

AN INFRASTRUCTURE REVOLUTION



EAST WEST RAIL RESTORING CROSS-COUNTRY CONNECTIONS

The Government has determined that the corridor between the cities of Oxford and Cambridge could produce an extra £111 billion in annual economic output and one million new homes by 2050. However, current public transport routes between the two cities, which require an expensive and time-consuming diversion via either London or Coventry, are acting as an economic stranglehold on the area and its booming tech industry.

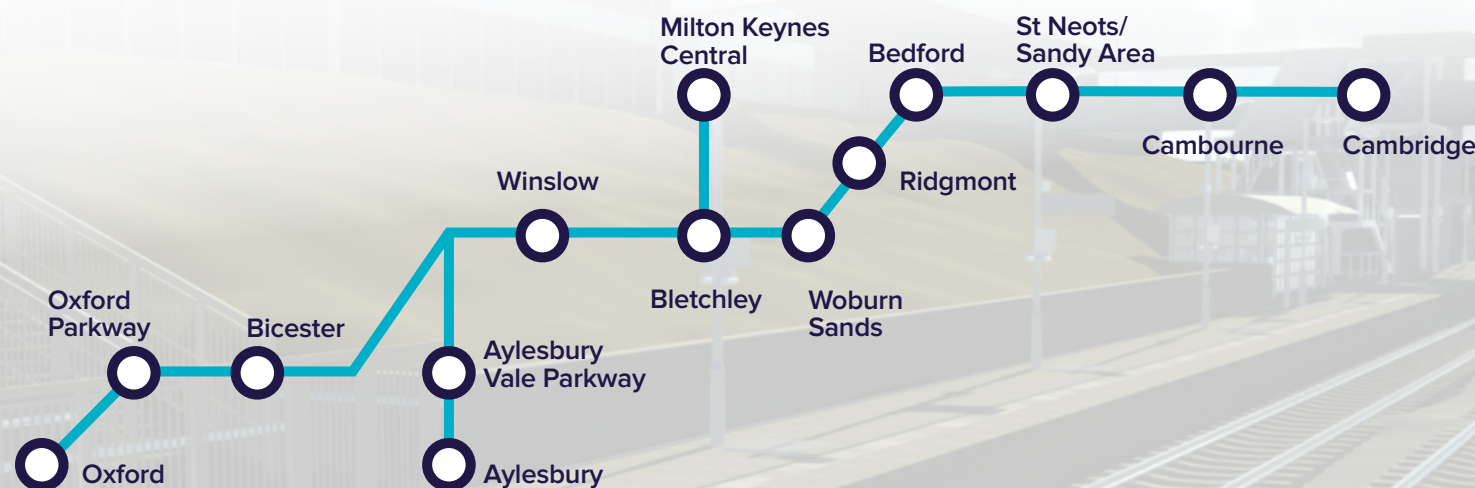
East West Rail is designed to unlock economic growth across central England and provide local residents with a safer and more reliable rail service.

WHAT IS EAST WEST RAIL?

East West Rail involves building and upgrading over 95 miles of rail lines between the cities of Oxford and Cambridge. The project is due to be completed in three 'Connection Stages':

- **Connection Stage 1 (CS1):** Oxford to Bicester, Bletchley and Milton Keynes
- **Connection Stage 2 (CS2):** Oxford to Bedford
- **Connection Stage 3 (CS3):** Oxford to Cambridge.

Phase one of CS1 has already been completed at a cost of £270 million, with trains running from Oxford to Bicester since 2016. Work has started on the final phase of CS1, which takes the line from Bicester to Milton Keynes at a cost of £760 million, and trains are due to start running from 2025. A public consultation on options for CS2 and CS3 was held in 2021, with the resulting Development Consent Order expected to be submitted in 2023 and the whole line expected to be fully operational by 2030.



Delivering an Infrastructure Revolution

Whilst economic and social infrastructure projects are often in the headlines due to the amount of money spent on them and the disruption caused during their construction, they generate huge long-term benefits. By providing better local services, new jobs, cleaner air and faster connections, modern infrastructure helps to level up opportunity and prosperity across the UK.

Build UK's factsheets cover a range of local and national projects explaining what they are and why they are being built in Britain today.



WHY WE NEED EAST WEST RAIL

East West Rail will unlock economic growth across central England by creating a safer and more reliable connection between neighbouring regions. Once completed, it will:

- Provide new jobs along the Oxford-Cambridge corridor, including within the booming tech businesses of the 'Silicon Fen' area of Cambridge
- Allow new houses to be built within commutable distance of major economic centres
- Ease reliance on motor vehicles for personal transport, reducing carbon emissions and helping the country meet its long-term net zero targets
- Facilitate the movement of freight between Eastern and Western England, reducing the strain on London and the number of lorries on the road.

EAST WEST RAIL IN NUMBERS



£1.03bn
investment to date



95
miles of new or
upgraded railway



1m
new homes
made possible

KEY ISSUES

- The disused railway between Bicester and Bletchley is due to be reinstated as part of CS1 and this has become a haven for local wildlife and ecology. The project has committed to minimising the **impact on the local environment** and delivering a 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) by 2023 in CS1. This represents the most ambitious BNG target for an infrastructure project of its size, and will ensure any ecological impact of the works is offset.
- From the outset, proposals for EWR have been shaped by the views of **local communities**, including two non-statutory public consultations in 2019 and 2021. The feedback received in the 9,000 responses to the latest consultation is being used together with environmental and technical studies to explore and develop more detailed proposals in key areas along the proposed route.

WHO WILL BENEFIT?

The Economy

- Oxford and Cambridge have been designated as two of the least affordable cities in the country, limiting the supply of new employees and stifling economic growth. New rail connections will allow more areas to be within commutable distance, providing a larger pool of talent to regional businesses.
- Improved transport efficiency in the region could contribute to an additional £93 billion in economic output per year by 2050, with estimated productivity improvements of £4,000 - £6,000 per worker per year by 2050.
- Improved supply chain links and benefits to other industries mean investment in rail is an economic multiplier, with £2.50 generated in the wider economy for every £1 invested in it.

The Local Community

- Journey times will be significantly reduced, particularly at peak hours, with Cambourne to Cambridge taking 15 minutes rather than up to 60 minutes by bus, and Bedford to Cambridge taking 35 minutes rather than up to 90 minutes by bus, making commuting viable for more people.
- Greater ease of travel will allow new communities to grow around the stations along the East West Rail route, serviced by a modern and integrated local transport system. This will not only enhance the quality of life for residents and improve access to jobs, it will reduce costs for businesses and drive both productivity and growth.

The Environment

- The railway aims to be carbon neutral by using low-carbon design and green energy to power trains. As rail is up to seven times more carbon-efficient than travel by car, emissions created during construction will be balanced by reduced emissions throughout the project's lifecycle.
- There will be a net gain in biodiversity along the route by protecting existing species and providing new habitats for other species to thrive.

Further Information

Centre for Cities (2017) [Cities Outlook 2017](#)

East West Rail Company (2022) [Building Better Connections](#)

East West Rail Company (2021) [Making Meaningful Connections Consultation](#)

East West Rail Company (2020) [Our Approach to the Environment](#)

East West Rail Company (2020) [Preferred Route between Bedford and Cambridge](#)

East West Rail Company (2018) [The Case for East West Rail, Western Section Phase 2](#)

National Infrastructure Commission (2016) [Final Report](#)

Rail Industry Association (2022) [The Economic, Environmental and Social Opportunities that Rail Brings to the UK](#)

Find out more

www.EastWestRail.co.uk

Contact us

www.BuildUK.org