

England's Economic Heartland Business Unit
c/o Buckinghamshire Council
Walton Street
Aylesbury
HP20 1UA

please reply to:

70 Dynevor Road
Stoke Newington
London
N16 0DX

engagement@englandseconomicheartland.com

roger.blake@raifuture.org.uk

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Dear Sir / Madam,

Luton - Bedford - Corby Connectivity Study: call for evidence

Raifuture is Britain's leading, longest-established, national independent voluntary organisation campaigning exclusively for a better railway across a bigger network for passenger and freight users, to support economic (housing and productivity) growth, environmental improvement and better-connected communities.

We seek to influence decision makers at local, regional and national levels to implement pro-rail policies in transport and development planning.

Question One: What do you think are the main themes within the connectivity study area?

The three most important over-arching themes for us that the connectivity study should look to consider when developing a package of potential measures are:

- ~ Decarbonisation (through a primary focus on securing modal shift to sustainable travel, more than decarbonising individual road vehicles as they still generate 'the Oslo effect')
- ~ Accessibility
- ~ Access to public transport

Question Two: What do you consider to be the key movements in the area?

The key journeys being made in the study area in our members' experience are between the major population and employment centres within, and also directly adjacent to, the study area, such as to and from Milton Keynes and Northampton.

All these journeys are being made disproportionately by motor vehicle.

They could, and should, be made by a different mode of travel in the future (including virtually, although as the effects of the pandemic recede and the value of face-to-face transactions is re-discovered, that can too readily be over-stated).

These journeys are being made overwhelmingly for employment and education, and also business as well as leisure.

The biggest single gap in connectivity which means that people cannot easily connect between key places, in our experience, is between the northern part of the study area and the Northampton area. The strategic gap in the southern part of the study area will soon be largely addressed as East West Rail improves links with Milton Keynes.

www.raifuture.org.uk www.raifuturescotland.org.uk www.raifuturewales.org.uk
www.railwatch.org.uk



Question Three: What interventions do you think the study should consider?

The principal intervention which we think should be considered during the development of the study is a direct mainline rail connection in the northern part of the study area with Northampton, heading westwards off the Midland Main Line either south of Wellingborough or south of Kettering in order to ensure through links with Corby, as well as with Leicester and beyond.

Yours faithfully,

Roger Blake BA, MRTPI (Rtd), MTPS
Railfuture
Director for Infrastructure & Networks, national Board