exclusively in the joint meetings held between National Highways and Puy Du Fou, Albion Land, Tritax, Heyford Park and OXSRFi - if CDC and or OCC were present or not is not a major consideration, our interest is in the evolution of the solutions to the issue of multiple applications surrounding M40 junction 10 and the cumulative effects.

Our Response:

I have established that the information you have requested is not held by National Highways. It therefore falls under Regulation 12(4)(a) of the Environmental Information Regulations 2004. This is because there have not been any meetings with all of the 5 commercial parties listed and National Highways present, and therefore there are no agendas or minutes to provide.

If you are not satisfied with your response you may ask for an internal review within 40 working days of receiving the response, by replying to this email. You can learn more about the internal review process here.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted here or via the address below -

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow

Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Please remember to quote reference number **EIR2025/02297** in any future communications about this response.

Kind regards

[redacted]
FOI Advice Team

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