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Please find below my submission to the National Infrastructure Commission's call for evidence for the CrossRail 2 consultation.

I am responding in my capacity as MP for Enfield North, an area which could benefit substantially from significant infrastructure investment.

1. What are the major economic and social challenges facing London and its commuter hinterland over the next two to three decades?

The greatest challenge for London and its commuter hinterland over the coming years will be how we can continue to connect people's homes with jobs. Cities are engines of growth, and London is particularly important in driving the UK economy. London's ability to do so relies upon being able to house and then transport a talented labour force to work. But with the population continuing to grow rapidly – by the equivalent two tube trains full of people every week – this is becoming an increasing challenge.

The housing crisis in London, including here in Enfield, has been well publicised. What is clear is that over the coming decades we will need to build significant numbers of new homes. These homes are essential if London is to continue attracting talented people that work in the high-growth sectors that power the economy. But to be viable, these homes must be built around public transport networks. In my constituency, road congestion is already severe in the morning and evening rush hours, partly because existing rail services are not as frequent or reliable as required. While there is potential for new housing development in my constituency, to take this forward without a big improvement in public transport would overwhelm the road network. If we fail to build more homes it will only make the existing challenges worse and damage London's long-term prospects.

Many of my constituents travel into central London to work: severe congestion on the transport network is a daily challenge for many, delaying journeys into work and deterring people from travelling to highly productive and well paid jobs in the centre of London. While planned improvements are welcome, over the next few decades London will need to invest in major new infrastructure projects to provide a major capacity boost. Without the transport network that can connect homes to jobs, London's international position is at risk.

This would harm my constituents. The London-Stansted-Cambridge corridor has had enormous success in attracting high-tech firms which provide skilled jobs. Proximity to a thriving London has been crucial to attracting that inward investment which is needed to drive up living standards in my constituency. In Enfield wages are significantly below the London average and unemployment is persistently higher. London must continue to thrive to create new opportunities for people there and across the whole city.



2. What are the strategic options for future investment in large-scale transport infrastructure improvements in London - on road, rail and underground - including, but not limited to Crossrail 2?

My constituency needs public transport improvements in the short, medium and long term to support economic growth. In the short to medium term, Network Rail needs to commit to improving the West Anglia Main Line to provide more frequent and more reliable services.

Currently, services on the West Anglia Main Line (WAML) 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 – which passes through the Eastern side of Enfield North - consists of only two tracks. Fast and slow services compete for space and as a result, journey times are long for the longer-distance services and frequencies are relatively low for the shorter-distance stopping services. Reliability is also a key concern: if one track is out of action services can become delayed or cancelled.

Providing four tracks could provide the solution, and would also pave the way for Crossrail 2, which would allow up to 30 trains per hour in each direction through central London and connect into the region's existing transport network. Delivered by 2030, Crossrail 2 could unlock tens of thousands of new homes and jobs in the WAML corridor alone. The delivery of four-tracking by 2024 will ensure that this growth can be kick-started ahead of Crossrail 2 opening in 2030. This would provide a step change in accessibility in my area and unlock growth in the Upper Lea Valley, one of London's largest opportunity areas.

It is important that strategic options for future investment in large-scale transport infrastructure improvements focus on maximising the return on investment. This is best achieved by targeting areas with high growth potential, such as the opportunity areas in the Upper Lea Valley. These areas have the most opportunity to unlock economic growth which can pay back the original investment, securing a stable economy. While it is important to invest in cities around the UK, this cannot be at the expense of London. It not only needs investment, but can also provide the greatest return on that investment, growing the national economy. Growth is not a zero-sum game.

3. What opportunities are there to increase the benefits and reduce the costs of the proposed Crossrail 2 scheme?

Delivering improvements to the West Anglia Main Line in Network Rail's control period 6 (2019-24), with an explicit commitment to Crossrail 2, would unlock significant housing and economic growth years ahead of the railway opening. As we have already seen with Crossrail, significant housing development happens in anticipation of the new railway, and the Upper Lea Valley provides very large opportunities to build some of the tens of thousands of new homes that we need. A commitment to improving the line and progressing Crossrail 2 would help increase the benefits, and deliver them earlier than would otherwise be possible.



Benefits could further be maximised if holistic development plans are drawn up along with transport plans. Enfield Council has developed ambitious plans for new homes, jobs and growth at Meridian Water as a result of local rail improvements. With further commitments to Crossrail 2, these plans could be further developed at other locations in the borough, to maximise opportunities and get the most efficient use of the infrastructure.

4. What are the options for the funding, financing and delivery of large-scale transport infrastructure improvements in London, including Crossrail 2?

Crossrail 2 has developed a funding package where the majority of funding is locally provided. This type of funding model, where Government's contribution is dramatically reduced maximises value and instead focuses planners on how best to design projects that can pay for themselves through greater economic growth, job creation, reduced unemployment and increased tax receipts.

Government needs to demonstrate leadership and commitment to Crossrail 2 by providing the development funding needed to get projects off the ground. That businesses are paying for Crossrail shows that, providing there is a clear Government commitment to infrastructure investment, new funding streams can be secured. This minimises central government expenditure while maintaining the transformational benefits of the infrastructure. With a possible funding structure in place, central Government should provide the £250m needed to develop Crossrail 2 and secure powers to build it in this parliament.

5. How have major metropolitan areas in other countries responded to similar challenges and priorities? Are there any lessons to be learned and applied in London?

In Hong Kong, city planners work as part of the railway company to devise development plans which provide a funding stream for the railway. These integrated plans make the most of available opportunities and help pay back the investment faster. Parts of the Upper Lea Valley contain large areas which could be regenerated and support new development should Crossrail 2 go ahead. Mechanisms which capture this value could be developed to provide additional funding streams for the project.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the call for evidence.

Regards,

Rt. Hon Joan Ryan MP