Network Rail has published a Cambridge Corridor Study, which assesses forecast growth across the railway in and around Cambridgeshire over the next 15 and 25 years, and identifies and costs a series of infrastructure improvements to help funders make informed decisions about planning the network in years to come.

The study forms part of Network Rail’s Continuous Modular Strategic Planning (CMSP), and is funded by the Department for Transport (DfT), Cambridgeshire County Council, the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority and the Greater Cambridge Partnership. It uses both Government-endorsed and local aspirational growth forecasts, with the infrastructure options identified to support the Government forecast.

The study has assumed East West Rail (EWR) services as part of the baseline for 2033 and 2043, with up to six trains per hour to and from Cambridge. The study has looked at six strategic questions to help establish the required train services, for both 2033 and 2043, including whether any of the six EWR services should be extended beyond Cambridge to address local demand.

The Government-endorsed growth scenario has identified that by 2033, an extra service is required between Cambridge and London King’s Cross, and by 2043, one EWR service is extended towards Ipswich. For 2043, the aspirational growth scenario requires an additional Ely to Cambridge service to support the demand towards Cambridge on this corridor, a new Ely to London King’s Cross service and up to five EWR services extending beyond Cambridge: three towards Ipswich and two towards Ely, with one extending to Norwich. If EWR services were not provided, these services would start from Cambridge.

A higher level of growth has been identified in the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Independent Economic Report. The implications of this are not considered but could be in a further study, say Network Rail. The study has identified additional infrastructure to support the Government endorsed growth. These options include two additional platforms (and associated switches, crossings and additional track) at Cambridge by 2033, and from 2043, doubling of the Newmarket single line for approximately 3.5 miles from Coldham Lane Junction towards Newmarket. Enhancements may be required earlier should growth be higher than forecast.
An ‘order of magnitude’ cost range has been assessed for these options. The study recommends that these options are developed to a Strategic Outline Business Case, aligned with the Government’s rail enhancement funding process.

Options have also been explored around the stabling required to support a future train service. These range from minimal options, such as supplying the necessary additional stabling in or around Cambridge, through to moving all existing stabling facilities to release the land for alternative uses or over-site development. The recommendations in this study have been developed by Network Rail in partnership with the DfT and local authorities and partnerships. These recommendations support the continued development of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough area and the contribution of rail to transport and economic growth across the sub-region.

See the report.

Topics

- Cambridge
- Cambridgeshire
- Infrastructure
- Network Rail