

Taskforce Members

Rt Hon Sir Alan Haselhurst MP – MP for Saffron Walden

Rt Hon David Lammy MP – MP for Tottenham

Cllr Kevin Bentley – Essex County Council

Cllr Ian Bates – Cambridgeshire County Council

Cllr Derrick Ashley – Hertfordshire County Council

Cllr Tim Wotherspoon – South Cambridgeshire District Council

Isabel Dedring – Greater London Authority

Cllr Joe Goldberg – London Borough of Haringey

Cllr Doug Taylor – London Borough of Enfield

Andrew Harrison – Stansted Airport

Alex Plant – Cambridge Ahead

Professor Greg Clark CBE – London Stansted Cambridge Consortium

Mark Reeve – Greater Cambridge Greater Peterborough LEP

Michèle Dix CBE – Crossrail 2

Paul Harwood – Network Rail

Stuart White – Department for Transport

Fiona Fletcher-Smith – Greater London Authority



A case for investment in rail to support growth



Substantial investment in the West Anglia Main Line would unleash enormous growth potential along this nationally significant corridor. Tens of thousands of homes and jobs will be needed in the years to come across the region but these cannot be delivered without a step change in rail connectivity. We have put up with an inferior railway for too long. We deserve better, sooner and I am determined to make it happen.

Sir Alan Haselhurst MP, Chair of the West Anglia Taskforce

What is the West Anglia Taskforce?

The West Anglia Taskforce, announced by the Chancellor of the Exchequer and Mayor of London in 2015 as part of the Government's Long Term Economic Plan, is building the case for improved rail provision on the West Anglia Main Line along the London Stansted Cambridge corridor.

The West Anglia Taskforce will compile an evidence base to support rail infrastructure investment along this corridor and will report its findings to the Government in the summer of 2016.

What does the Taskforce want?

The Taskforce wants to see improvements to the West Anglia Main Line. The railway links Cambridge, Stansted and London, forming the backbone of this globally significant growth corridor – one of the most successful economic regions in the UK.

The corridor is a crucial arm of the Cambridge, London and Oxford golden triangle which is driving technology and bioscience-led economic growth in the UK. The elite universities here have been, and continue to be, a significant catalyst in the fast-growing life science sector in these locations, especially in Cambridge.

It is also home to Stansted Airport, one of Europe's fastest growing major airports, providing the corridor with a vital international link – over 22m passengers passed through the terminal in 2015.



The corridor today: a growth region

London and the East of England are the two fastest-growing regions in the UK, and the West Anglia Main Line corridor links them together. The railway must provide the reliable and frequent transport connections that are essential to access jobs.

A national economic powerhouse

Nearly one in seven of all the jobs in the UK are within a 10km radius of the corridor and many of these jobs are in high-skill, high-growth sectors. The London Stansted Cambridge corridor is home to a highly efficient economy – productivity in the region is 16 per cent higher than the UK average. With Gross Value Added (GVA) growth projected to outpace jobs growth significantly, the area will contribute greatly to productivity growth, helping overcome a persistent shortcoming for the UK.

Rapid employment growth is underway, with the number of jobs in the area increasing at more than double the national rate in the last ten years. The corridor is driving technology and bioscience-led economic growth in the UK and is home to major operations from Microsoft Research, ARM Holdings, AstraZeneca, GSK, Pfizer and Illumina. Life sciences and medical technology are the third largest contributor to economic growth in the UK, set to generate over 14,000 new jobs by 2023. Investing in this corridor would contribute significantly to the UK's overall productivity; not investing here could mean that business goes abroad and the UK loses out.

The West Anglia Main Line is the corridor's backbone. It runs from Liverpool Street and Stratford to Stansted Airport and Cambridge, passing through key growth areas such as the Upper Lee Valley, the Harlow Enterprise Zone and the internationally recognised biotech hubs and enterprise zones around Cambridge. It provides the connectivity essential to supporting growth and paves the way for Crossrail 2 to link in to the catchment area of South West London and beyond.



London and Cambridge are the top two destinations for FDI (Foreign Direct Investment) in the UK

Challenges to future growth

Limited space on the tracks

Currently, services on the West Anglia Main Line are severely hampered all the way along the line because the section between Coppermill Junction (just South of Tottenham Hale) and Broxbourne junction in Hertfordshire consists of only two tracks affecting journey times, reliability and capacity. New tracks between these two locations (four-tracking) will provide the capacity to run more trains and allow a balance between fast outer services and frequently stopping inner-suburban services.

Speed and frequency

Journey times and train frequencies on the line could be improved. Fast services and commuter stopping services currently compete for space in the timetable and on the tracks, meaning that journey times are extended for the longer distance services and frequencies are relatively low for the shorter distance stopping services.

Reliability

If one track is out of action, other services on the line become disrupted through delays or cancellations. This impedes business growth and airport competitiveness as many people choose to commute, travel or do business elsewhere.

A housing shortage

As well as transport challenges, the corridor faces huge pressure for homes. Across the corridor, and much of North East London, the population is due to grow by around 360,000 by 2031. Without improvement to the rail link, there will be increased housing pressures, labour shortages, restrictions on growth and constrained access to Stansted Airport.

In London alone, 49,000 new homes need to be built every year to meet the growing demand for housing. Homes are needed across the region. The Upper Lee Valley, as London's largest Opportunity Area, can only realise its huge potential to fulfil some of this demand through improvements to West Anglia Main Line.

A sustained programme of investment in the West Anglia Main Line is vital to foster growth, productivity, new homes and regeneration along the entire London-Stansted-Cambridge corridor, whilst unlocking crucial spare runway capacity at Stansted.

Andrew Harrison,
Managing Director, Stansted Airport

London Stansted Cambridge: the corridor with huge potential

The West Anglia corridor is set to continue growing at pace, with a population increase of 360,000 between now and 2031. We need to house this population and provide regular and reliable transport connections to access jobs.

Cambridge

Home to one of the world’s best universities, numerous science parks, the Cambridge Biomedical Campus which employs 30,000 people making it one of the largest biomedical sites in the world, and the new Cambridge Compass Enterprise Zone.

Stansted Airport

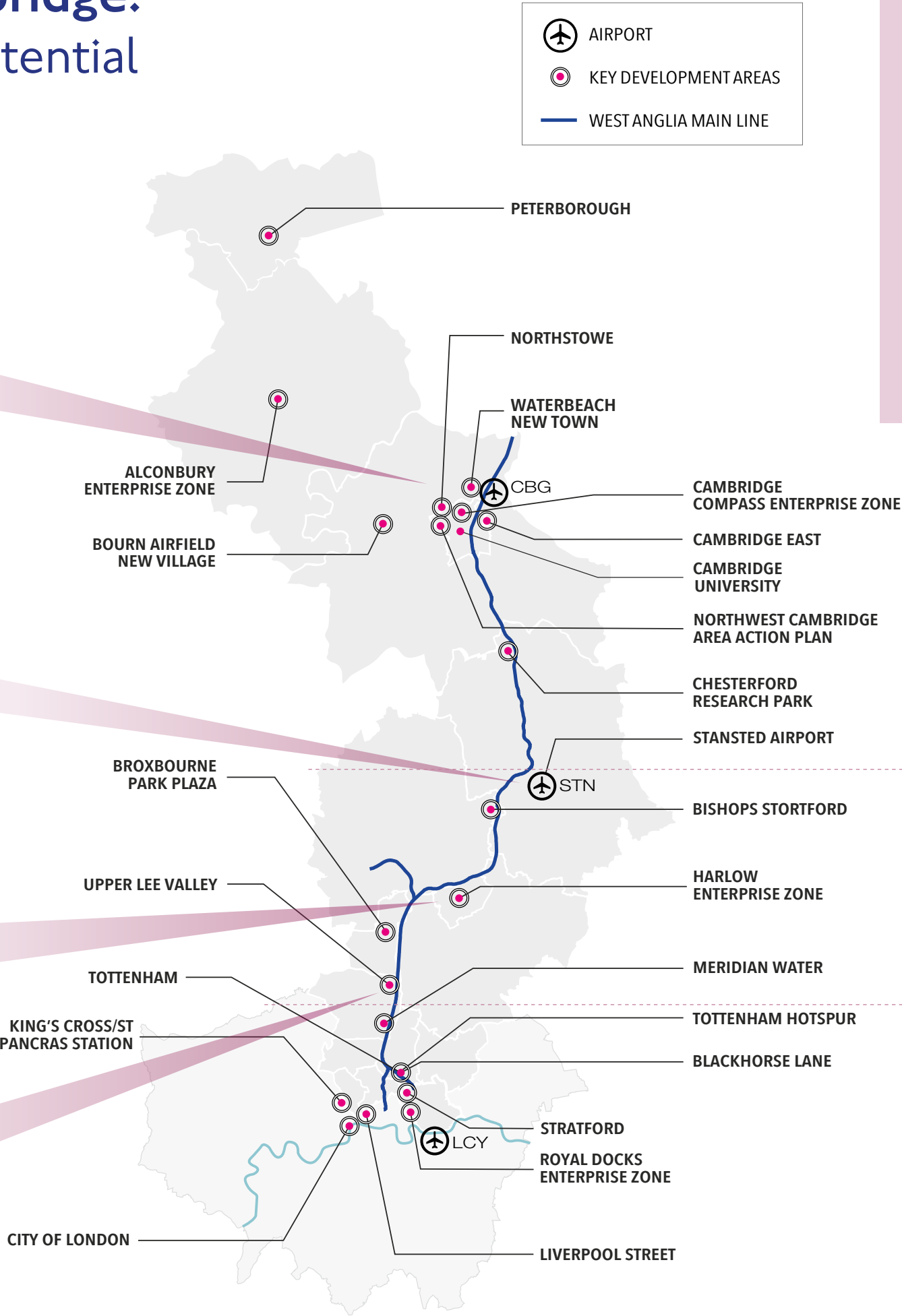
One of the fastest growing major airports in Europe, serving 170 worldwide destinations in 38 countries. Plans to nearly double passenger throughput by 2030 will generate £4.6bn GVA.

Greater Harlow

Home to the Harlow Enterprise Zone and soon to host the £350m National Science Hub.

Upper Lee Valley Opportunity Area

London’s largest Opportunity Area could support tens of thousands of new homes and jobs with the right transport infrastructure. Around 8,000 homes and 3,000 jobs are being created at Meridian Water following improvements to the railway line.



Transport is the key to unlocking housing potential and supporting jobs in the corridor. The significant potential along this corridor is being stalled by a lack of rail capacity and slow, unreliable journeys. Tens of thousands of new homes could come forward with investment in four-tracking and Crossrail 2. Depending on local plans, even more homes could be built than these numbers suggest.

North of Stansted

around
10,000
new homes

Waltham Cross to Stansted

around
30,000
new homes

Upper Lee Valley

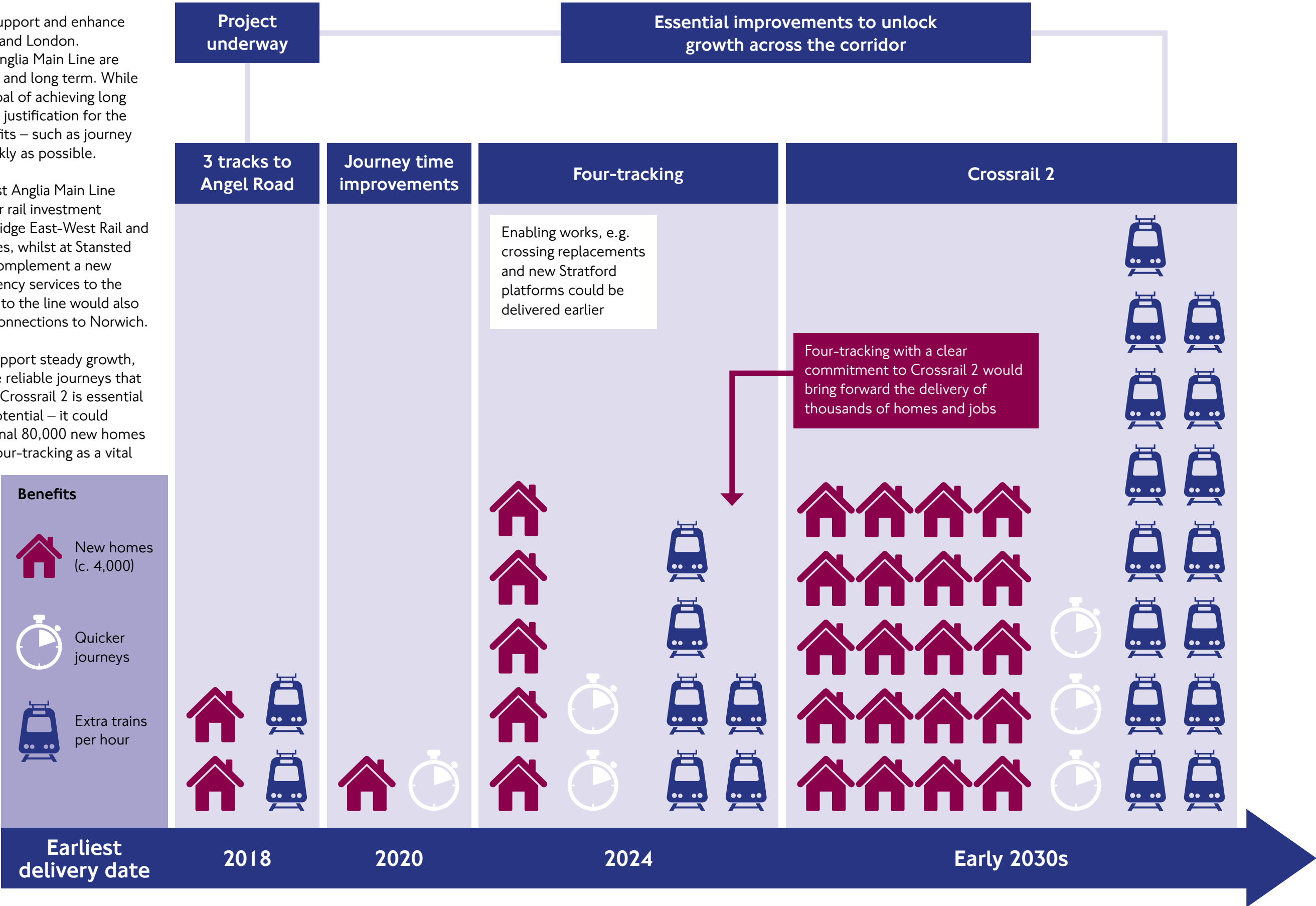
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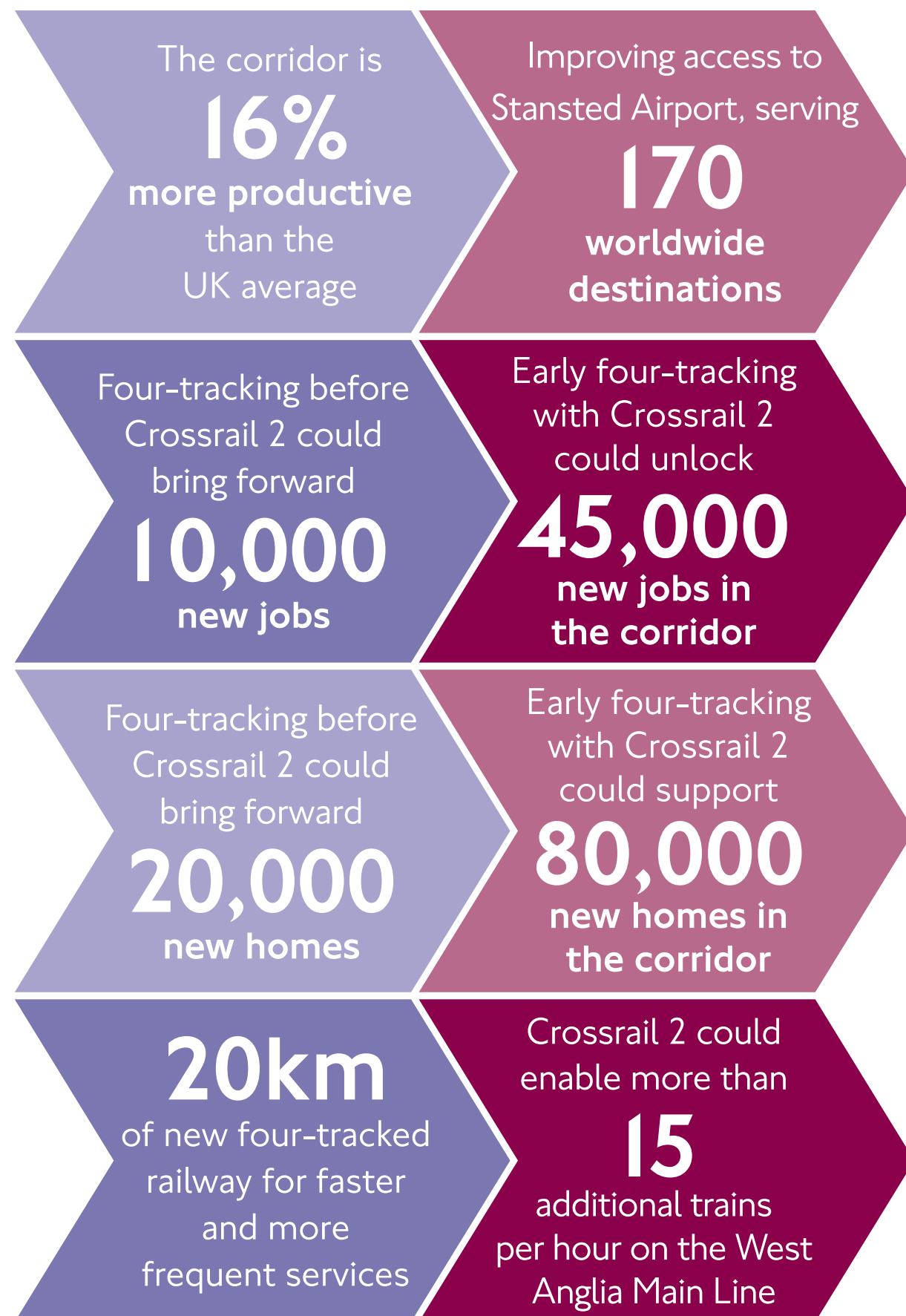
Assessing the options for the short, medium and long term

The Taskforce is seeking to support and enhance the economy of West Anglia and London. Improvements to the West Anglia Main Line are needed in the short, medium and long term. While the Taskforce has the clear goal of achieving long term aims, it will seek to gain justification for the delivery of incremental benefits – such as journey time improvements – as quickly as possible.

Adding more track to the West Anglia Main Line would also complement other rail investment proposals, including in Cambridge East-West Rail and a new station at Addenbrookes, whilst at Stansted Airport four-tracking would complement a new tunnel to unlock higher frequency services to the airport. These enhancements to the line would also substantially strengthen rail connections to Norwich.

Phased improvements will support steady growth, providing the faster and more reliable journeys that unlock new homes and jobs. Crossrail 2 is essential to unlocking the corridor’s potential – it could ultimately support an additional 80,000 new homes and 45,000 jobs. Delivering four-tracking as a vital precursor to this would kick-start growth, bringing forward the delivery of at least 20,000 homes and 10,000 jobs.





Next steps

The Taskforce's work is accelerating and will meet a series of milestones this year. It is gathering evidence and building the business case for investment which will be submitted to the Government in summer 2016. This will include reviewing a number of possible schemes to identify the best way to support growth in the corridor.

The Taskforce is looking at how much of this cost could be met through non-central Government sources, but support will be needed from Government to unlock the benefits of the scheme for the UK. This support could come in the form of grant funding or a devolved funding mechanism.

The Taskforce is also working with the National Infrastructure Commission as it considers potential infrastructure investment in London and the surrounding regions.

The completion of four-tracking and associated works to close level crossings could be achieved by 2024 if funding is confirmed and the necessary consents granted by 2020. This early delivery will ensure that growth can be kick-started ahead of Crossrail 2 opening.

Doing nothing is not an option – it would be damaging to growth across the whole corridor. Four-tracking is needed to enable high-growth businesses to thrive by providing faster, more reliable and more frequent rail services, and is a vital precursor to Crossrail 2. Investment is essential to opening up land for tens of thousands of planned new homes and jobs across the corridor. It is an opportunity we cannot afford to miss.



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