

The Rt Hon. Rachel Reeves MP  
Chancellor of the Exchequer  
HM Treasury  
1 Horse Guards Road  
London SW1A 2HQ

*Sent via email*

5 June 2025

Dear Chancellor,

### **The national importance of unlocking Ely Junction**

As the Board of the Combined Authority, we are writing jointly to express our collective and individual support for unlocking Ely Junction. The scheme, known formally as the Ely Area Capacity Enhancement (EACE) programme, is long overdue and delivers exceptional value for money.

There is cross-party support for this project. The Spending Review is the right moment to unlock rail capacity, boost growth and back your government's ambitions for Cambridge with the infrastructure required.

Ely Junction is a notorious rail bottleneck, where five lines are forced into one. The case for EACE is compelling:

- A transformational increase in passenger connectivity across the East of England – particularly between Stansted Airport, Cambridge, Peterborough and the Midlands.
- Substantial growth in rail freight supporting Felixstowe, which is the UK's busiest container port.
- Crucial to widening benefits from the growth of Cambridge and the Oxford-Cambridge corridor.
- Strong economic returns, with Network Rail estimating up to £4.89 in benefits for every £1 invested.
- National significance for growth and the ability to sustain housing demand in the region.
- Environmental impact – the project would remove up to 98,000 lorry journeys annually, cutting 1.7 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> over its lifetime.

Put simply, this critical rail corridor is being throttled by Victorian-era infrastructure. Unless we finally end one of the worst rail junctions in the UK, new trade, freight, housing and growth will continue to be held back.

Unlocking Ely Junction fully aligns with national priorities including:

- The growth of Cambridge and growth across the East of England and the Oxford-Cambridge corridor.
- The government's Rail Freight and Net Zero strategies.
- Delivering the full benefits of East West Rail and the Freeport programme.

Our region has been waiting for this project for decades. This a generational opportunity, which will unlock the growth our country needs.

We urge you to fund EACE in the Spending Review later this month.

Yours sincerely,

**Cllr Lucy Nethsingha**  
Leader of Cambridgeshire County Council

**Cllr Anna Bailey**  
Leader of East Cambridgeshire District Council

**Cllr Bridget Smith**  
Leader of South Cambridgeshire District Council

**John O'Brien**  
Chair of NHS Cambridgeshire & Peterborough

**Cllr Dennis Jones**  
Leader of Peterborough City Council

**Cllr Chris Boden**  
Leader of Fenland District Council

**Al Kingsley**  
Chair of the Business Board

**Paul Bristow**  
Mayor of Cambridgeshire & Peterborough

**Cllr Anna Smith**  
Cambridge City Council

**Cllr Sarah Conboy**  
Leader of Huntingdonshire District Council

**Darryl Preston**  
Police and Crime Commissioner