

East Sussex County Council
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please reply to:

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2025-06-30

Dear ESCC,

Draft East Sussex Rail Strategy 2025-2050

Respondent Information

Questions 1-3: Railfuture is Britain's leading and longest-established, independent national 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.

Roles and responsibilities

Q4 - Do you agree with the roles and responsibilities related to rail as set out in section 3 of the draft strategy?

Yes.

(optional open response box: two 'Key organisations' not mentioned are the Ministry of Housing Communities & Local Government and His Majesty's Treasury. The former is significant because in the context of its housing growth plans, coupled with the lacklustre delivery of new homes in particularly three of the County's five Districts, the locations planned for that growth are indicators of where improved / new services and new stations / even lines might be developed. The latter is significant for its post-Spending Review 10-year Infrastructure Strategy just published and the imminent Infrastructure Pipeline, and for the forthcoming revised Green Book as HMG's guidance on appraisal.)

Rail Priority Investment Areas

Q5 - Have we included reference to relevant policy documents, evidence or opportunities for Priority Investment Area 1 (accessibility of the rail network)?

Yes.

Q6 - Do you agree with the rail related schemes and initiatives included in Priority Investment Area 1 (accessibility of the rail network)?

Yes.

Q7 - Have we included reference to relevant policy documents, evidence or opportunities for Priority Investment Area 2 (integration with other modes)?

Yes.

Q8 - Do you agree with the rail related schemes and initiatives included in Priority Investment Area 2 (integration with other modes)?

Yes.

www.railfuture.org.uk www.railfuturescotland.org.uk www.railfuturewales.org.uk
www.railwatch.org.uk

Q9 - Have we included reference to relevant policy documents, evidence or opportunities for Priority Investment Area 3 (reliability and resilience)?

Yes.

Q10 - Do you agree with the rail related schemes and initiatives included in Priority Investment Area 3 (reliability and resilience)?

Yes.

Q11 - Have we included reference to relevant policy documents, evidence or opportunities for Priority Investment Area 4 (decarbonisation)?

Yes.

Q12 - Do you agree with the rail related schemes and initiatives included in Priority Investment Area 4 (decarbonisation)?

Yes.

Q13 - Have we included reference to relevant policy documents, evidence or opportunities for Priority Investment Area 5 (journey time competitiveness)?

Yes.

Q14 - Do you agree with the rail related schemes and initiatives included in Priority Investment Area 5 (journey time competitiveness)?

Yes.

Q15 - Have we included reference to relevant policy documents, evidence or opportunities for Priority Investment Area 6 (customer experience)?

Yes.

Q16 - Do you agree with the rail related schemes and initiatives included in Priority Investment Area 6 (customer experience)?

Yes.

Equalities Impact Assessment

Q17 - do you have any feedback on the draft Rail Strategy Equalities Impact Assessment?

No.

Overall support and any other comments

Q18 - To what extent do you support or not support the draft East Sussex Rail Strategy?

Somewhat agree.

Q19 - Do you have any further comments, not covered in the previous questions, that you wish to make? Yes (open response box: We welcome "Uckfield - Lewes - Line Reopening" and "Eridge - Tunbridge Wells railway line reinstatement (Spa Valley Line Modern Operations Reopening)" as two of the six Strategic Priority Schemes. For the former we also welcome "Potential delivery of an intermediate station to unlock new sustainable housing development which could in turn help to fund the scheme costs." in Appendix A. We aver that this will depend on the location and quantum of such development in the next Lewes Local Plan. For the latter we envisage a co-existence of mainline and heritage operations).

Yours faithfully,

Roger Blake BA, MRTPI (Rtd), MTPS
Railfuture
London & South East regional branch
Director for Infrastructure & Networks, national Board