

New or improved rail  
lines – Evaluation case  
studies of local  
economic impacts

Corby Case Study  
January 2018

Department for Transport Rail  
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## Executive Summary

### Background

The Corby case study is part of a Department for Transport (DfT) ex-post evaluation study considering the economic impacts of investment in new and improved railway lines. Corby was selected as a retrospective study, where investment in the form of a new rail service and new station was delivered in 2009. This case study sits alongside a number of other case studies, some of which are also retrospective, and some baselining for future rail improvements.

Within each of the six case studies undertaken as part of this ex-post evaluation study, three central hypotheses are being tested:

1. That improved rail services will, by making rail travel more convenient for local people, encourage additional rail trips including some generated trips and some captured from other modes.
2. That improvements to the station and services will make the affected area a more attractive place to:
  - i. live;
  - ii. work; and / or
  - iii. locate a business.  
(investment and employment effects).
3. That businesses located within the station catchment area with improved services will benefit from improved access to potential employees, customers, and suppliers, resulting in greater productivity (productivity effects).

We approached the case study by:

- considering the economic, socio-demographic characteristics and market for rail travel in Corby prior to the new service being introduced (Chapter 2);
- identifying a comparison area to allow us to better isolate impacts from the rail improvement versus other factors (Chapter 3);
- exploring the transport impacts of the new rail service and new station in Corby (Chapter 4);
- identifying the economic impacts of the intervention, including on productivity, employment and investment, in part through econometric analysis (Chapter 5); and
- drawing these findings together to consider what can be concluded about the economic impact of the new rail service at Corby (Chapter 6).

### Economic, socio-demographic and transport context (Chapter 2)

Corby is a large town located in Northamptonshire, approximately 80 miles north of London. Corby local authority (which represents the case study area) has experienced above average levels of population growth in the pre-intervention period. Census data from before the new rail service was introduced showed that the majority of Corby residents commuted within the Corby local authority or neighbouring geographical areas, travelling relatively short distances and most often by car.



In terms of employment rates, Corby performed as well or better than Northamptonshire, East Midlands and nationally, and experienced a growth in Gross Value Added (GVA) between 2004 and 2008.

### **The comparison area (Chapter 3)**

Comparison areas are used in evaluation to attempt to isolate impacts from the rail improvement versus other background factors. By selecting a comparison area that is similar to Corby, in terms of location, population and transport infrastructure, prior to the new rail service opening we attempt to account for what might have happened in Corby had the new rail service not been delivered.

The comparison area of Daventry was selected due to its comparable employment, sectoral composition profile and transport usage patterns, combined with the fact that it does not have a station located within it, similarly to Corby prior to the new rail service and station being delivered in 2009. The value of the comparison area is primarily realised when exploring the impacts of the investment on employment, change in travel to work behaviours and diversification of sectoral composition and/or increased productivity in Corby.

### **Outcomes of the transport intervention (Chapter 4)**

Rail usage data indicates that immediately following the opening of the new station in Corby in 2009 there were 115,000 rail trips starting or finishing at the station, increasing to 278,000 by 2015/16. However, growth in rail trips was subdued at the nearby stations of Kettering and Market Harborough (where new rail trips at Corby would have been expected to have been abstracted from) over the same time period, with the volume of trips falling during the economic downturn, albeit recovering afterwards. Across all three stations, usage of rail increased from 1.83m in the year prior to Corby opening (2008-9) to 2.19m in 2015/16, an increase of 20%, the same as that experienced in the East Midlands region, although less than the increase across the whole network of 34%. Approximately 30% of rail trips from Corby appear to be to / from Kettering – and hence entirely new trips since this is a flow previously not possible by rail.

Evidence from station user and residents surveys, together with Office of Rail and Road (ORR) rail usage data, suggests that the rail demand at Corby is partly a result of abstraction from neighbouring stations and partly newly generated rail trips (some of which appear to be due to modal shift), and additional leisure trips. Over half of Corby station users are reported to have increased their overall use of rail since the opening of the station, with the major reason given for their increased usage being the greater convenience the new rail service and station offers. Resident surveys in Corby and Daventry report that, while 61% of Corby residents travel by rail at least once a month, this is just 50% for Daventry residents, illustrating that the station at Corby is likely to have contributed towards an increase in overall rail use.

Overall, the new rail service and station at Corby, through making rail travel more convenient for local people, has encouraged additional rail trips, both newly-generated and from other modes, although the rail usage data does suggest the majority of trips were abstracted from other local stations at Kettering and Market Harborough.

## Economic impacts of the transport intervention (Chapter 5)

Several economic impacts could be expected to occur in Corby as a result of the towns' improved rail connectivity, as individuals and businesses change their travel behaviour to benefit accordingly. These effects can be broadly considered in three groups:

- Investment effects (residents and businesses)
- Employment effects
- Productivity effects

### *Investment effects*

Both residents and businesses are hypothesised to value the accessibility offered by improved rail connectivity, and will hence adjust their locational choices – in terms of where to invest, locate or purchase a property – accordingly. Research amongst local residents and businesses indicates that availability of rail services was one of their considerations when choosing where to live, where to work and where to locate a business. Furthermore, the research also indicated that there was a higher level of satisfaction with local rail services in Corby compared with the comparator area, Daventry. For example:

- 27% of Corby and 21% of Daventry residents said that rail services were an important factor in choosing where to live;
- 12% of Corby and 9% of Daventry residents said that rail services were an important factor in choosing where to work;
- 12% of Corby and 2% of Daventry businesses who had moved within the last 7 years said that rail services were an important factor in choosing where to locate;
- 30% of Corby and 21% of Daventry businesses said that rail services are important for clients or suppliers visiting the site; and
- 74% Corby and 19% of Daventry businesses said they were satisfied with the station that they used.

The primary research provides some qualitative evidence for positive economic impacts, since it illustrates that individuals and businesses located in Corby tend to value rail accessibility more than those in Daventry, who do not benefit from close proximity to rail services. This suggests that some individuals and businesses *who value rail connectivity* – such as those who rely on access to larger labour markets and customers and clients in London – may have decided to locate in Corby, rather than other towns such as Daventry which lack rail connectivity.

It should be stressed, however, that the quantitative evidence for these effects was limited, and it is unlikely that, for most businesses and individuals, the new rail service and station played a significant role in their decision to locate. Most residents and businesses did not view rail connectivity as an important factor in their locational decisions (reflected in the evidence above), with rail connectivity only important for businesses in specific sectors.

While population growth in Corby has remained high relative to Daventry, this is more likely to be a result of planning policy and land availability, albeit perhaps supported by improved rail connectivity post-station opening, but in any case simply represents the continuation of a pre-2009 trend. Similarly, the analysis of local property prices in this report does not suggest that

the opening of the station at Corby has resulted in an increase in local property values, though no detailed property price analysis was undertaken and hence this cannot be ruled out.

#### *Employment effects*

Econometric analysis, using a Difference-in-Difference (D-i-D) approach based on the Business Structure Database, was also used to identify the impacts of the opening of the new station at Corby on firm-level employment. It concluded that while there was a small positive increase in overall firm employment in Corby relative to Daventry, this was not statistically significant.

Firms operating within both the Retail and Wholesale, and Transport and Storage sectors in Corby did appear to benefit from a statistically significant increase in overall employment compared to Daventry, with a 7% and 6% increase over a 6-year horizon respectively. Small firms, with less than 10 employees, also reported a statistically significant increase, perhaps indicating that any employment response to the new rail service was focused amongst smaller, local businesses – rather than larger retail and manufacturing firms.

While this could have been a result of the station investment – increased footfall following the introduction of the rail service benefitting retailers, and an increase in employment in transport and storage both directly at the station and as a result of complementary transport e.g. taxis – it is not possible to specifically identify the station as the *cause* of the increased employment. It should be noted that the rapid growth of Corby over this time period, despite the Great Recession, results in difficulty in disaggregating the impacts of the new station at Corby. However, it could be that the new rail service provision made some contribution to these wider trends.

Office for National Statistics (ONS) local labour market data supports this analysis, indicating that employment continued to grow strongly throughout and since the recession, in contrast to Daventry and the wider UK economy, despite a brief fall in employment in 2012/13.

#### *Productivity effects*

Econometric analysis was also undertaken using the Business Structure Database to identify any impacts of the new station and rail service on firm turnover. Increased turnover could indicate increased firm productivity and profitability, as firms increase economic output as a result of a transport improvement reducing the cost of producing output and enabling them to become more productive.

Evidence of any change in firm turnover in Corby, relative to Daventry, was limited. While there was a non-statistically significant increase in turnover amongst Wholesale, Transport and Storage sector businesses, overall turnover in Corby actually decreased, although again this effect was not statistically significant. Data on the change in GVA by worker, a measure of the total productivity of the local economy, also suggests that Corby has underperformed relative to Daventry and the wider economy. Hence, it is difficult to identify any relationship between productivity in Corby and the opening of the station and the arrival of new rail services.

### **Conclusions and Further Work (chapter 6)**

Overall, it appears the opening of the station at Corby and the arrival of new rail services is likely to have had a series of impacts on the local economy, although these are concentrated

and difficult to quantify. Stakeholders and survey evidence identifies that some businesses and individuals value the new accessibility offered by Corby's rail service, but the majority do not view rail connectivity as important to them and hence are unlikely to have influenced their investment or locational decisions in response to the arrival of Corby's rail service. Additionally, sustained growth in Corby station usage has been observed, which appears to have only started to level off since 2015.

While some businesses and individuals in specific sectors do rely on rail connectivity, these appear to be few in number, and hence the overall impact of the rail service on investment, employment and productivity on the town is marginal, reflected in the econometric analysis undertaken. Whilst employment does appear to have increased following the opening of the station in 2009, reflected in the econometric analysis and ONS data, it is difficult to conclude that this was caused by the accessibility improvement offered by the new rail service. There is no evidence that the productivity of the local economy in Corby has increased following the opening of Corby station and the arrival of new rail services.

In part, due to the Great Recession putting a brake on the economy, it could be that further transport and economic effects are still to be seen, especially since rail usage at Corby station - the key driver of behavioural responses – has only recently stabilised.

# 1 Introduction

1.1 This report outlines the findings of a case study into the economic impacts of a new railway service and station serving Corby in Northamptonshire, which forms part of a wider study into the economic impacts of investment in new and improved rail lines. In total, six case study reports have been produced and are supplemented by an Executive Summary document and a Technical Report. Corby was selected as a ‘retrospective’ case study since the new service and station:

- serve a large, rapidly growing town previously unserved by rail services, which means there is potential for economic impacts to occur due to the increased connectivity offered to residents and businesses; and,
- opened in 2009, therefore giving a period of eight years during which resulting economic impacts could be identified through ex-post monitoring and evaluation

1.2 This introductory chapter provides some brief background to the wider project and to this case study. Further information about the project and the methodological approach being used can be found in the accompanying Technical Report. This chapter is followed by chapters which:

- look at the economic, socio-demographic characteristics and market for rail travel in Corby prior to the new service commencing (Chapter 2);
- identify a comparison area to allow us to better isolate impacts from the rail improvement versus other factors (Chapter 3);
- explore the transport impacts of the new rail service and new station in Corby (Chapter 4);
- identify the economic impacts of the intervention, including the results of econometric analysis (Chapter 5); and
- draw these findings together to consider what can be concluded about the economic impact of the new rail service at Corby (Chapter 6).

## **Overall aims of the project**

1.3 The purpose of this project is to generate evidence to increase understanding of the economic impacts of rail infrastructure investments, including the relationship between the provision of improved rail services and economic growth. DfT commissioned the project to start to build an evidence base in this area, for which there is currently limited robust ex-post evaluation evidence available. This project tests the insights that can be gained by using a case study approach to build a detailed and rich narrative of the particular context in which new or improved rail lines are being delivered, and how this relates to any observed behavioural and

economic impacts. Further discussion on the relative strengths and limitations of a case study design can be found in the Technical Report.

- 1.4 We investigate first the evidence for behavioural change (e.g. demand response) as a precursor to economic impacts, before investigating evidence for potential economic impacts. Given that this is an innovative and methodologically challenging area, we aim to first build an evidence base across case studies on any potential economic effects, without going so far as to then explicitly address questions of additionality and displacement within this study (i.e. questions around whether any increased economic activity is newly generated or displaced from elsewhere).
- 1.5 This project involves six case studies, three retrospective case-studies (including Corby) two baseline case studies, and one composite study involving both baseline and retrospective elements. Each case study has been purposely selected to include different transport interventions that will deliver different outputs under different circumstances and lead to a diversity in the scale, nature and distribution of economic outcomes that may be realised.

## **The Corby case study**

### **Why was Corby chosen as a case study?**

- 1.6 Corby was selected as a case study because:
- prior to 2009, the town was one of the largest in Western Europe without a railway station, and hence the opening of the station and commencement of rail services would be expected to have an impact on the accessibility of Corby, and therefore potentially its attractiveness as a place to live, work or locate a business;
  - Corby is a rapidly growing town, with a developing economy that is likely to benefit from improved connectivity delivered by good rail services; and
  - the timing of the improvements grants a sufficient timespan to retrospectively identify any economic impacts that may have arisen from the investment, and make informed comment on any future impacts.

**What is the nature of the investment in rail services at Corby?**

1.7 Figure 1.1 illustrates the extent of the rail network surrounding Corby, and the location of the town on a branch of the Midland Main Line from Kettering to Corby, Oakham and Melton Mowbray.

Figure 1.1: Rail services surrounding Corby



Source: National Rail (amended)

1.8 Prior to 2009, Corby was not directly served by passenger rail services, with passengers required to travel to Kettering (approximately 20 minutes’ drive away) to access rail services, and the existing railway line through the town used only by infrequent freight trains. Shuttle

services to Kettering briefly operated between 1987 and 1990, but were withdrawn due to unreliability and low usage<sup>1</sup>.

- 1.9 Network Rail committed funding to reopening the station in April 2007 (in order to support housing and employment growth) with DfT later granting full approval. Investment consisted of a new platform, station building, car park and a small bus interchange, together with minor infrastructure improvements to the previously freight-only line through Corby to facilitate passenger services. Corby station opened in February 2009, with a full all-day service commencing in April 2009.
- 1.10 Services are currently operated by East Midlands Trains, and operate hourly serving Corby, Kettering, Wellingborough, Bedford, Luton and London St Pancras, with a journey time to London of approximately 70 minutes. Services are operated by Class 222 'intercity' diesel multiple units, built in 2003-05. Services have remained largely unchanged since the opening of the station in 2009.
- 1.11 The town lacks good accessibility to the wider national rail network, particularly towards locations in the east including Peterborough and East Anglia. Connections are available at Kettering for northbound trains to Leicester and Nottingham, although the timing of the connections between these two hourly services when travelling northbound makes this an unattractive option, with a 58-minute wait at Kettering. Infrequent services also run between Corby, Oakham and Melton Mowbray (1-2 each day in each direction).

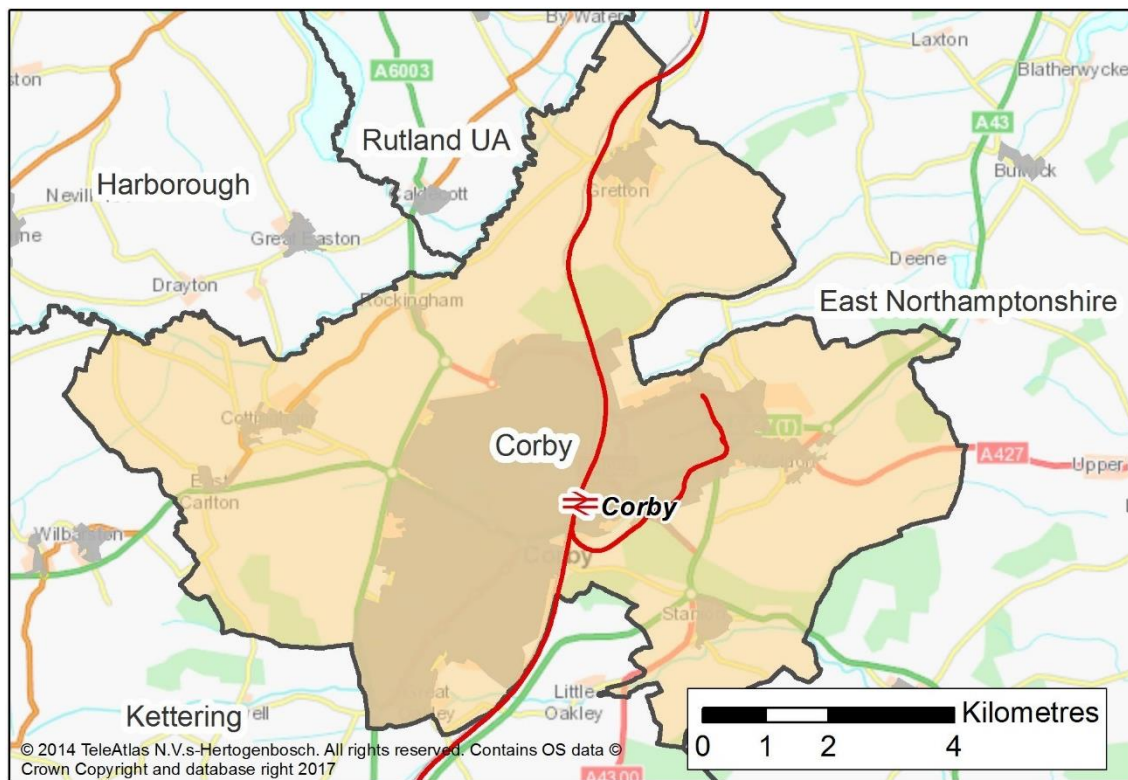
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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.northantstelegraph.co.uk/lifestyle/nostalgia/steaming-ahead-to-transform-a-village-1-767591>



- 1.12 Corby station is not, as is typical for settlements of its size and nature, located within the town centre. As can be seen in Figure 1.2, the station is located to the east of the retail and commercial centre of Corby, and to the south and west of the major industrial parks upon which the majority of employment is located.
- 1.13 The location of the station is opposite the original station dating from 1879 which, with the coming of the railway and its ability to deliver large quantities of iron ore and coal, led to the establishment of a large integrated ironstone and steel works to the north-east of the station. The location of the station predates much of the industrial and commercial development that has taken place in Corby since its designation as a New Town in 1950. In line with many such schemes of the time, the Corby development plan was prepared with a car-friendly layout and commercial development was not, therefore, heavily influenced by the location of the station.

Figure 1.2: Location of Corby rail station



## 2 Economic, socio-demographic and transport context

### Introduction

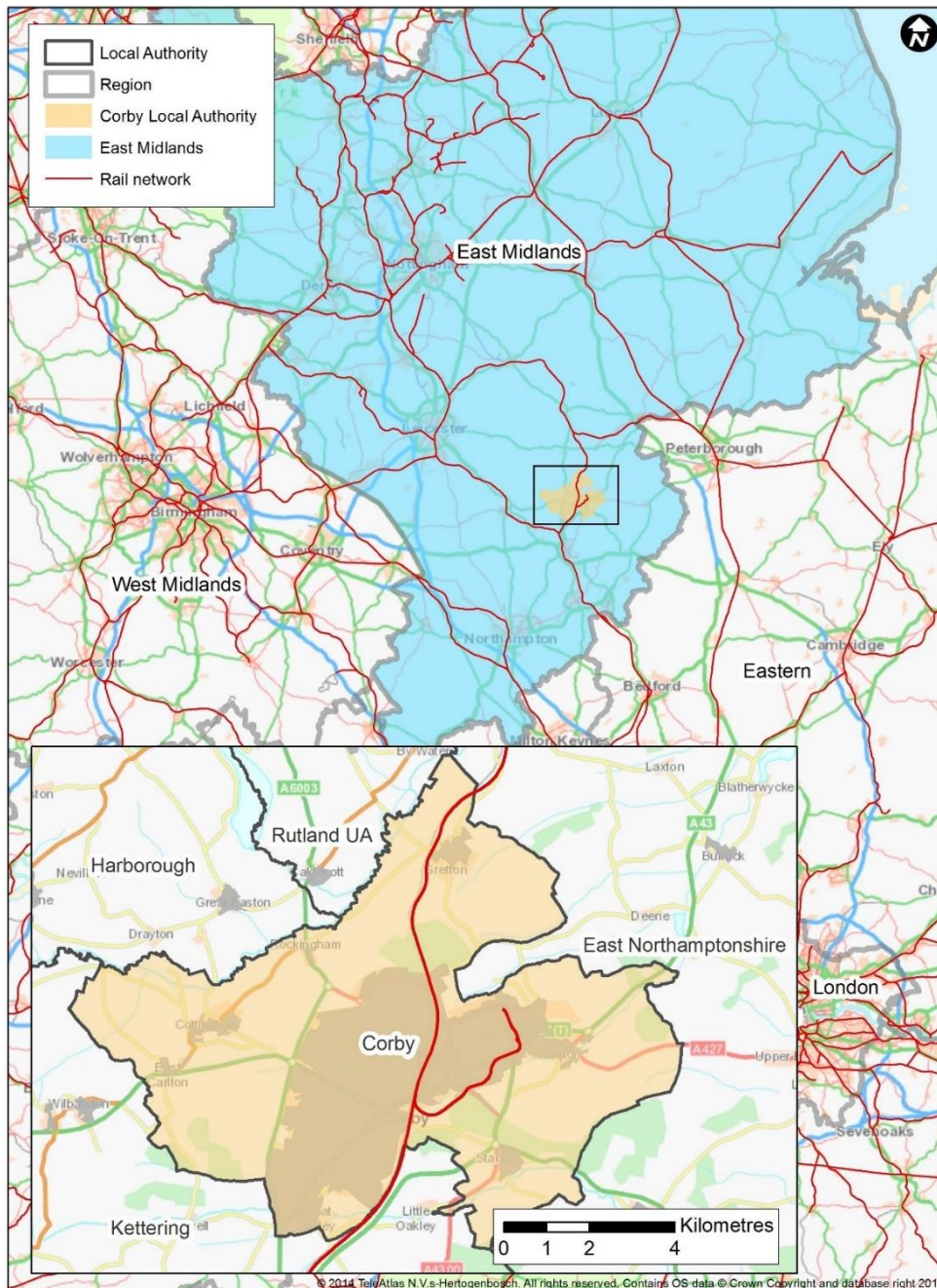
- 2.1 This chapter outlines the socio-economic and transport context of Corby prior to the new service being introduced in 2009. This provides an overview of Corby's geography, demography and economic profile and how this compared to the wider region at the time, so that the case study can later isolate any potential economic impacts arising following the introduction of the new service.

## Overview of Corby

### Where is Corby, and what is the geography of the town?

- 2.2 Corby is located in Northamptonshire, East Midlands around 80 miles north of London (Figure 2.1). Administratively, the town is governed by Northamptonshire County Council at the county level and Corby Borough Council at the district level.
- 2.3 Peterborough, Leicester and Northampton, the nearest large employment centres, are located between 35 and 50 minutes by road from Corby, with the smaller market town of Kettering approximately 20 minutes’ drive away.

Figure 2.1: Corby local authority within the East Midlands



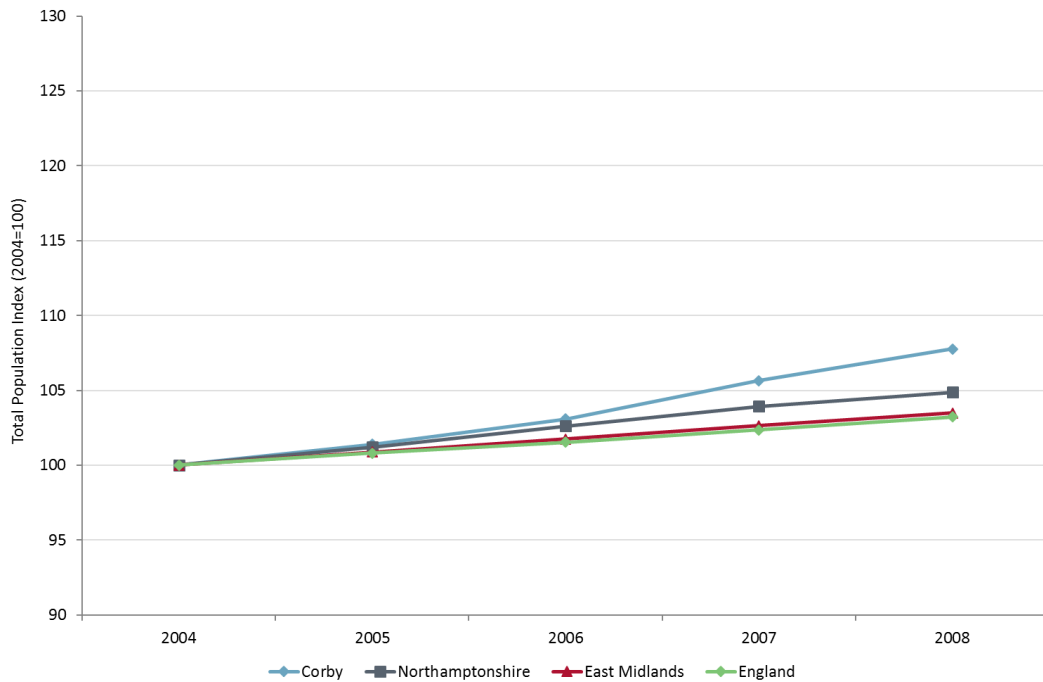
### **Transport networks in and around Corby prior to the new rail service provision**

- 2.4 Corby is served by a number of major road corridors of national and regional significance. The A43 offers a link (with some sections dual carriageway) to Kettering and the A14 (the major route between East Anglia, the M6 and the West Midlands). The town is also served by several single carriageway roads to Peterborough, Leicester and the A1. In general, these pass through numerous small settlements with frequent junctions, tight corners and limited overtaking opportunities, with correspondingly low average speeds.
- 2.5 Prior to the introduction of new services in 2009, Corby was served by a small local bus network, operated by Stagecoach, together with regional services to Peterborough, Kettering, Wellingborough and Northampton. National Express operates a daily coach service connecting Corby to Nottingham, Sheffield, Leeds and Glasgow.
- 2.6 At the time, the nearest railway stations for Corby residents were Kettering (approximately 9 miles) and Market Harborough (approximately 13 miles).

## Population growth

2.7 In 2004, the population of Corby was approximately 54,000, increasing to approximately 58,000 in 2008 prior to the new rail service provision<sup>2</sup>. Figure 2.2 illustrates population growth from 2004–2008. From 2006 onwards, Corby experienced higher average population growth compared to the East Midlands and national average. Since 2007, it has also been higher than population growth in the county of Northamptonshire. The Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) from 2004 – 2008 was 1.9%, compared to the national average of 0.8% over the same time period. The rationale for the new rail service provision at Corby was linked to Corby’s fast growing population.

Figure 2.2: Population Index 2004-2008



Source: ONS mid-year population estimates (accessed 2017)

<sup>2</sup> ONS, mid-year population estimates (accessed 2017)

### Commuting by Corby residents

- 2.8 Data from the 2001 census shows that, prior to the new rail service provision, the majority (69.1%) of Corby employed working-age residents (aged 16-64) travelled to work by car or van (as drivers or passengers) (Table 2.1).
- 2.9 A small minority of Corby employed residents used public transport of any form to travel to work (9.6%), and only 0.6% used rail in particular. Since there was no rail provision within Corby at this time, this represents residents travelling to nearby stations such as Kettering or Market Harborough, for example.

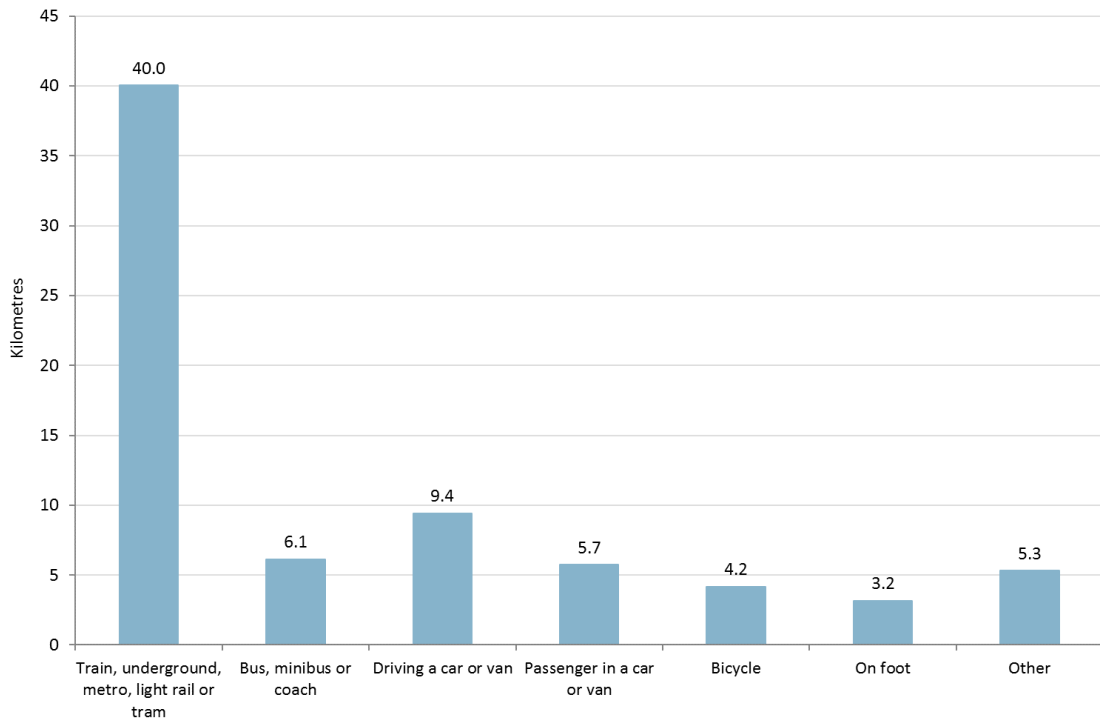
**Table 2.1: Method of travel to work for residents of Corby local authority, 2001**

	Corby local authority	Percentage
All people aged 16 to 74 in employment	24,749	
Work mainly at or from home	1,466	5.9%
Underground, metro, light rail, tram	8	0.0%
Train	138	0.6%
Bus, minibus or coach	2,220	9.0%
Motorcycle, scooter or moped	179	0.7%
Driving a car or van	14,219	57.5%
Passenger in a car or van	2,868	11.6%
Taxi or minicab	587	2.4%
Bicycle	880	3.6%
On foot	2,105	8.5%
Other	79	0.3%

Source: ONS Census 2001 Travel to Work (accessed 2017)

2.10 Figure 2.3 shows the commuting distances travelled by Corby residents, based on the 2001 census. While Table 2.1 showed that rail users made up only a very small proportion of Corby-based commuters, these individuals tended to make longer journeys on average<sup>3</sup>.

**Figure 2.3: Average distance travelled to work (by mode) Corby local authority, 2001**



Source: ONS Census 2001 Travel to Work (accessed 2017)

<sup>3</sup> Data on distance travelled by train has been combined with the category ‘underground, metro, light rail or tram’ to ensure consistency with the 2011 census data in Chapter 4, which is not available at a more disaggregate level.

- 2.11 To understand differences and similarities in travel patterns for employees living in Corby we have examined 2001 census data to identify the major commuting destinations. Table 2.2 shows the top 10 commuting destinations at local authority level for residents of Corby local authority in 2001, based on all modes of transport (i.e. not just rail).

**Table 2.2: Outbound commuting 2001 (top 10 commuting destinations where place of residence is Corby LA, all modes)**

Kettering	1,897	7.7%
East Northamptonshire	475	1.9%
Harborough	176	0.7%
London districts	137	0.6%
Daventry	116	0.5%

Source: ONS Census 2001 Travel to Work (accessed 2017)

- 2.12 The data shows that, prior to the new rail service provision, the majority (78.9%) of Corby employed residents (aged 16-74) worked within the Corby area. Those working outside of Corby tended to be in nearby surrounding areas within and around Northamptonshire. This suggests that in 2001, the labour market of Corby was largely self-contained, with little outbound commuting.
- 2.13 In 2001, only 0.6% of Corby employed residents travelled to London districts, possibly reflecting the relatively poor rail connectivity to London from Corby prior to the new rail service provision. The level of commuting to London is expected to have increased in more recent years due to the new rail service, which provides direct connectivity between Corby and London.



2.14 Table 2.3 shows the proportion of people commuting into Corby local authority to their place of work prior to the new rail service provision. The majority of people commuting into Corby travelled from within the local authority (66.1%) and surrounding local authority areas, such as Kettering, East Northamptonshire, Harborough and Rutland. This highlights the strength of the local employment market within Corby, and the town's attractiveness as a place to work.

**Table 2.3: Inbound commuting 2001 (top 10 commuting origins where place of work is Corby LA, all modes)**

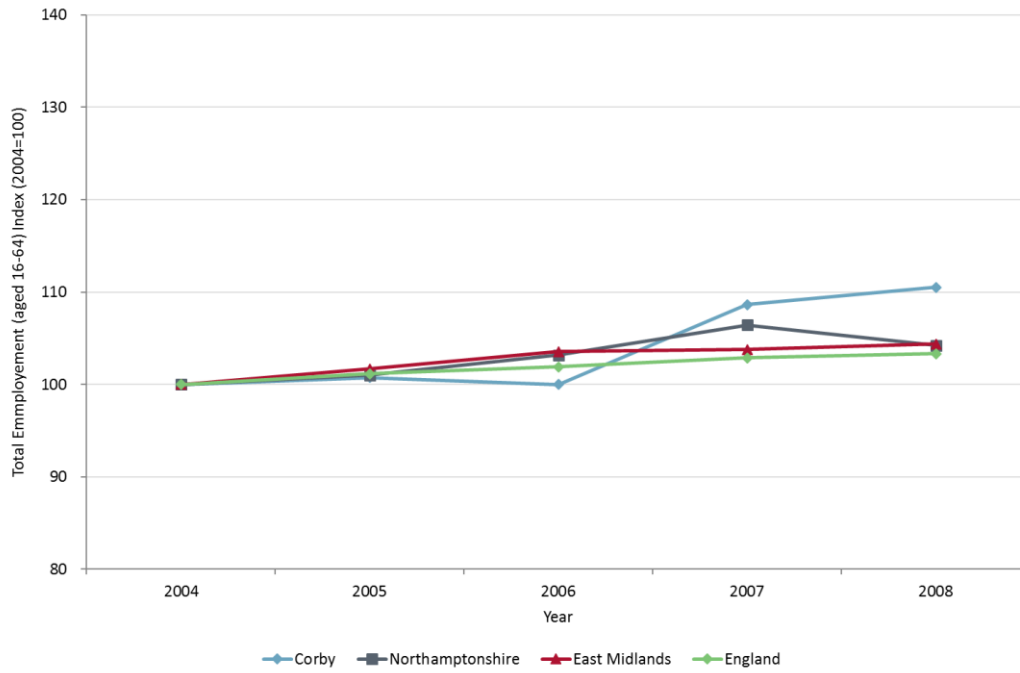
Origin Local Authority	Destination Corby Local Authority	
	No. of commuters	% of commuters
Corby	19,499	66.1%
Kettering	4,114	14.0%
East Northamptonshire	1,245	4.2%
Harborough	617	2.1%
Rutland	573	1.9%
Northampton	465	1.6%
Wellingborough	402	1.4%
South Kesteven	349	1.2%
Peterborough	254	0.9%
Daventry	166	0.6%

Source: ONS Census 2001 Travel to Work (accessed 2017)

## Employment

2.15 Figure 2.4 shows Corby has experienced larger growth in the total number of employees between 2004-2008 than have the wider geographies of Northamptonshire, East Midlands and nationally. This illustrates that even pre-2009 (prior to the new rail service provision) there was some growth in Corby employee numbers, of approximately 10%, across the period.

Figure 2.4: Employment Index (aged 16-64) in Corby, 2004-2008



Source: ONS Annual Population Survey (accessed 2017)

- 2.16 Table 2.4 illustrates the employment rate prior to the new rail service provision. The employment rate in Corby has fluctuated between 74.2% and 78.3% across the 2004-2008 baseline period. While employment in Corby remained static between 2004-2006 (Figure 2.4), its population grew by 2,000<sup>4</sup> and therefore the employment rate fell, reaching the low of 74.2% in 2006 (Table 2.4). From 2006 onwards (to 2008) employment grew significantly (an increase of 2,800) and therefore the employment rate rose from 74.2 to 76.7 per cent.

**Table 2.4: Employment Rate % (16-64) in Corby local authority, 2004-2008**

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Corby	78.3	75.6	74.2	77.7	76.7
Northamptonshire	78.7	77.9	78.7	79.6	77.3
East Midlands	73.5	73.9	74.3	73.7	73.6
England	72.8	72.9	72.6	72.6	72.3

Source: ONS Annual Population Survey (accessed 2017)

- 2.17 Corby's employment rate has generally been higher than the wider East Midlands and the national averages, but closer to, or at times slightly lower than, the average for wider Northamptonshire county within which it is based.

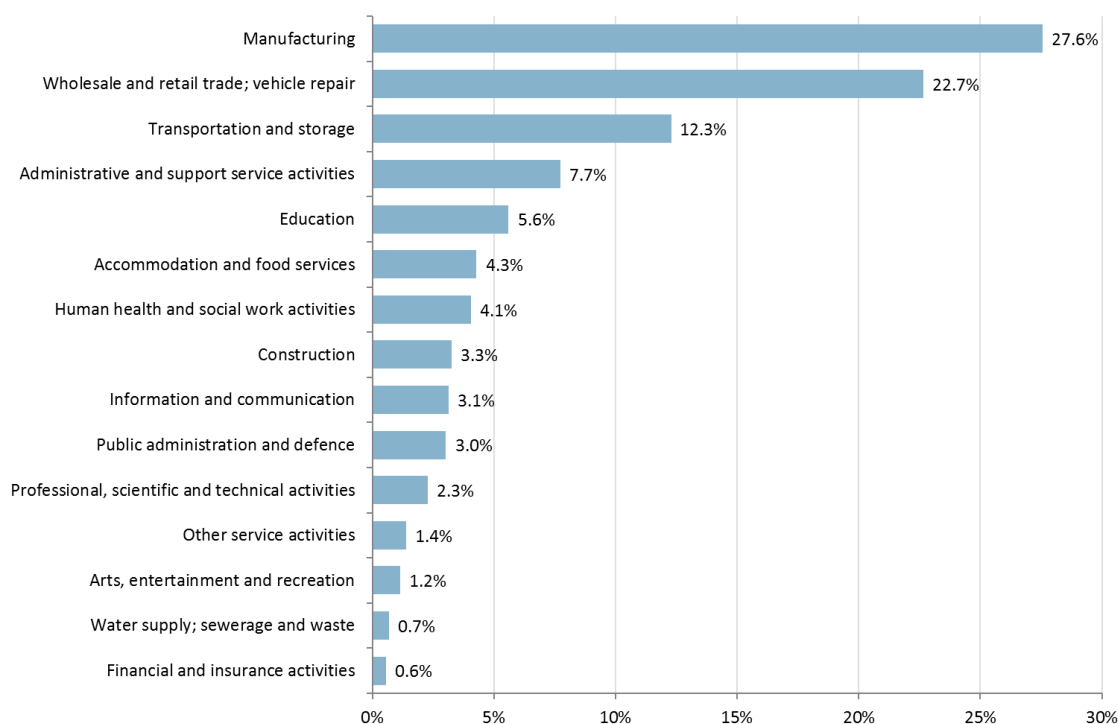
<sup>4</sup> ONS, mid-year population estimates (accessed 2017)

## Sectoral composition of employment

2.18 Corby’s economy has traditionally been associated with the steel industry, which dominated the local economy until the closure of the Corby Steelworks in 1980. While the town retains a specialism within the manufacture of steel tubing, the economy has successfully diversified into light manufacturing, services and distribution.

2.19 Figure 2.5 outlines the largest economic sectors within Corby local authority in 2008<sup>5</sup>. Employment is heavily concentrated in Manufacturing and Wholesale/Retail, which account for 27.6% and 22.7% respectively, compared to a national average of 8% and 16% respectively. Employment in 2008 was concentrated in large purpose-built industrial parks to the north of the town centre, with major employers including Avon Cosmetics, Tata Steel and Fairline Boats.

**Figure 2.5: Employment by Industry in Corby local authority, 2008**



Source: ONS Business Register and Employment Survey, 2008 (accessed 2017)

2.20 Notably, the proportion of employment in high-value service industries such as Finance and Insurance and Professional, Scientific and Technical is significantly lower than the national average. Only 0.6% of jobs in Corby are within financial and insurance activities, compared to a

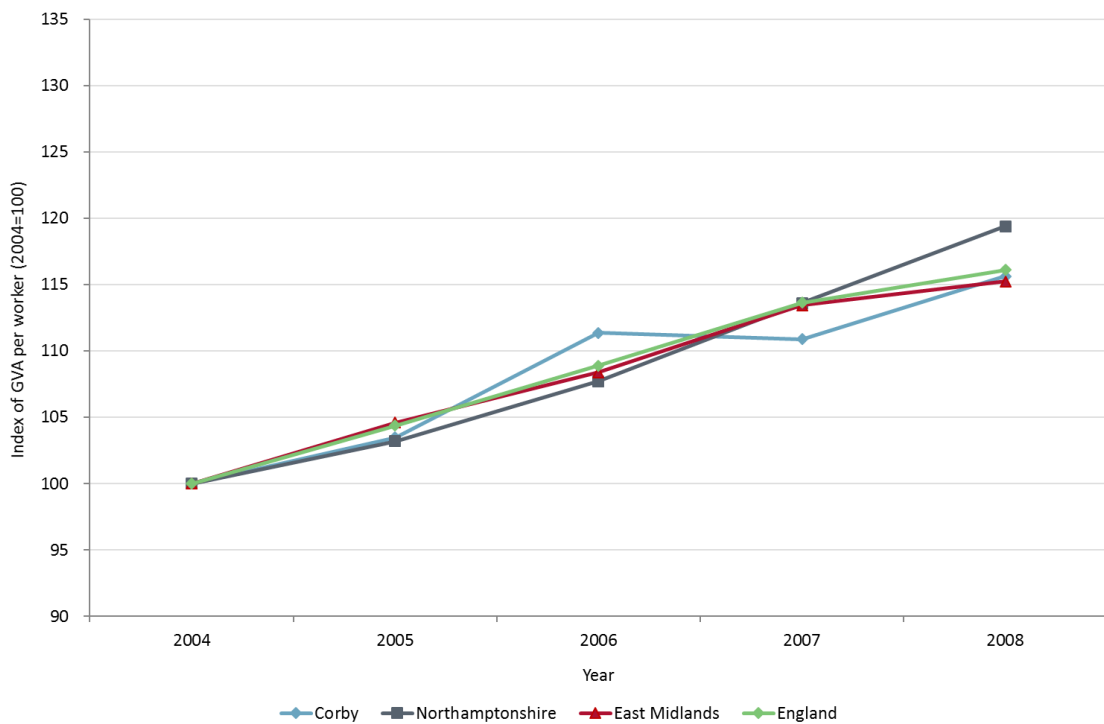
<sup>5</sup> In order to provide an overview of the industrial makeup of employment within the study area, we have considered the 2007 Standard Industrial Classification ‘sections’ which represent the top tier within the hierarchical relationship between increasingly disaggregate industrial sectors. Full details can be found at [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/455263/SIC\\_codes\\_V2.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/455263/SIC_codes_V2.pdf)

national average of 4%; similarly, only 2.3% of jobs fall within the Professional, Scientific and Technical activities sector, compared to the national average of 9%. Since firms within such high-skill, high-value service sectors benefit disproportionately from agglomeration economies (such as the productivity enhancement derived from greater knowledge spill-overs and pooling of resources) compared to firms within the wider economy, the smaller proportion of employment within these sectors in Corby is likely to mean that the local economy would benefit less from potential agglomeration effects than elsewhere.

**Productivity**

- 2.21 GVA is an economic measure of the value of outputs from the businesses in an area. GVA per worker refers to the total value of goods and services generated by each worker within a given region or sector of the economy, and therefore provides a measure of productivity.
- 2.22 Figure 2.6 shows that Corby, Northamptonshire, the East Midlands and England have seen an increase in GVA per worker across the 2004-2008 period. In Corby local authority, the increase was slightly higher in 2006 than for the other areas, whilst the reverse was true in 2007. Across the whole period, Corby’s growth of 15% was comparable to that for the East Midlands and national average, but lower than the 20% seen for Northamptonshire.

**Figure 2.6: Change in GVA per worker, 2004 – 2008**



Source: ONS Annual Population Survey and ONS Regional GVA by Local Authority in England (accessed 2017)

## Summary

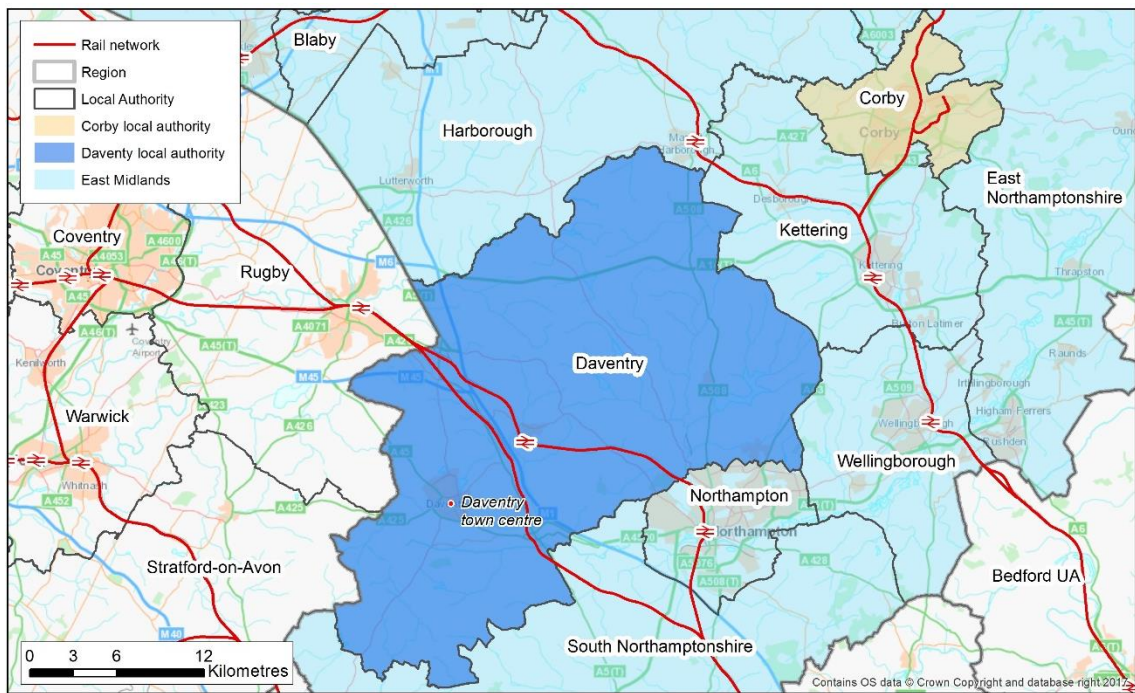
- 2.23 Prior to the arrival of the new rail service at Corby in 2009, the town was already experiencing rapid population growth of 1.9% per annum, significantly greater than the national average of 0.8%, and that of the wider region. Commuting typically tended to be over short distances, by car, with more than 78% of local workers commuting to workplaces within the town. Only a very small minority of Corby residents (<1%) reported using rail for their commute and this was typically for longer distances. The town was well-served by the road network, with the A14 dual carriageway trunk road within close proximity, and prior to the opening of Corby station public transport was limited to a number of local bus and National Express services.
- 2.24 Corby's economy, while historically suffering from a legacy of deindustrialisation, had performed more strongly in recent years. Between 2004 and 2008, Corby performed better than Northamptonshire, East Midlands and nationally in terms of employment growth. Over half of the sectoral composition of Corby's economy prior to the new service introduction was composed of Manufacturing (28%) and the Wholesale and Retail trade sectors (23%), which are less likely to benefit from agglomeration effects.
- 2.25 Corby experienced a growth in GVA per worker between 2004 and 2008, resulting in a total increase of 15% for Corby across the period. However, this was lower than the 20% increase in Northamptonshire, indicating that much of Corby's recent employment growth was likely to have occurred in lower-value, lower-skilled jobs, such as within the retail sector.

## 3 The Comparison Area

### Introduction

- 3.1 Comparison areas are used to disaggregate the effects of the rail investment from more general transport and economic trends, such as increasing rail use nationally. This chapter introduces the comparison area of Daventry local authority used within the Corby case study, including the rationale for its selection, and identifies any principal differences between the town and Corby (Figure 3.1).

Figure 3.1: Location of comparison area



Note: Although the Daventry town centre has been highlighted on the map, Corby does not have a designated town centre.

### Selection of the comparison area

#### How (and why) was the comparison area selected?

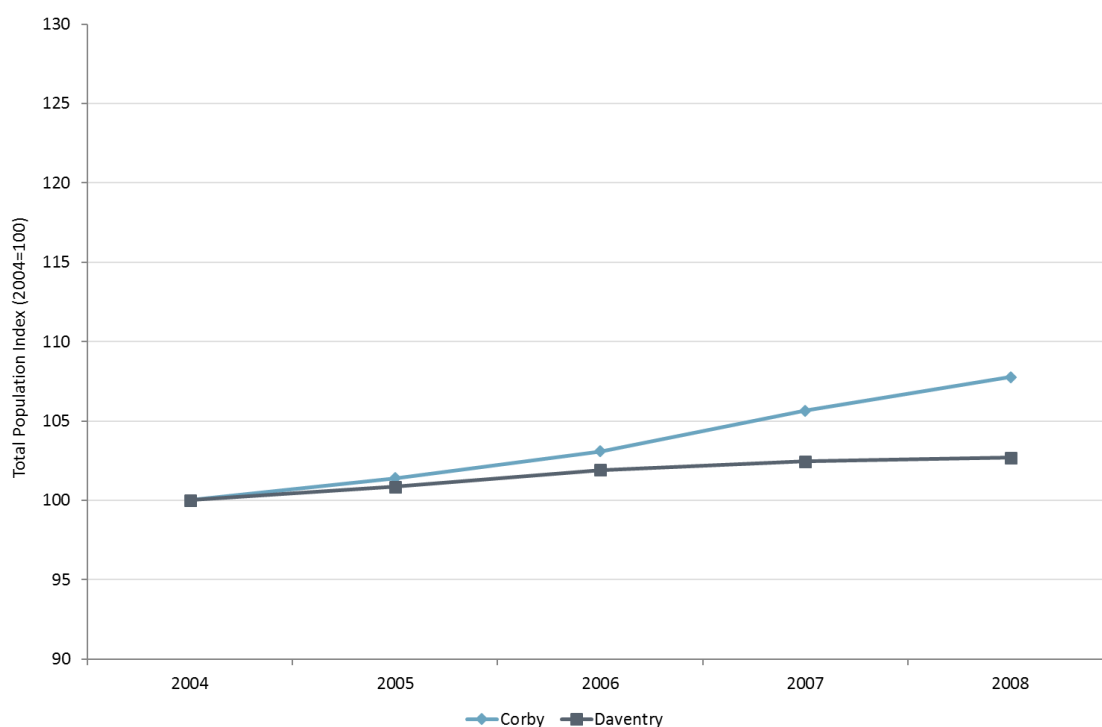
- 3.2 Daventry local authority was selected due to its comparability with Corby pre-intervention (i.e. before the introduction of new services and opening of the station in 2009) in terms of

transport provision, with neither of the towns having their own rail stations or direct rail links. The two locations are not closely linked with other urban centres and are comparable in terms of distance to London and distance from other employment centres, and are likely to be influenced by the London economy to a similar extent.

### Population growth

3.3 In 2004, the population of Daventry local authority (666km<sup>2</sup>) was approximately 75,000<sup>6</sup> compared to 54,000 in Corby local authority (80km<sup>2</sup>)<sup>7</sup>. Trends in the population of Corby and Daventry are shown in Figure 3.2. From 2004 – 2008, Daventry experienced population growth in line with the national average (the compound annual growth rate (CAGR) for Daventry from 2004 – 2008 was 0.7%, compared to 0.8% nationally over the same period). In comparison, Corby was already growing faster than Daventry and experienced higher average population growth over 2004 – 2008 (CAGR 1.9%), and hence the reason for investment there.

Figure 3.2: Population Index 2004-2008



Source: ONS mid-year population estimates (accessed 2017)

<sup>6</sup> ONS, mid-year population estimates (accessed 2017)

<sup>7</sup> It should be noted that the Corby local authority boundaries broadly follow the edge of the Corby urban area, whereas Daventry local authority also includes significant rural land and small villages to the north and east of the town (e.g. Brixworth and West Haddon).

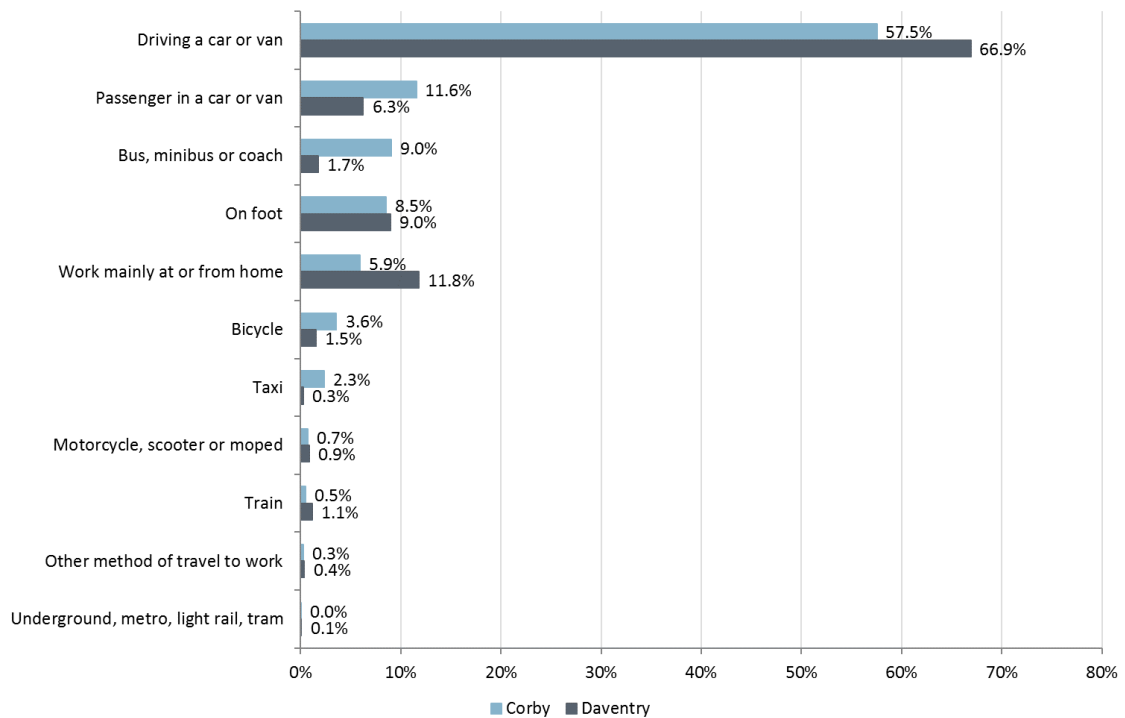


### Commuting by Corby and Daventry residents

3.4 Census Travel to Work data from 2001 has been used to understand differences and similarities in travel patterns and mode shares for employees living in Corby and Daventry prior to 2009.

3.5 Figure 3.3 illustrates the primary mode of travel to work for residents of Corby and Daventry local authority in 2001. The profile of modal use by commuters in Daventry was very similar to that shown for Corby, with the majority using cars or vans. A very small minority of commuters used rail, and the proportion that did use rail was slightly higher in Daventry (1.1%) than for Corby (0.5%). In the absence of a local rail station, only a very small proportion of local residents travelled by rail. Following the introduction of the rail service at Corby in 2009, we would hypothesise that the proportion of Corby-based commuters reporting using rail would increase more greatly in comparison to Daventry.

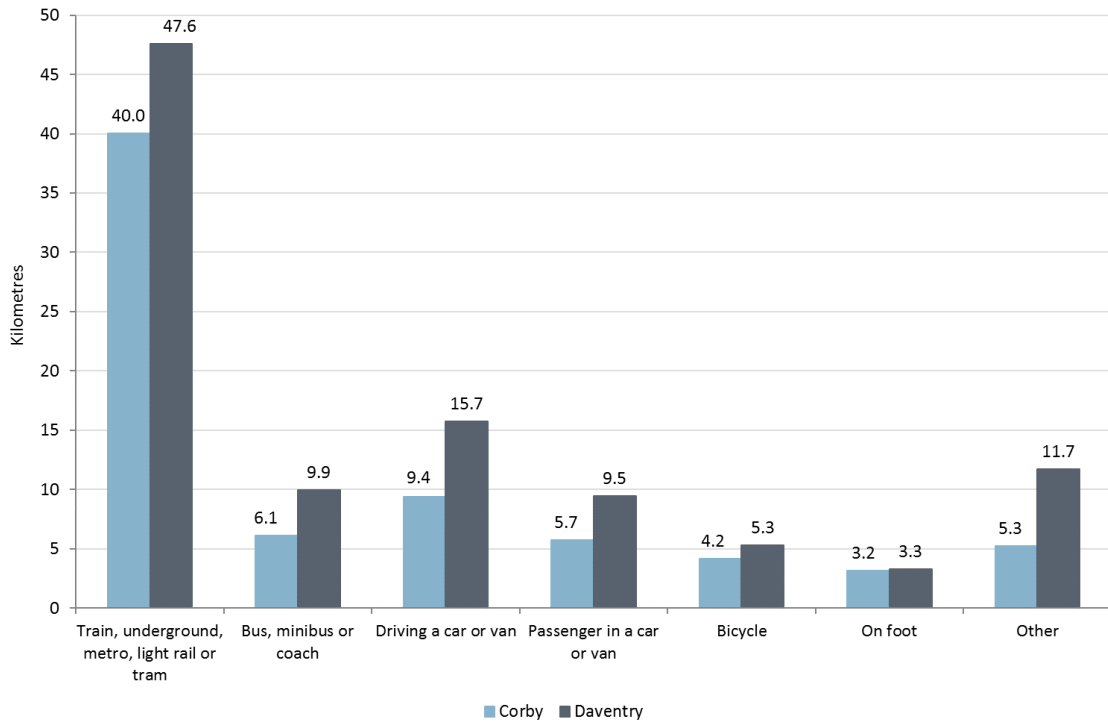
Figure 3.3: Method of travel to work Corby and Daventry local authority (2001)



Source: ONS Census Journey to Work 2001 (accessed 2017)

3.6 Figure 3.4 shows the average distance travelled to work by each mode for residents of Corby and Daventry local authority in 2001<sup>8</sup>.

**Figure 3.4: Average distance travelled to work Corby and Daventry local authority (by mode) 2001**



Source: ONS Census Journey to Work 2001 (accessed 2017)

3.7 As with Corby, the majority of commuters travelled by non-rail modes to make relatively short journeys, although these were slightly longer on average in the case of Daventry. The minority of Daventry residents that did use rail for commuting tended to travel longer distances via this mode, as was also found for Corby.

<sup>8</sup> Similar to Figure 2.3, data on distance travelled by train has been combined with the category ‘underground, metro, light rail or tram’ to ensure consistency with the 2011 census data in Chapter 4.

3.8 Table 3.1 shows the top destinations for employees living in Corby and Daventry in 2001. Whilst almost 80% of Corby residents worked within the same local authority area, the comparable percentage for Daventry residents working in the same local authority area was just over 50%. This is consistent with Figure 3.4 which shows Daventry commuters travelled slightly further than Corby commuters on average. However, the vast majority were either employed within the local authority area or surrounding areas, as was also the case for Corby-based commuters. Slightly more Daventry residents (1.6%) travelled to London districts compared to Corby residents (0.6%), although this was still very low for both areas.

3.9 If the new rail service provision offers access to more employment opportunities for Corby-based commuters, we might see Corby travel to work areas diversify and become more distant from Corby, to a greater extent than any changes reported for Daventry-based commuters.

**Table 3.1: Outbound commuting 2001 (top 10 commuting destinations where place of residence is Corby and Daventry local authority, all modes)**

	Origin Corby Local Authority		Origin Daventry Local Authority	
	Destination Local Authority	% of commuters	Destination Local Authority	% of commuters
1	Corby	78.9%	Daventry	52.5%
2	Kettering	7.7%	Northampton	18.7%
3	Northampton	3.4%	Rugby	4.3%
4	East Northamptonshire	1.9%	South Northamptonshire	3.7%
5	Wellingborough	1.5%	Cherwell	2.5%
6	Harborough	0.7%	Milton Keynes	1.9%
7	Peterborough	0.6%	Harborough	1.8%
8	London districts	0.6%	London districts	1.6%
9	Rutland	0.5%	Coventry	1.6%
10	Daventry	0.5%	Wellingborough	1.4%

Source: ONS Census Journey to Work 2001 (accessed 2017)

3.10 Table 3.2 shows the top origins for people commuting into Corby and Daventry as their place of work in 2001. Daventry is similar to Corby, where the majority of people commuting into Daventry travelled from within the local authority (61.7%) and surrounding local authority areas, such as Northampton, Rugby, South Northampton, Harborough and Kettering.

**Table 3.2: Inbound commuting 2001 (top 10 commuting origins where place of work is Corby and Daventry local authority, all modes)**

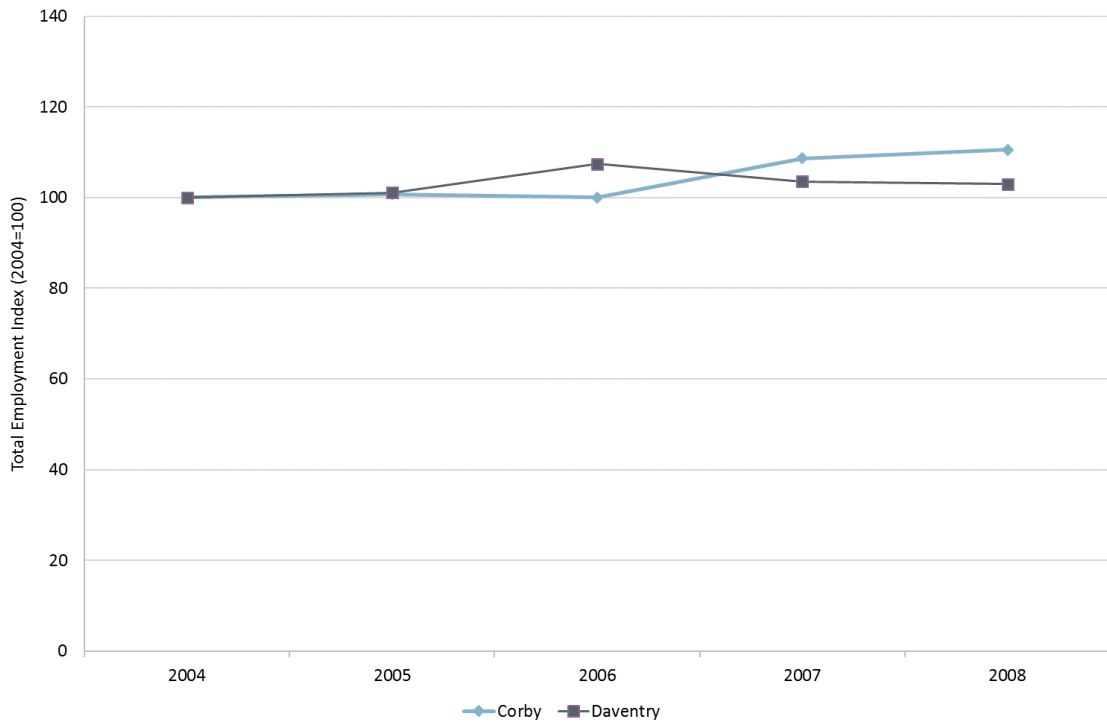
	Destination Corby Local Authority		Destination Daventry Local Authority	
	Origin Local Authority	% of commuters	Origin Local Authority	% of commuters
1	Corby	66.1%	Daventry	61.7%
2	Kettering	14.0%	Northampton	9.6%
3	East Northamptonshire	4.2%	Rugby	7.9%
4	Harborough	2.1%	South Northamptonshire	3.3%
5	Rutland	1.9%	Harborough	2.0%
6	Northampton	1.6%	Kettering	1.9%
7	Wellingborough	1.4%	Coventry	1.7%
8	South Kesteven	1.2%	Wellingborough	1.4%
9	Peterborough	0.9%	East Northamptonshire	1.1%
10	Daventry	0.6%	Stratford-on-Avon	0.9%

Source: ONS Census Journey to Work 2001 (accessed 2017)

## Employment

3.11 Figure 3.5 shows the trends in employment in Corby and Daventry local authority between 2004-2008. Although employment was slightly higher in Corby, employment trends in Corby and Daventry were reasonably consistent with a very small increase between 2004-2008 in both areas, albeit with some variability in the intermediate years.

**Figure 3.5: Total Employment Index in Corby and Daventry local authority**



Source: ONS Annual Population Survey (accessed 2017)

3.12 Table 3.3 shows employment rates over the same period. Both Corby and Daventry employment rates were higher than the national average throughout this period. Daventry employment rates over the 2004-2008 period were very similar to those shown for Corby, except for in 2006 when Corby experienced a dip in the employment rate (Figure 3.5). If the new rail service provision has a positive impact on the number of employment opportunities in the Corby local economy, we may see a greater increase in Corby’s employment growth relative to Daventry.

**Table 3.3: Employment rate (aged 16 – 64), Corby and Daventry local authority**

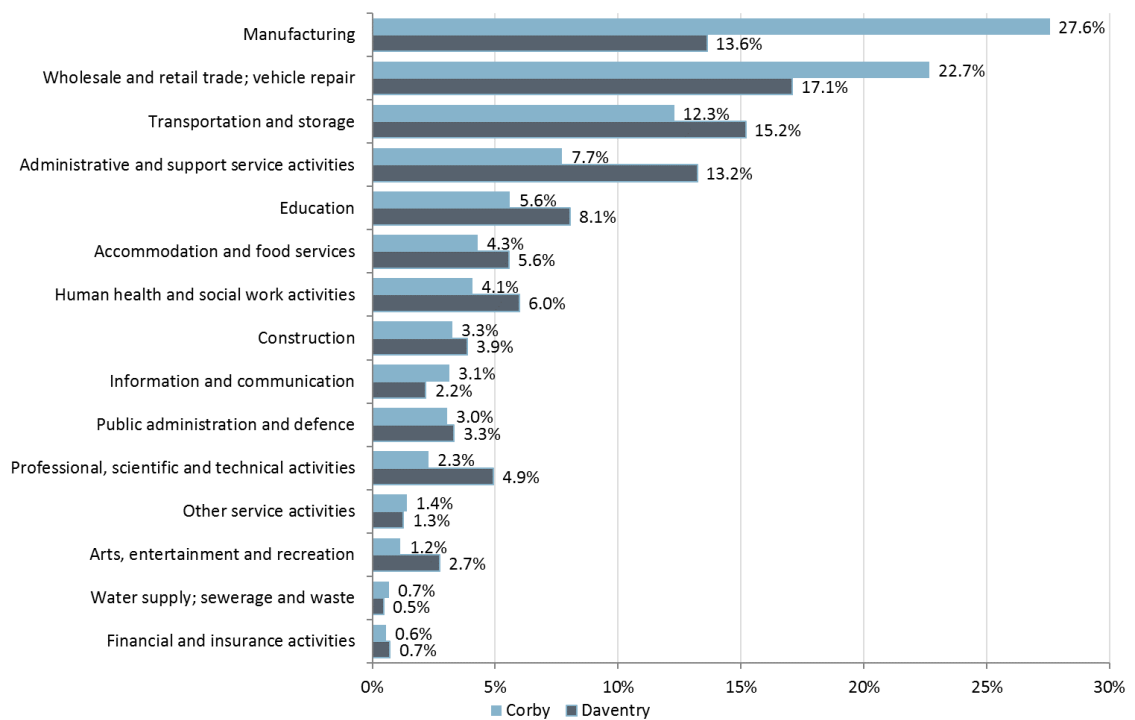
Area	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Corby	78.3	75.6	74.2	77.7	76.7
Daventry	77.3	76.8	78.4	77.4	76.9
England	72.8	72.9	72.6	72.6	72.3

Source: ONS Annual Population Survey (accessed 2017)

### Sectoral composition of employment

3.13 Figure 3.6 shows that the sectoral composition of the local economy in Daventry in 2008 was broadly comparable to that of Corby, although there was less of a reliance on the Manufacturing and Wholesale and Retail trade sectors. Although Daventry’s economic profile was more diverse, Manufacturing, Wholesale and Retail trade and Transportation and Storage accounted for almost 50% of employment. The Administrative and Support Service sector was also important in Daventry. Following the introduction of the new rail service, we might expect to see diversification of sectoral composition due to increased business and employment prospects within Corby.

Figure 3.6: Employment by Industry in Corby and Daventry local authority, 2008

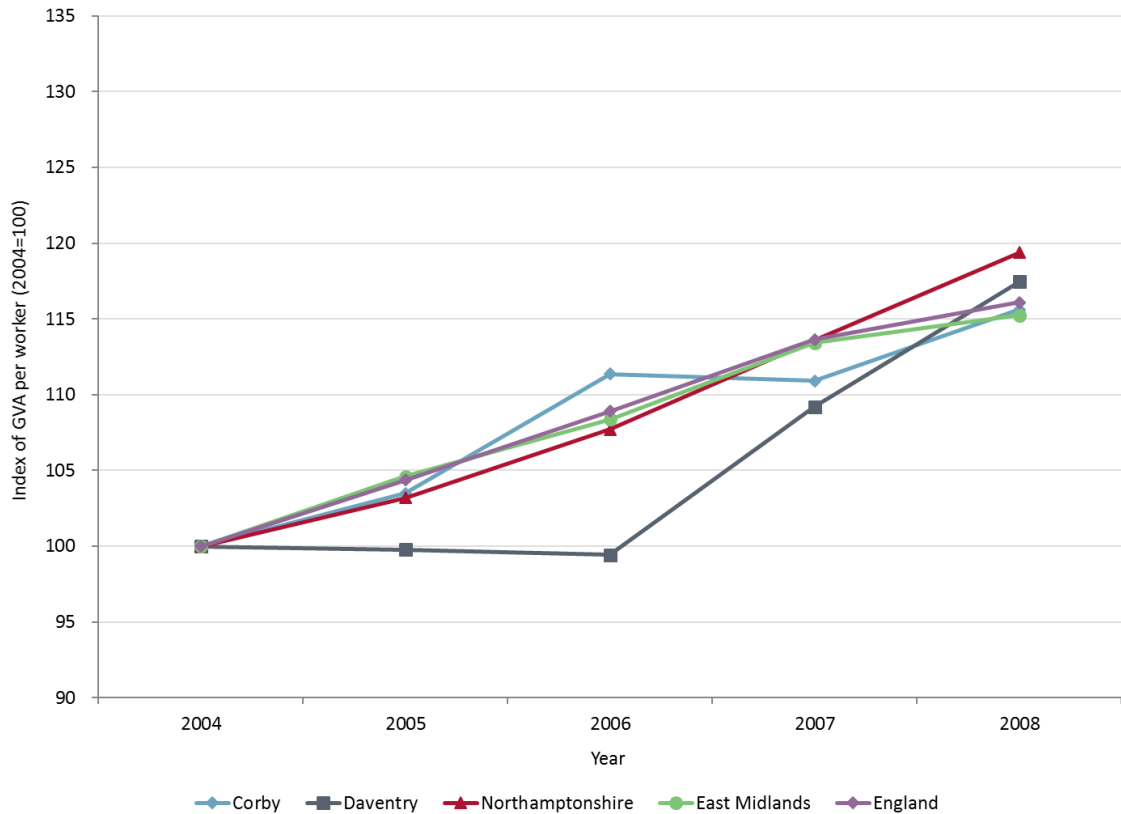


Source: ONS Business Register and Employment Survey, 2008 (accessed 2017)

## Productivity

- 3.14 In Daventry, although GVA per worker decreased slightly from 2004–2006, it increased significantly from 2006 – 2008 (Figure 3.7). Overall growth in Daventry (17.5%) and Corby (15.6%) over the 2004-2008 period is broadly comparable.

Figure 3.7: GVA per worker in Corby and Daventry local authority, 2004 – 2008



Source: ONS Annual Population Survey and ONS Regional GVA by Local Authority in England (accessed 2017)

## Summary

- 3.15 Identifying suitable comparator areas for isolating the impacts of transport investments is very difficult in practice, due to the need to match areas on their baseline transport provision and economic profiles. However, we believe Daventry provides a good comparator for the purposes of the Corby case study.
- 3.16 Both areas are located in the East Midlands, and did not have local rail service provision within the town. Although Corby was experiencing above average levels of population growth compared to Daventry, the transport usage patterns of commuters from within these areas show that these were largely car users, who travelled relatively short distances, tending to work within the same local authority or surrounding areas. Rail users made up only a very small minority of commuters in either of the areas prior to the introduction of the new rail service in Corby.
- 3.17 Broadly speaking, the economic profiles of the two areas across the 2004-2008 period were similar in terms of employment rates and growth in employee numbers. The sectoral profiles

of the local economies were similar with a dominance of the Wholesale and Retail, Manufacturing and Transportation and Storage sectors. Overall growth in GVA per worker in Corby and Daventry over the 2004 -2008 period was also broadly comparable (15.6% and 17.5% respectively).

- 3.18 On this basis, we believe Daventry provides a good comparator for Corby prior to the introduction of the new rail service. There are a number of ways in which the new service provision could drive impacts in Corby, which we would expect to see via a divergence in trends from those seen in comparison to Daventry from 2009 onwards. These could include increased employment prospects due to greater access to external labour markets for Corby-based commuters. This may be evident through a change in travel-to-work behaviours found in the 2011 census data. In addition, increased business and employment prospects within Corby could be shown via increased population growth, increased employment, diversification of sectoral composition and/or increased productivity.



## 4 Behavioural Impacts of the Transport Intervention

### Introduction

- 4.1 This chapter uses evidence gathered from station user, resident and business surveys, together with rail usage data and stakeholder interviews undertaken as part of this case study to identify the impacts of the new services at Corby on observed and stated local rail use. It also seeks to identify the mechanisms through which any additional rail trips are likely to have been generated.
- 4.2 Notwithstanding any anticipatory effects, immediately following the opening of the new rail service it is reasonable to assume that land-use (the location of households and businesses) is fixed during this initial period, so rail trips may replace similar journeys made by other modes and for which rail travel is now considered to be a superior alternative. In addition, some individuals may now choose to change their travelling behaviour to take advantage of new opportunities (access to employment, customers, suppliers or leisure facilities) for which the access costs in the absence of rail services was prohibitively high. This could lead to additional generated trips.

### Methodological Note

- 4.3 Station user, resident and business surveys were undertaken as part of the study, with full details provided within the accompanying Technical Report. Station user surveys were undertaken, using interviews, on the platform at Corby on weekdays (07:00 – 13:00) and Saturdays (10:00 – 14:00) to capture a mix of peak and off-peak station users. 20% of interviews took place during the Weekday AM Peak, 37% took place during the Weekday Interpeak, 12% during the Weekday PM Peak and 31% at the weekend, and data has not been re-weighted to account for higher volumes of usage in the peak.
- 4.4 Resident surveys were conducted, by telephone, with residents living within 6km of the station in Corby and within 3km of the town centre in Daventry, using a sample provided by UK Changes. Interviewing took place between 12:00 and 20:00 on weekdays and 11:00 – 16:00 on Saturday. The profile of respondents was monitored by MOSAIC type (a consumer classification system) to maintain representativeness.
- 4.5 Business surveys were also undertaken by telephone, with businesses based within 10km of the station in Corby and within 5km of the town centre in Daventry, using a sample provided

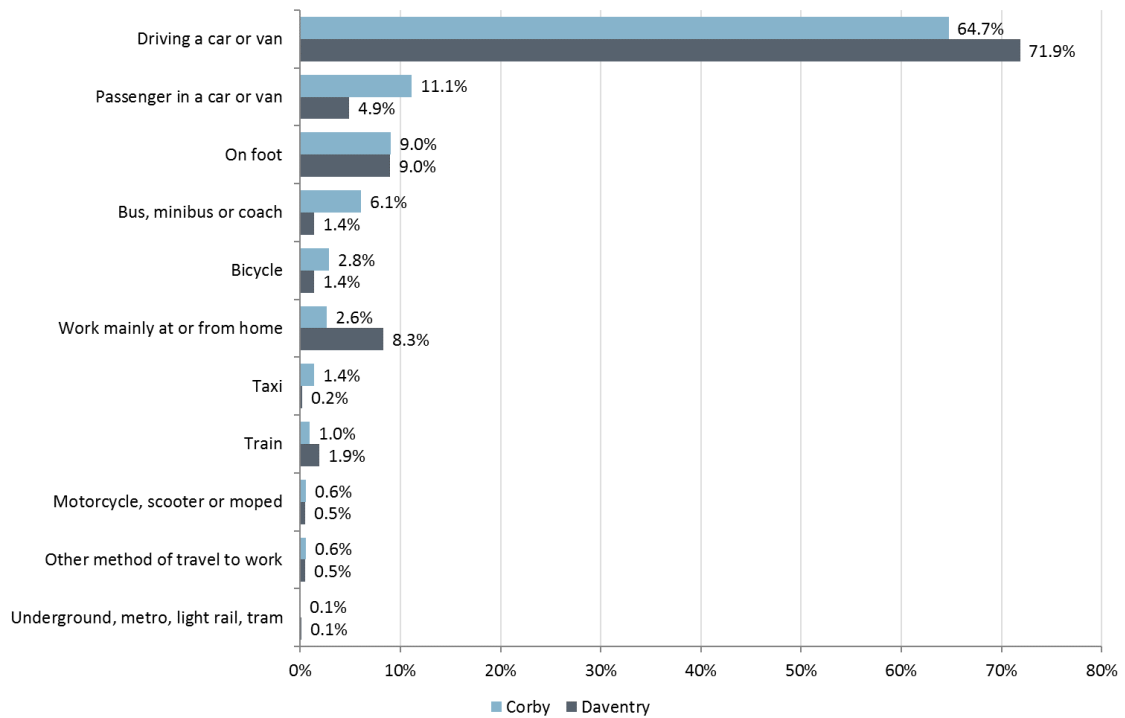
by UK Changes. The profile of businesses was monitored by Standard Industrial Classification and number of employees to maintain representativeness.

## Rail usage

### Commuting by Corby and Daventry residents

4.6 Census Travel to Work data from 2011 allow us to examine the primary modes used by Corby-based commuters two years after the rail service was introduced, as shown in Figure 4.1. At this point, there was no discernible increase in the use of rail associated with the new service (compared to Census 2001 data illustrated in Figure 3.3). While there was a very slight increase in rail usage for Corby commuters (from 0.5% to 1.0%), this was similar to that also found in Daventry (from 1.1% to 1.9%) where there isn't a local service. Similarly, both areas also saw a slight increase in car usage, and a decline in reported working from home against 2001 census data.

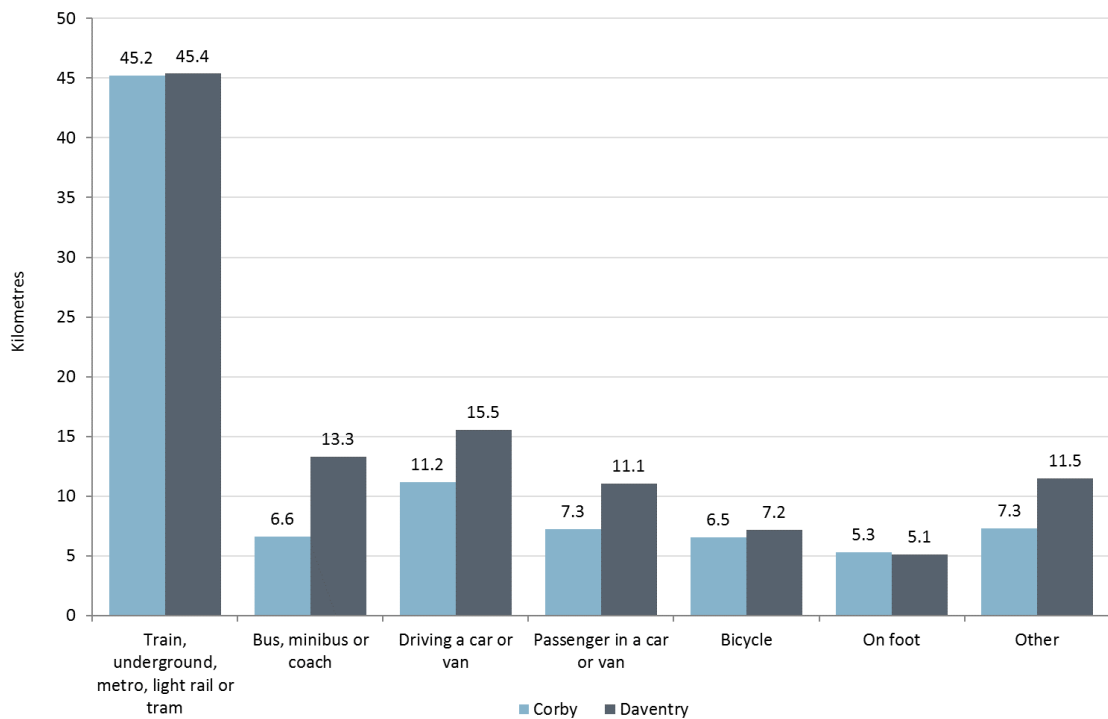
Figure 4.1: Method of travel to work Corby and Daventry local authority (2011)



Source: ONS Census Journey to Work 2011 (accessed 2017)

4.7 Figure 4.2 shows the average distance travelled to work by each mode for residents of Corby and Daventry local authority in 2011. The average distance travelled by Corby commuters using rail (defined within the train, underground, metro, light rail or tram category) has increased between 2001 (Figure 3.4) and 2011 from 40.0km to 45.2km while the distance for Daventry commuters using rail had changed little (47.6km in 2001, 45.4km in 2011). It is possible the new rail service has opened the opportunity for Corby commuters to make longer-distance commutes (e.g. access to a greater range of labour opportunities). However, the average distances travelled to work by commuters using some other modes also increased between 2001 and 2011 for both Corby and Daventry, so we cannot be sure that the trend observed for rail users in Corby is a result of the new service.

**Figure 4.2: Average distance travelled to work Corby and Daventry local authority (by mode) 2011**



Source: ONS Census Journey to Work 2011 (accessed 2017)

- 4.8 The top work destinations for employees living in Corby and Daventry local authorities in 2011 are shown in Table 4.1 (the equivalent results for 2001 are provided in Table 3.1). The proportion of individuals working within the Corby local authority area has decreased to that reported in 2001 (from 78.9% to 67.0%); although a similar decrease is also found for Daventry-based commuters (from 52.5% to 47.3%), with both locations seeing an increase in commuting beyond the local authority area. This, paired with the small increase in rail usage shown in Figure 4.1, suggests the changes are not clearly attributable to the provision of the new rail service at Corby, although this may account for a small part of the change.

**Table 4.1: Outbound commuting 2011 (top 10 commuting destinations where place of residence is Corby and Daventry local authority, all modes)**

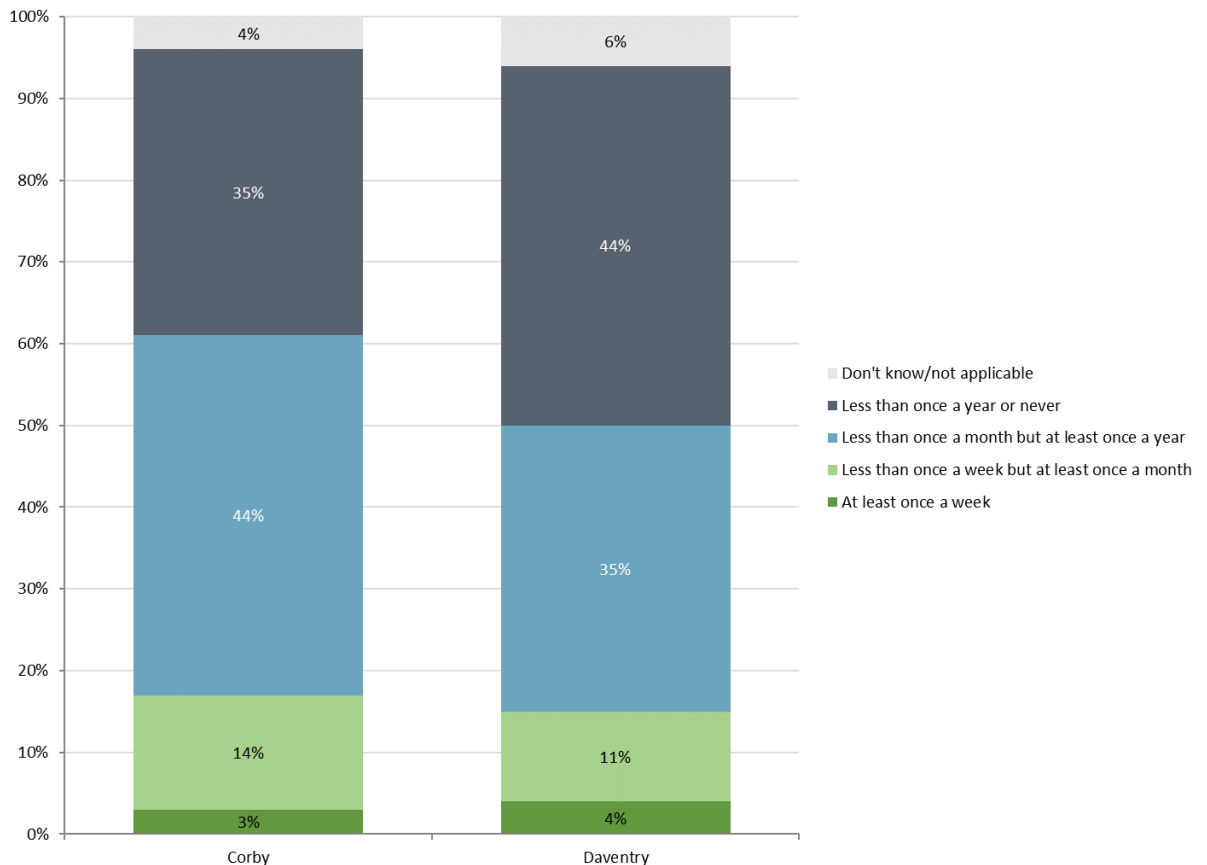
Rank	Origin Corby		Origin Daventry	
	Destination local authority	% of commuters	Destination local authority	% of commuters
1	Corby	67.0%	Daventry	47.3%
2	Kettering	11.2%	Northampton	23.3%
3	Northampton	3.6%	Rugby	5.8%
4	East Northamptonshire	2.8%	South Northamptonshire	5.4%
5	Wellingborough	1.6%	Cherwell	3.3%
6	Rutland	1.4%	Milton Keynes	2.8%
7	Harborough	1.4%	Harborough	2.8%
8	Daventry	1.1%	Wellingborough	2.3%
9	Peterborough	0.9%	Kettering	2.1%
10	Milton Keynes	0.7%	Coventry	1.9%

Source: ONS Census Journey to Work 2011 (accessed 2017)

### Rail usage among Corby and Daventry residents

- 4.9 Whilst the 2011 census data doesn't conclusively show that rail usage for commuting increased among Corby-based residents due to the new service, behavioural and demand responses to the availability of new transport routes can be lagged and we wouldn't expect to have seen the full effects of the new line by 2011 (within two years of the line opening).
- 4.10 Residents surveys undertaken in 2016 provide an update on rail usage seven years post-opening, although this is not strictly comparable to the census data as it covers all local residents (rather than just commuters).
- 4.11 The residents surveys suggest higher rail usage amongst Corby residents than for Daventry in 2016 (Figure 4.3), although it is not clear how these two populations compared prior to the new rail service opening in Corby.
- 4.12 The proportion of residents in both areas that travel at least once a month or more is very similar, with the main difference being that Corby has more infrequent rail users who travel less than once a month but more than once a year. This group are less likely to be commuters and more likely to be using rail for infrequent business or leisure purposes.

**Figure 4.3: Frequency of rail travel amongst Corby and Daventry residents**



Source: Corby residents survey (n = 500) and Daventry residents survey (n = 500)

### Increased usage of Corby station and abstraction/modal shift

- 4.13 The previous analyses informed our understanding of whether rail usage appeared to have increased amongst Corby residents to a greater extent than amongst Daventry residents. We now focus on understanding the usage of the Corby service since its introduction to better understand the behavioural and demand response. For this, we do not compare with Daventry estimates, since Daventry does not have a local rail service within its town.
- 4.14 The ORR station usage dataset provides high-level figures regarding passenger volumes, and shows significant year-on-year growth in passenger demand at Corby station. In 2009-10 (the first year of opening) 115,000 journeys were made to/from Corby. By 2010-11, two years post-opening, demand had grown by over 50% of that seen in 2009-10. This has continued to rise rapidly to around 140% of that seen in 2009-10 by 2015-16 (seven years post-opening, 278,000 entries and exits), further illustrating a lagged behavioural response to new service provision (Figure 4.4).
- 4.15 Since the opening of the station in Corby in 2009, patronage has grown at a faster rate than both the regional and national average. In the most recent period shown (2015-16), the rate of growth has slowed to a comparable level to that shown for East Midlands and England, indicating that it could now be stabilising (Figure 4.4).

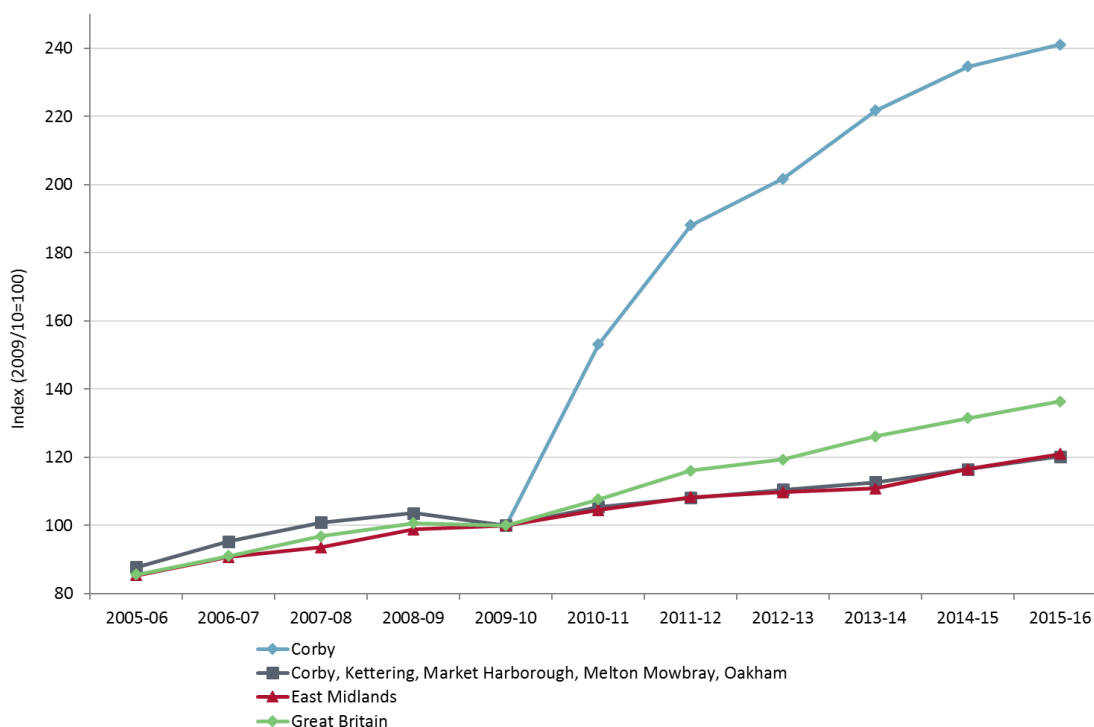
Figure 4.4: Index of station usage, 2004/05 to 2015/16



Source: National Rail Trends and Estimates of Station Usage, ORR (accessed 2017)

4.16 Whilst Figure 4.4 shows huge growth in demand at Corby since the new service was provided, Figure 4.5 allows greater understanding of whether this was due to ‘new’ rail trips or those that were previously made at other stations. There does appear to be evidence for abstraction to Corby from other surrounding stations, as evidenced by the negative growth these stations experienced in 2009-10 when the new service was introduced. However, this also coincides with the economic downturn which accompanied the Great Recession.

Figure 4.5: Growth in station entries and exits at Corby and selected alternative stations



Source: Estimates of Station Usage, ORR (accessed 2017)

4.17 Across Corby, Kettering and Market Harborough – the latter two stations where demand to London would have been expected to be largely abstracted from – usage of rail increased from 1.83m in the year prior to Corby opening (2008-9) to 2.19m in 2015/16, an increase of 20% compared to an increase across the whole network of 34%, mirroring closely the growth rate in the wider East Midlands region. This supports the hypothesis that a significant proportion of demand is abstracted from other locations, but since it is likely to be the case that other local stations are underperforming relative to the East Midlands average, the new station at Corby is still likely to be associated with a significant proportion of newly generated trips. Examination of growth in rail demand prior to 2009-10 supports this perspective because demand at these stations fell slightly in 2009-10 whereas demand in the East Midlands as a whole rose slightly.

- 4.18 Table 4.2 shows findings from surveys undertaken with station users at Corby station in 2016. The data suggests that the demand at Corby station is partly driven by both abstraction and newly generated trips. For the 25% of individuals who reported their rail usage has stayed the same after the station opened, it is likely that they were previously using other stations. However, 62% report that they either started travelling by rail only since the station opened (8%) or increased their usage of rail in this time (54%).

**Table 4.2: Since this station was opened in early 2009, has the amount you travel by rail increased, decreased or stayed about the same?**

Response	Proportion of respondents
Increased a lot	26%
Increased a little	28%
Stayed about the same	25%
Decreased a little	0%
Decreased a lot	1%
Only started travelling by rail since the station opened	8%
Couldn't say/not relevant	14%

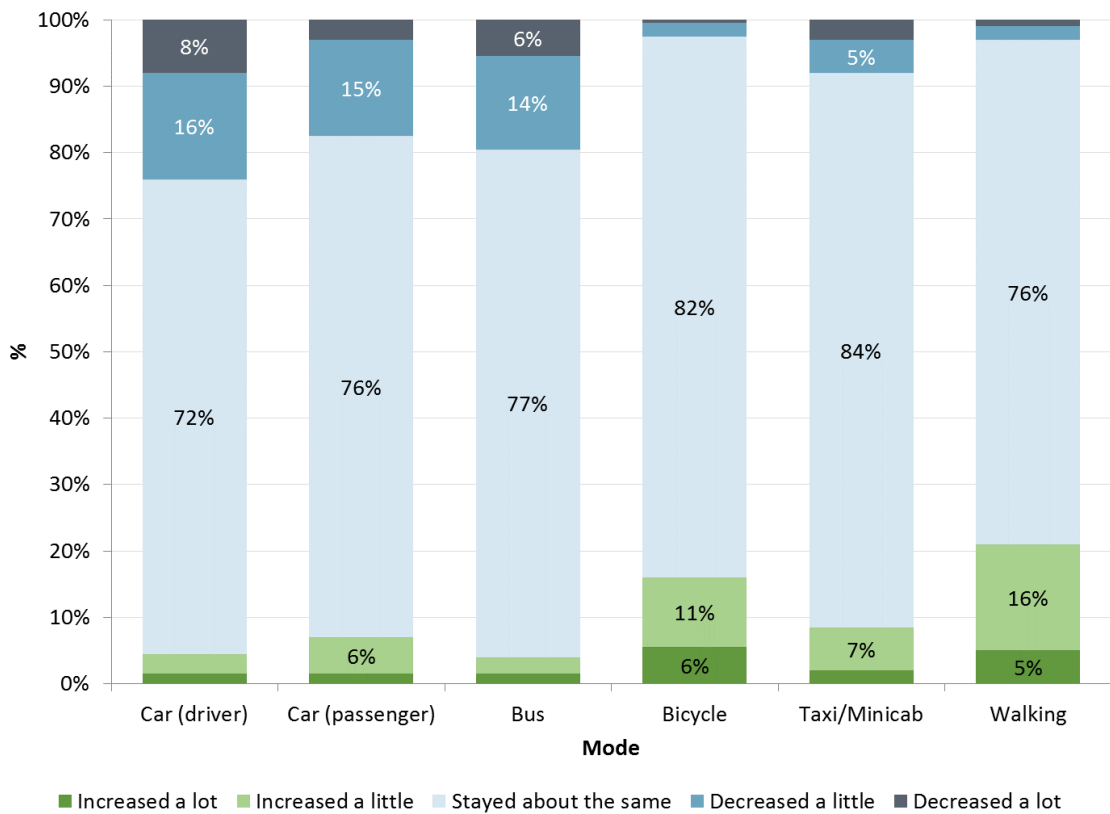
Source: Corby station users survey (n = 200)



4.19 The station user survey also provides some interesting indications of the effect on other modes of the increased use of rail. Responses to the question “Since the station opened in 2009, have you changed the amount you travel by other means?” are shown in Figure 4.6. Some Corby station users reported decreased use of car and bus, and increased travel by active modes, such as bicycles and walking since the new rail service was provided.

4.20 This could be due to some combination of both modal shift to rail from other modes, and change in means of travel to and from the station given greater proximity to where individuals live.

Figure 4.6: Since the station opened in 2009, have you changed the amount you travel by other means?



Source: Corby station users survey (n = 200)

4.21 Table 4.3 and Figure 4.7 provide some insights into why individuals may have switched station or changed to using rail from different modes, following the introduction of the new service. The majority (86%) of Corby station users either agreed strongly or tended to agree that travelling by rail was more convenient following the opening of the station.

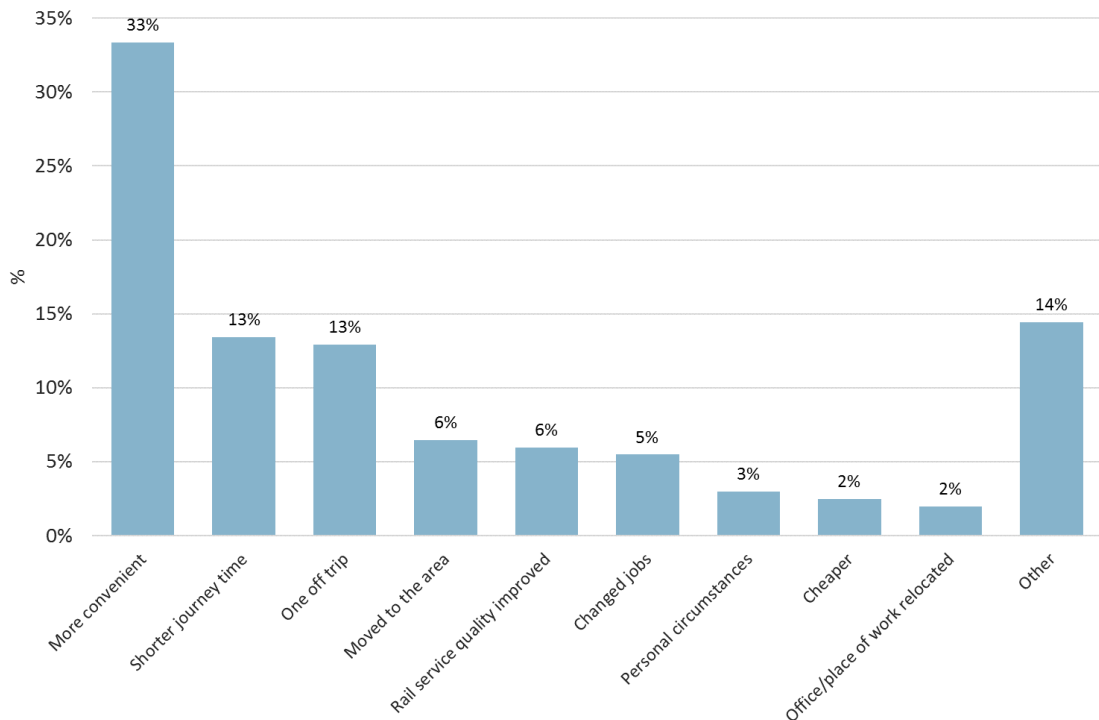
**Table 4.3: Since the station opened travelling by rail is more convenient than it used to be**

Response	Proportion of respondents
Strongly agree	61%
Tend to agree	25%
Neither agree or disagree	8%
Tend to disagree	4%
Strongly disagree	2%

Source: Corby station user survey (n=200)

4.22 When asked for the main reason why they started using the station, Corby station users reported convenience (33%) and shorter journey times (13%) as key factors. Smaller proportions also identified having moved to the area (6%), improved rail service (6%) or changing jobs (5%) (Figure 4.7).

**Figure 4.7: What is the main reason you started using this [Corby] station?**



Source: Corby station user survey (n=200)

4.23 It is clear from the evidence above that the step change in rail connectivity delivered through the opening of Corby station and commencement of rail services has led to observable changes in travel patterns for residents of Corby and its station users. Underlying this change

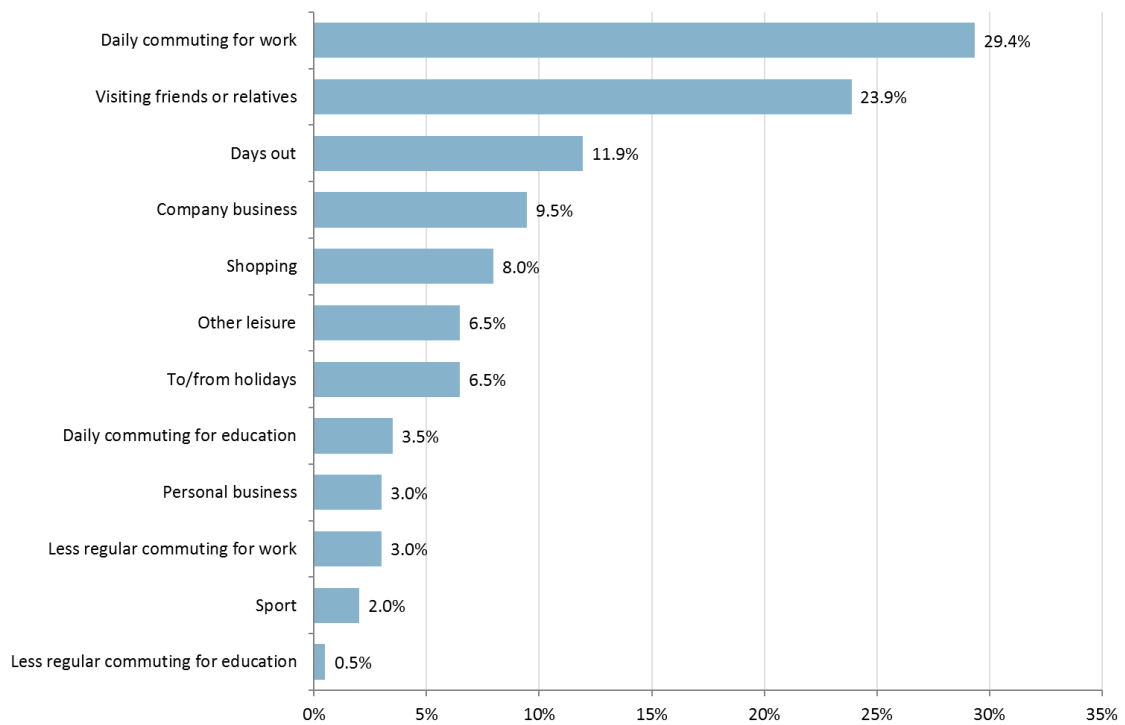
in behaviour is an improvement in the perceived convenience of rail travel due to the new rail service and new station.

### Corby station users

#### *Journey profiles*

- 4.24 The 2016 station user survey can also be used to understand for what purposes individuals tend to use the new rail service, and how satisfied they are with it.
- 4.25 The most common reason reported for using the station was daily commuting for work (29%), followed by visiting friends or relatives (24%) (Figure 4.8). Leisure use (days out, shopping, other leisure, holidays and sport) and company business were less common reasons but also featured.

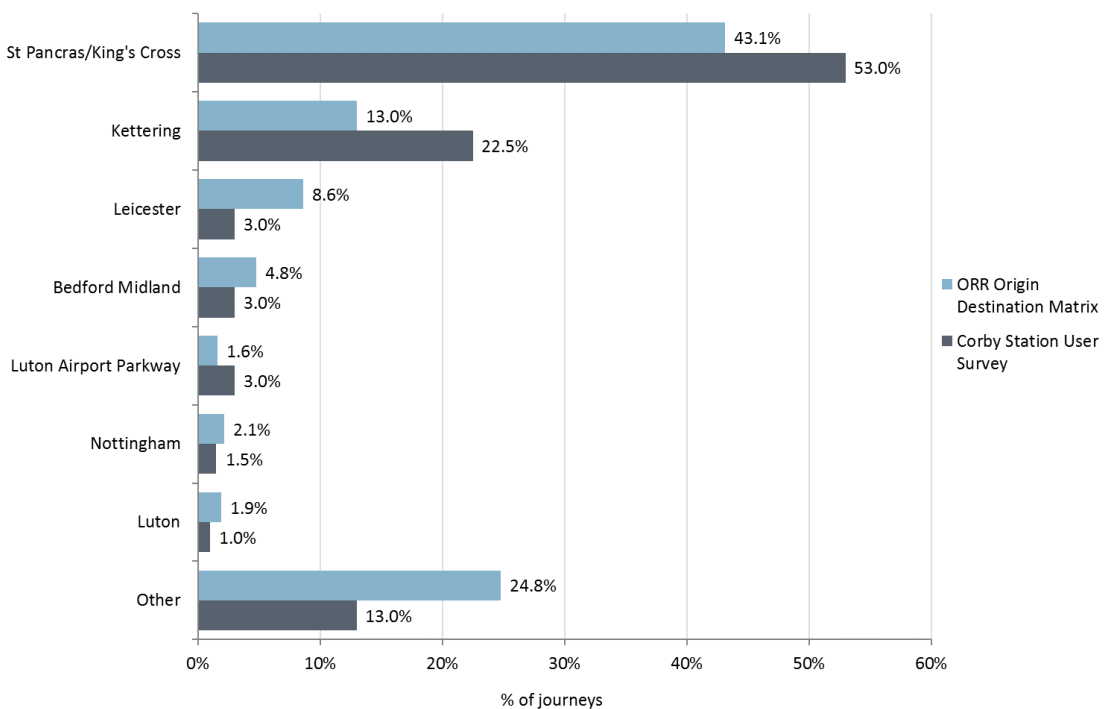
**Figure 4.8: Corby station user survey (September 2016) – for what journey purposes do you tend to use this station (Question 5)?**



Source: Corby station user survey (n=200)

4.26 Figure 4.9 shows information from the 2016 Corby station user survey which asked individuals which station they were travelling to at the time of the survey, and information regarding the origin and destination of trips for Corby from the ORR Origin Destination Matrix, providing an update on the Census data. The breakdown of destinations reported by station users matches very closely with data from the ORR. The most common destination is London (St Pancras/King’s Cross), followed by Kettering. This suggests that whilst the new service primarily facilitates longer-distance trips and greater connectivity with London, it is also being utilised for more local trips. Approximately 20% of rail trips from Corby appear to be to / from Kettering – and hence entirely newly generated trips since this is a flow previously not possible by rail.

**Figure 4.9: Corby station user survey (September 2016) – which station are you travelling to today? (Question 3a) and proportion of all rail journeys from Corby by destination (financial year Jan – Dec 2014/15)**



Source: Station user survey (Corby n=200) and ORR Origin Destination Matrix 2014-15 (2015/16 data was not available at the time of drafting the case study) (accessed 2017)

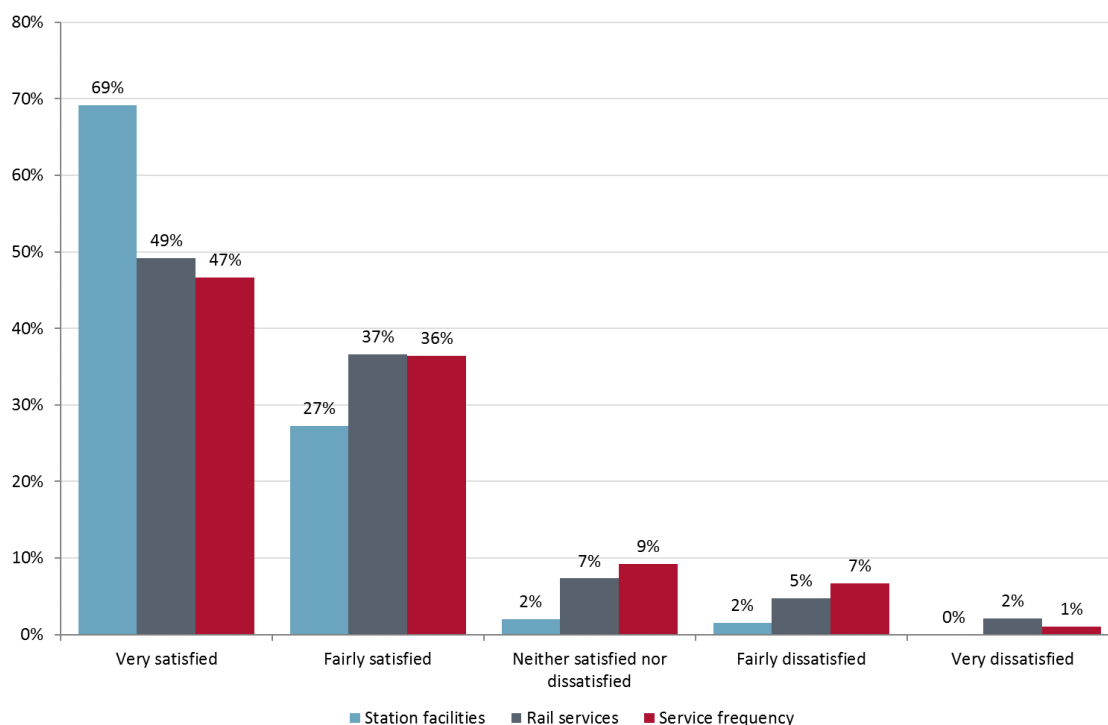
4.27 Interviews with local stakeholders further indicate that the new station has created direct links to Bedford, Luton and London, and increased the attractiveness of Corby to households, encouraging people to live in Corby and commute to London.

*Satisfaction with current service provision*

4.28 The survey with current station users at Corby showed that high proportions were very or fairly satisfied with the station facilities (96%), rail services (86%), and service frequency (83%) (Figure 4.10). In general, users were more satisfied with the station than with the service and frequency, but only small proportions reported being fairly or very dissatisfied with any of these (station 2%; rail service 7%; frequency 8%). The slightly lower ratings for service and frequency possibly reflect current timetable limitations from Corby, including the interchange at Kettering for northbound services to Leicester and Nottingham.

4.29 Interviews with the local council further indicate that residents and businesses are happy with the station, although there are issues with the reduced frequency Sunday service and lack of connectivity between the railway station and town centre. Residents would like to see additional train services in the future and better integration with Midland services.

**Figure 4.10: Station user survey - based on your experience of your station how satisfied are you with the station, rail services at the station, and the frequency of rail services?**



Source: Corby station users survey (n = 200)

**Summary**

4.30 Census data for two years after the introduction of the rail service showed a small increase in rail usage and diversification of travel to work areas amongst commuters based in Corby. However, similar patterns were also found for Daventry residents (without a new service provision), suggesting the changes may be due to wider trends rather than attributable to the new service at Corby.

4.31 However, we know that behavioural response to new service provision is lagged, and more recent evidence from the residents surveys suggests potentially greater (but infrequent) rail

use amongst residents in Corby than in Daventry. Station usage estimates for Corby also support the notion of a lagged response with continued strong growth in station usage occurring up until the most recent period (7 years post-opening).

- 4.32 In terms of the demand at Corby station, this appears partly composed of both abstraction from neighbouring stations and newly generated rail trips (some of which appear to be due to modal shift). Individuals largely report using the new rail service at Corby due to greater convenience or the shorter journey times it offers them.
- 4.33 The main purposes for using the station are daily work commuting and a variety of leisure trips. The most common destination station is London, followed by Kettering. This suggests that the new service has improved both longer and shorter distance connectivity for Corby station users.
- 4.34 In general, users of the new service are highly satisfied with the station, rail service and frequencies. Only a very small proportion report dissatisfaction with the rail service and frequency of service.
- 4.35 In light of these behavioural responses to the commencement of rail services to/from Corby, we would expect:
- limited impacts upon productivity within Corby since the majority of new trips are outbound, longer-distance commuting trips;
  - some improvements to the economic activity rate within Corby, as the range of employment opportunities available to residents of Corby is greater (including bringing it within the catchment of the London labour market). There may also be a one-off economic boost as Corby residents can find opportunities which better match their skill levels; and
  - limited impacts on inward investment by employers, but a more attractive residential location following the connectivity enhancements delivered by the station and rail services. There is some scope for new enterprises, largely in the tertiary sector to support the larger residential population.

# 5 Economic Impacts of the Transport Intervention

## Introduction

5.1 Chapter 4 outlined how the new station and commencement of rail services to/from Corby has led to an increase in rail trips with Corby as an origin or destination. The demand for travel is generally expected to be associated with a range of second-order economic effects, as individuals adjust their behaviour to benefit from the improved connectivity offered by the new station. This chapter considers the nature and magnitude of these economic impacts, drawing on a range of sources including ONS data as well as bespoke econometric analysis of the Business Structure Database, and discusses:

- investment effects (changes in the attractiveness of Corby as a place to locate for residents and businesses);
- employment effects (changes in the local labour and firm employment); and
- productivity effects (changes in firm turnover and GVA).

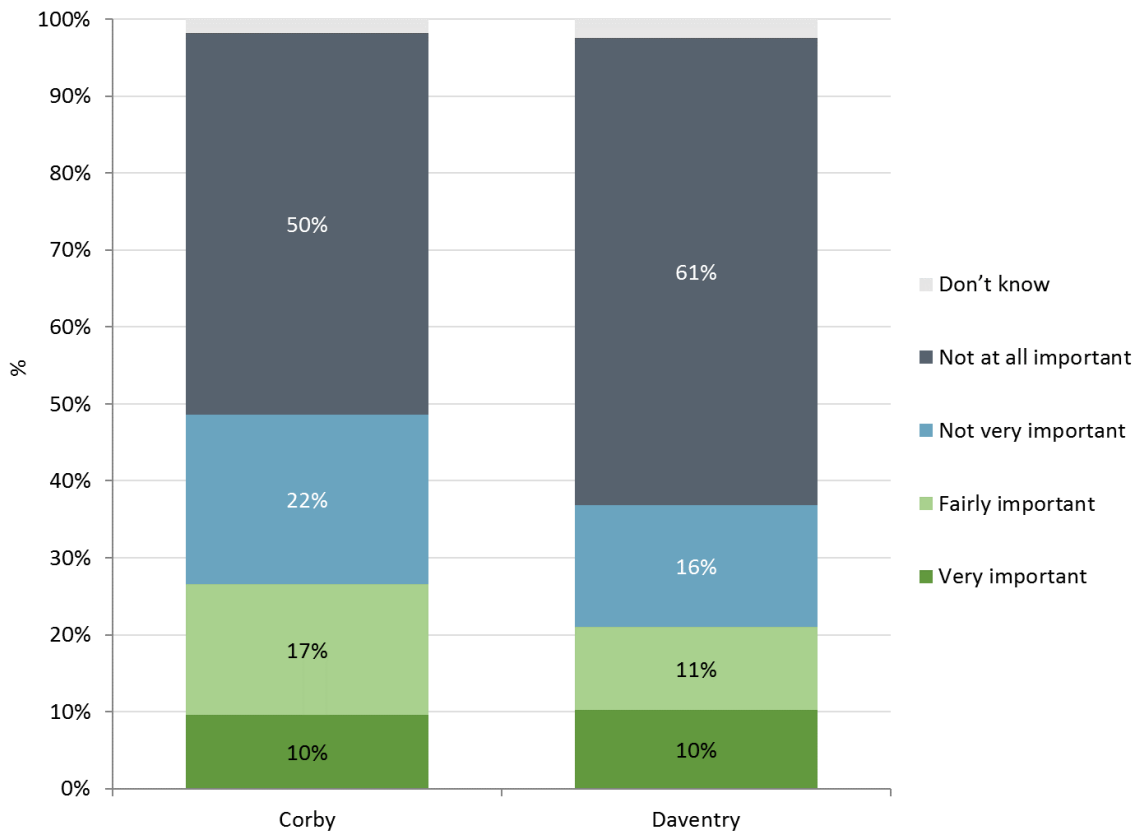
## Investment effects (residential)

5.2 Broadly, it is argued that individuals value the benefits of rail connectivity, and hence enhanced connectivity delivered by the new station at Corby and the commencement of services to London would be expected to make the town a more attractive place to live. Significant improvements in rail accessibility would be expected to result in more people choosing to move to the town, resulting in population growth and increases in local property prices and housing development, together with an accompanying increase in rail travel, as discussed in Chapter 4.

### Importance of rail services when deciding where to live

- 5.3 If this hypothesis is correct, one would expect that residents who have located to Corby are more reliant upon rail services than those elsewhere, and when choosing to relocate place significant importance on the availability of local rail services.
- 5.4 Primary research, as shown in Figure 5.1, highlights that significantly more residents in Corby felt that rail services were an important factor in determining where to live compared to Daventry (27% versus 21%), which does not have good access to a rail station. Similarly, more Daventry residents (61%) thought that rail services were not at all important in choosing where to live than was the case for Corby residents (50%).
- 5.5 This could reflect the presence of the station in Corby, which could make the town more attractive to people wanting to travel by rail, relative to Daventry, who then decide to locate there. This endogeneity provides support for the argument that providing a new rail service may then influence individuals’ choices about where to locate.

Figure 5.1: When moving to your current address, to what extent were rail services important to you?



Source: Corby and Daventry residents surveys 2016. n=500 Corby residents, 500 Daventry residents.

- 5.6 The working status of residents appears to have only a minor effect on the importance of rail connections on where people choose to live. For example, for those in paid employment the percentage saying rail services are important was 22%, the same as for those not in employment and lower than for respondents that are retired (27%). This illustrates that rail is important across a range of journey purposes, and individuals consider their proximity to rail

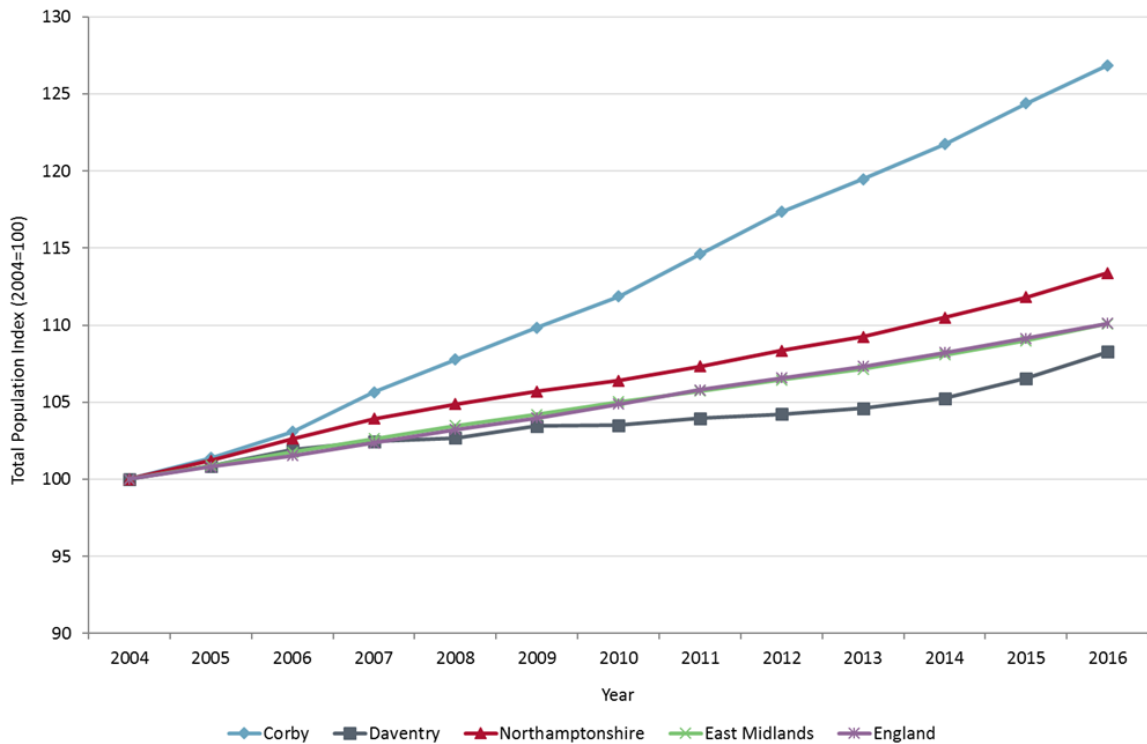


services when deciding where to live not simply because of commuting accessibility. This theory is supported by the evidence from the Corby residents’ survey, suggesting that there is a significant volume of infrequent rail use by residents of Corby.

**Impact on local population growth**

5.7 Similarly, if residents place sufficient value on the benefits of good rail connectivity, one would expect population growth and therefore pressures on local property prices to be greater in an area well-served by rail than an area without. Figure 5.2 below highlights how population growth has been strong within Corby throughout the past decade, including following the arrival of rail services in 2009. After 2006, there was a notable upturn in local population growth, with the rate of growth significantly outstripping that in Daventry, Northamptonshire, the East Midlands and England as a whole.

**Figure 5.2: Population Index, 2004-2016**



Source: ONS mid-year population estimates, 2015 (accessed 2017)

5.8 Corby has remained the fastest-growing town in England, both prior to and following the opening of the station and the arrival of rail services in 2009. However, whilst it is likely that improved rail accessibility has contributed towards this growth, it is not possible to attribute it to the station and the commencement of new rail services.

5.9 Housing development has been strong both before and after 2009. This is influenced by planning, regional policy and the availability of land. While, therefore, improved rail access may have improved the attractiveness of the town as a place to live (and hence resulting in more housing development than would have otherwise been the case) it is unlikely to have played a critical role. It should be noted that much of the housing development within Corby

has been located on the southern and western fringes of the town, in low-density developments with excellent road access to the dual carriageway A43, rather than in close proximity to the station.

**Impact on local property prices**

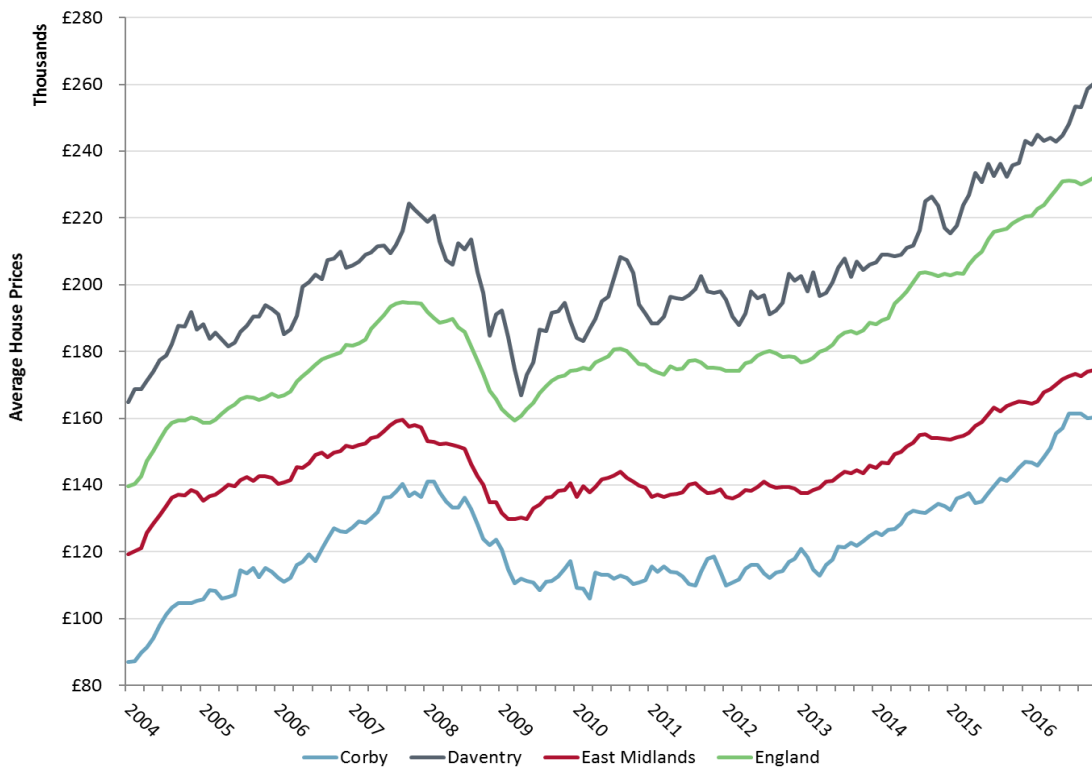
- 5.10 Increased attractiveness as a place to live would also be expected to result in an uplift to the local housing market (or properties located within the wider catchment area of Corby station). Holding all else constant, property prices in Corby would be expected to increase relative to Daventry and the wider region both prior to (due to anticipatory effects) and following the commencement of rail services in 2009. Such property effects have been documented within the transport literature for major transport schemes (such as the Jubilee Line in London<sup>9</sup>) although the scale of these effects are highly variable and context-specific, with the opening of some new stations and metro systems resulting in no change to local land values or development patterns.

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<sup>9</sup> Lane, R. and Powell, T. (2004) 'Jubilee Line Extension Final Report', Transport Studies Group, University of Westminster.

5.11 Figure 5.3 indicates the current property market trends within Corby and Daventry, at the local authority level. Contrary to the hypothesis, property prices in Corby remain considerably and consistently lower (by 40%) than those in Daventry, and have followed a very similar trend since 2009. Had the station have impacted house prices, it would have been expected that the trajectory of growth in Corby would have outpaced that of Daventry, but this is not the case. Average house prices in Corby are lower than the East Midlands average, and, while the gap between the two has narrowed since 2013, the gap between Corby and Daventry has widened significantly since 2009.

Figure 5.3: Property Price Trends in Corby



Source: Land Registry House Price Index (2004-16) (accessed 2017)

5.12 As set out in the Passenger Demand Forecasting Handbook, there is however a time lag associated with the behavioural impacts of changes to rail services, including major transactional costs such as moving house. This lag effect is likely to have been exacerbated by the Great Recession, and a lack of investor confidence within the construction industry. Property prices in Corby have increased relative to the East Midlands average since 2013 (27% versus 20%), and hence this could be interpreted as weak evidence of a lagged response to the change in rail services.

5.13 It is likely that, in the case of Corby, the significant volume of local housing development has led to a dampening of growth in local property prices compared to what would be expected elsewhere in a more constrained housing market, due the widespread availability of land

locally for housing development<sup>10</sup>. Increased demand for housing generated by improved rail connectivity could have increased the attractiveness of the town as a place to live, but rather than increasing local property prices, simply increased the viability and delivery of new development.

### **Stakeholder evidence**

- 5.14 In qualitative interviews local stakeholders, however, did identify a significant increase in housing development, some of which is believed to be attributable to the new station, and more broadly the positive effects of the station and new services, to have resulted in more positive perceptions of the local economy and Corby as a place to live. Both the station and new services are argued locally to have been a catalyst for the improved town centre, which has seen a new retail offer and cinema since the station opening. The town centre is now seen as a 'dynamic city centre', worthy of investment.

### **Conclusions**

- 5.15 Survey evidence does suggest that some residents in Corby place a greater focus on the importance of rail connectivity when choosing to locate in Corby than those in Daventry, and hence the opening of the station and new rail services at Corby may have resulted in the town becoming a more attractive place to live. However, the majority of residents in both Corby and Daventry viewed rail connectivity as 'not at all important', and hence this effect is likely to be limited.
- 5.16 This conclusion is reflected in the population and property price trends which, while demonstrating that Corby has continued to experience rapid growth, do not indicate that the opening of the station had any impact in the overall rate of population growth or property price change.
- 5.17 It should also be noted that, while Corby does now benefit from improved rail accessibility, the towns' rail links are still relatively poor compared to other towns within the region, with only one service per hour to London, compared to the significantly more frequent and faster services available at Kettering, Peterborough, Huntingdon, Northampton or Bedford. Residents wishing to locate to a town with good commuting rail access to London, and who value rail accessibility, are still likely to prefer to locate in other towns and cities in the region, rather than in Corby.
- 5.18 While a more detailed investigation of property, development and land value trends is beyond the scope of this project, more rigorous regression analysis which isolated, for example, the impact of local job losses and changes in housing supply could be an avenue for future work. This analysis could take into account the distance from the station, to further isolate these impacts.

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<sup>10</sup> Corby has experienced significant housing growth over the past decade, largely on greenfield sites to the west and south of the town. In contrast to other towns within Northamptonshire, and the wider country, a lack of land available for development does not appear to have hindered Corby's growth.

## Investment effects (businesses)

- 5.19 Similarly, businesses also value rail connectivity, since it offers improved accessibility to potential customers, suppliers and employees, and reductions in travel costs represent direct productivity gains. Hence, an improvement in Corby’s rail services would be expected to make the area a more attractive place to locate a business, leading to business investment.
- 5.20 Qualitative evidence from businesses and local stakeholders supports this view, and indicates that the opening of the new service and new station has encouraged international businesses to relocate to Corby. Several technology companies have relocated to Corby which has helped to diversify the local economy away from its traditional association with the steel industry.

### Importance of rail to local businesses

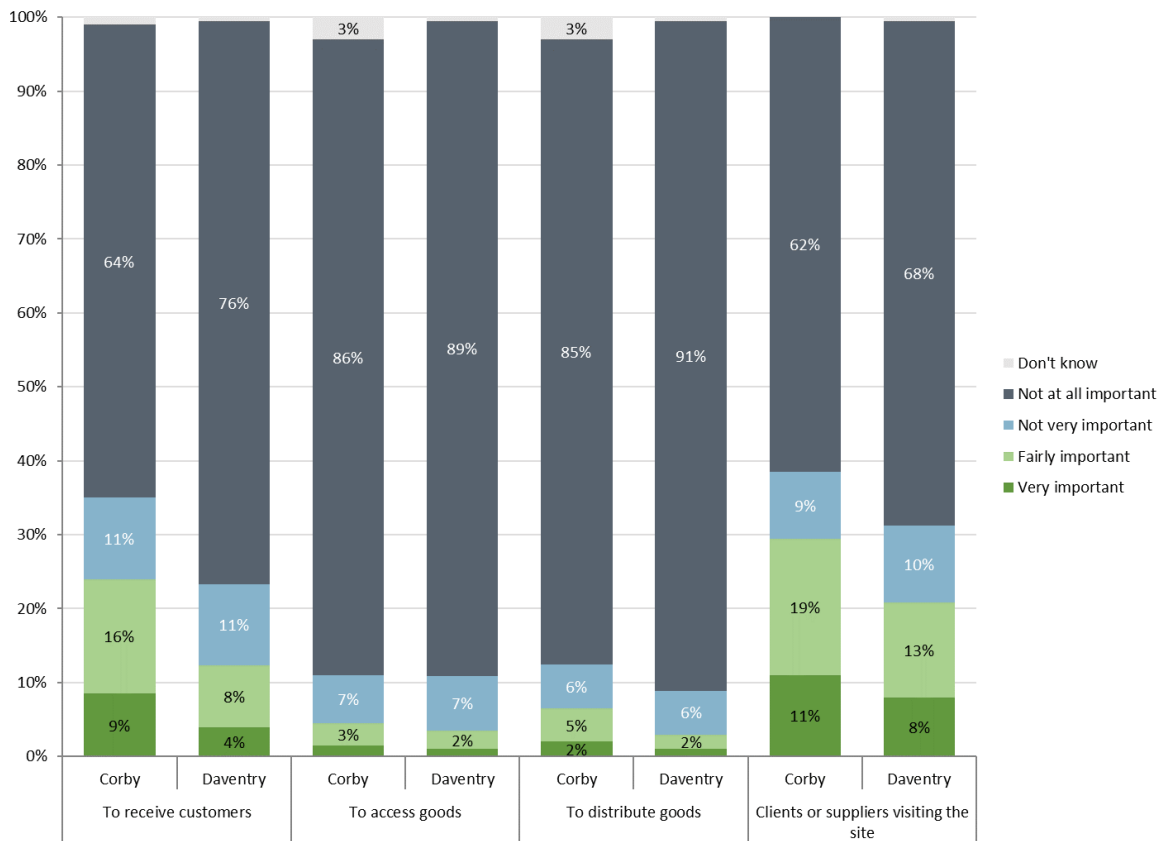
- 5.21 The surveys of businesses in Corby and Daventry provide some qualitative evidence for the impacts of the transport improvements in Corby, though some care should be taken in interpreting the results given the relatively small sample sizes (approximately 200 in each town).
- 5.22 Nevertheless, within the surveys we explored the importance of rail services to firms, and how satisfied with the rail services they are. Around a fifth of Corby and Daventry business survey respondents who had moved to the area within the last seven years considered that the local rail services were important when considering the location of their business<sup>11</sup>. While just 2% of Daventry businesses who had moved in the last seven years said the rail services were “very important”, for Corby the equivalent percentage was 12%, indicating that recent business moves to Corby are likely to have been influenced in part by the towns’ new rail connectivity.

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<sup>11</sup> Note: these results are based on relatively small samples (30 Corby and 52 Daventry businesses)

5.23 Notably, as highlighted in Figure 5.4, the importance of rail to individual aspects of business activity is variable, and was not necessarily similar between Corby and Daventry. In particular, the two aspects of business for which rail was judged to be most important – for receiving customers and for clients or suppliers visiting the site – were rated as more important by business in Corby than those in Daventry. For example, 30% of Corby business respondents said that rail was either quite or very important for clients or suppliers visiting the site, compared to just 21% of Daventry businesses. This difference could reflect the impact of the presence of new rail services and a new station in Corby.

**Figure 5.4: Relative importance of rail to different aspects of business**

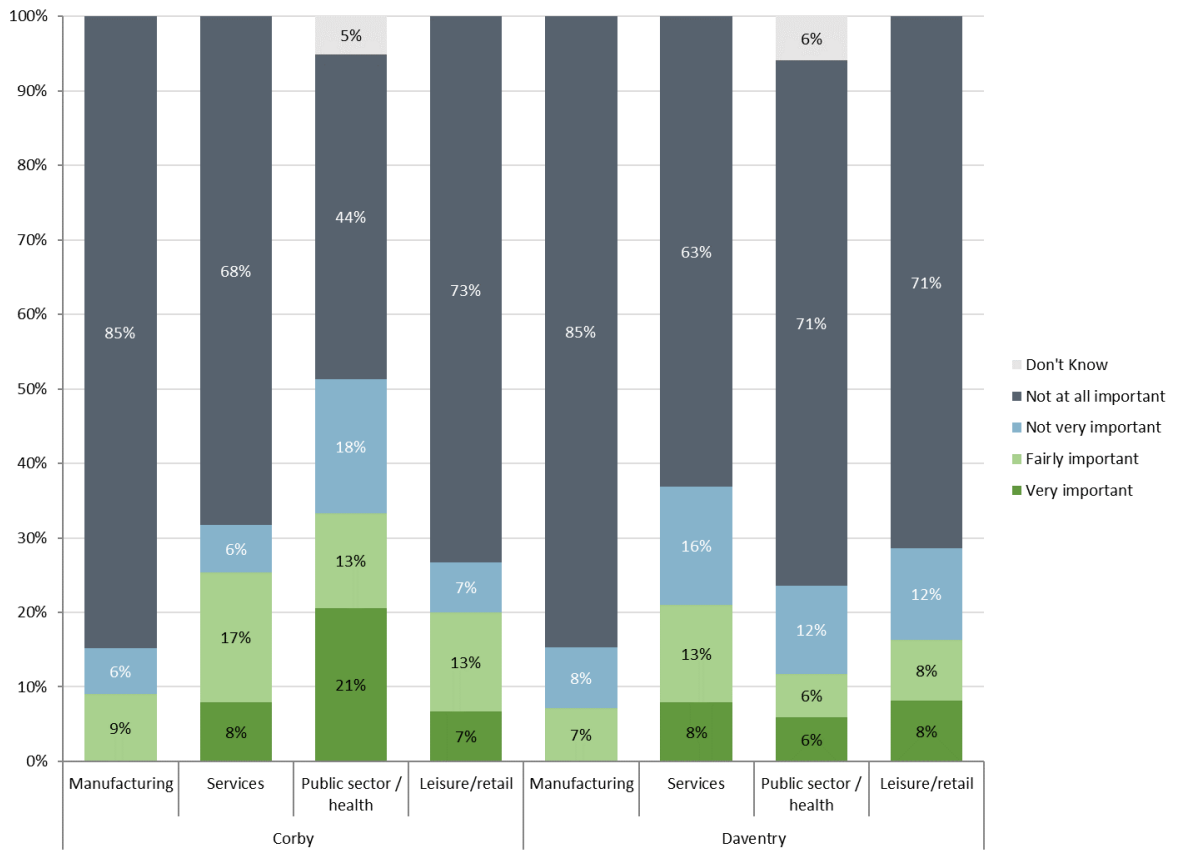


Source: Corby and Daventry business surveys 2016. Base = 200 Corby businesses, 202 Daventry businesses

5.24 Across both Corby and Daventry, there are also important differences between industrial sectors, with Public Sector/Health, Services and Leisure/Retail businesses attributing greater importance than Manufacturing businesses to using rail to receive customers, as illustrated in Figure 5.5. Similarly, Public Sector/Health and Services businesses attributed greater importance than Leisure/Retail and Manufacturing businesses to use of rail for commuting (data not shown).

5.25 Clearly, whether businesses are attracted to invest and relocate in Corby based on the town’s new rail connectivity will depend greatly on the specific business sector and its individual requirements for rail accessibility. It should be noted, however, that the majority of businesses across all sectors reported that rail was “not at all important” for both receiving customers and staff commuting – and hence, among the current cohort of businesses located in Corby, the rail improvements are unlikely to have a significant effect on the decisions of firms to locate in the town.

**Figure 5.5: Importance of rail for receiving customers by broad industry sector**



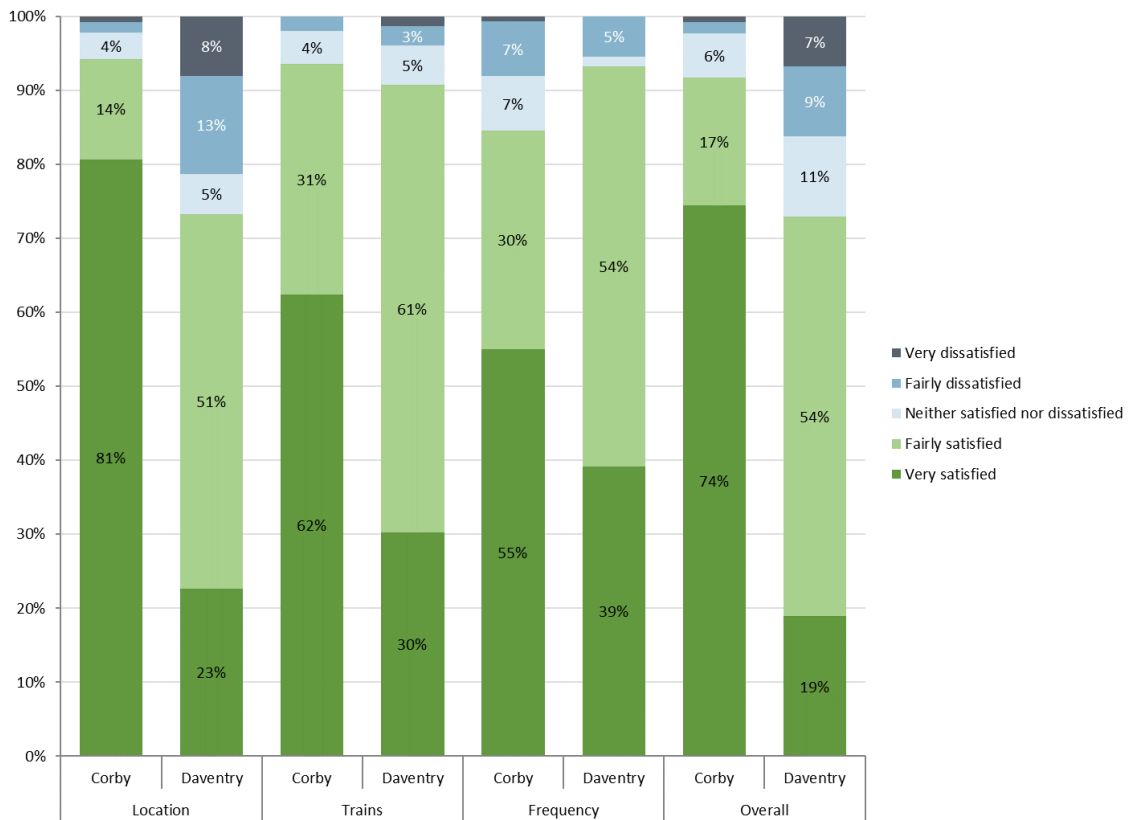
Source: Corby and Daventry business surveys 2016. Base = 165 Corby businesses, 202 Daventry businesses

**Business satisfaction with local rail services**

5.26 Figure 5.6 highlights the level of satisfaction with local rail services amongst businesses based in Corby and Daventry. 74% of Corby businesses were ‘very satisfied’ with the local station they used, compared to just 19% of Daventry businesses. A key factor behind this would appear to be the relatively convenient location of Corby station: while 81% of Corby businesses were “very satisfied” with the location of the station, this was just 23% for Daventry businesses. Physical proximity to a station does therefore appear to be a key driver of satisfaction for local rail services, and hence businesses which rely on rail are more likely to be attracted towards an area with good rail accessibility such as Corby.

5.27 The poor connectivity of Daventry businesses to a station is also evident in the improvement priorities of employers, with a more convenient station location being the single most quoted improvement that they would seek with rail services (17% said a more convenient station location was the number one priority compared with 13% seeking reduced fares). In Corby, however, the top two rail improvement priorities were reduced fares and more frequent services.

**Figure 5.6: Satisfaction with the station (based on staff’s experiences)**



Source: Corby and Daventry business surveys 2016. Base = 140 Corby businesses, 75 Daventry businesses. Note: based on those expressing an opinion



### Increased attractiveness as place to work

- 5.28 Approximately 10% of UK residents travel to work by rail<sup>12</sup>, and hence for some individuals the attractiveness of an area as a place to work will be directly linked to the accessibility by rail. Many businesses will therefore seek to locate in somewhere accessible to rail, to benefit from a wider labour pool which includes these potential rail commuters.
- 5.29 However, just 0.2% of all commuting trips made by residents of all local authority districts (usual residence) to Corby local authority (place of work) in 2011 were by rail, according to census inbound commuting data. While this indicates that improved rail accessibility is likely to play a minor role in the overall attractiveness of the town as a place to work, and hence the locational choices of businesses, it should be noted that this was only recorded two years following the intervention; the increases in rail use outlined in Chapter 4 therefore suggest this may be an underestimate.
- 5.30 Table 5.1 outlines that surveys of residents in Corby and Daventry support this picture, indicating that small proportions of residents (12% in Corby and 9% in Daventry) felt that rail services were ‘very’ or ‘fairly’ important to them when they moved to their current job. While this is more likely to refer to outbound rather than inbound commuting trips, it is still illustrative of the importance on rail accessibility to some residents of Corby and Daventry, and hence their locational preferences. Moreover, 56% of Corby station survey respondents currently in employment and 51% not in employment agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that ‘since the station opened more work opportunities are available to me’.

**Table 5.1: When moving to your current job, to what extent were rail services important to you?**

Response	Corby	Daventry
Very important	6%	5%
Fairly important	6%	4%
Not very important	12%	10%
Not at all important	75%	75%
Don't know	2%	6%

Source: Corby and Daventry residents surveys 2016. n=500 Corby residents, 500 Daventry residents.

- 5.31 Increased rail accessibility to a workplace may therefore increase its attractiveness as a place to work, although since the clear majority of Corby residents (87%) report this is not important to them, this effect is likely to be marginal. This is supported by stakeholder evidence, as one stakeholder notes:
- “Since the opening of the rail station the borough has seen a greater balance in people living and working in Corby, with fewer people commuting into Corby for work. The station also provides a direct connection to London, which has resulted in Corby becoming a much more attractive place to live for people commuting to London.”*
- 5.32 This indicates that the attractiveness of Corby as a place to work is unlikely to be significantly affected by the opening of the new service and new station. Instead, the station is viewed as

<sup>12</sup> DfT, Transport Statistics Great Britain, 2016

providing greater scope for residents of Corby to access employment opportunities outside the Corby Local Authority District, although the evidence for this in the previous section is limited.

### Summary

- 5.33 As with the evidence for households, the qualitative evidence suggests that while some businesses do value rail accessibility – and hence are more likely to locate in Corby post-intervention – the majority of businesses place limited importance on rail services when determining where to locate and invest, and hence the overall impacts of the new station and services at Corby on local investment is likely to be very limited.
- 5.34 Some businesses within specific sectors with specific transport requirements – such as knowledge-intensive firms requiring regular travel to London for employees and customers – may find Corby a more attractive place to locate, which may contribute towards longer-term change in the structure of the Corby economy.

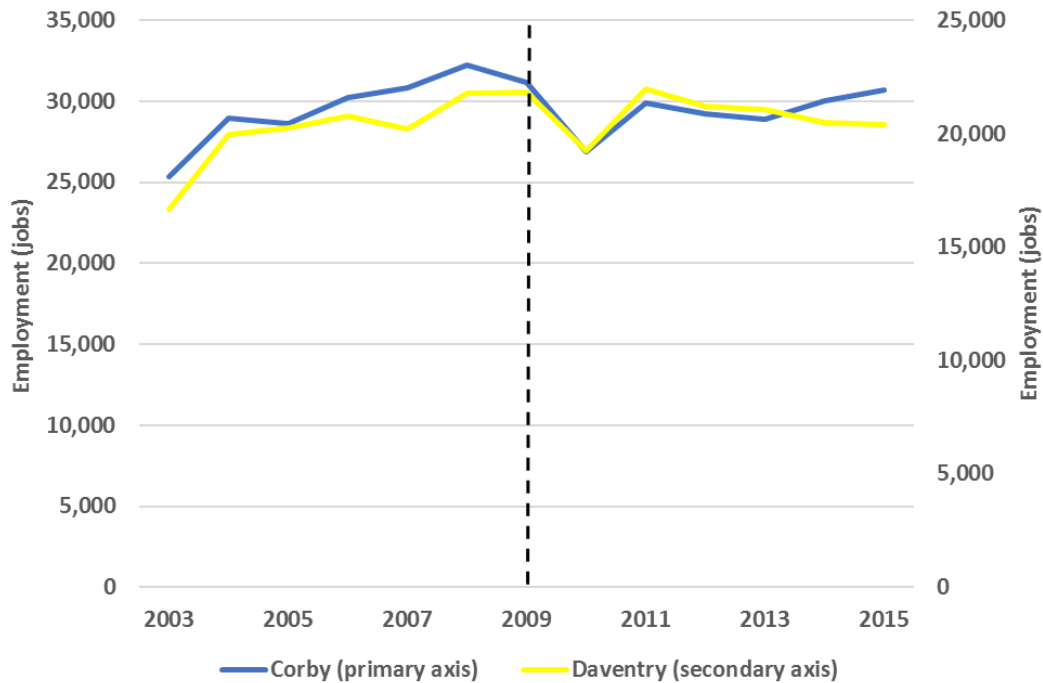
## Employment effects

### Firm employment

- 5.35 Econometric analysis was undertaken using the Business Structure Database (BSD) to identify the impacts of the new rail service at Corby on local employment, with local business units (each individual business site or workplace) the unit of analysis.
- 5.36 Our analytical approach involved a D-i-D, outlined in detail in the accompanying Technical Report, which identified the new rail service and station in Corby as a treatment effect, with Daventry identified as a suitable comparator group in which no treatment occurs (i.e. no rail station exists). The D-i-D approach estimates the difference between Corby and Daventry (and also over time) both before and after treatment (e.g. the treatment being the new service introduction) to establish what, if any, effect on firm employment is found to be a result of treatment. Corby and Daventry are identified for the D-i-D analysis according to postcodes linked to lower-super output areas within the geography of both towns.
- 5.37 The D-i-D methodology requires that common trends be present between the control and the treatment areas prior to the intervention, in order for the conclusions to be meaningful. As such, not all sectors and size classes are analysed below, as those common trends were not always present. Further details are given in the annex outlining the econometric analysis for Corby, Annex 4ai.

5.38 Figure 5.7 summarises the aggregate employment data, as used within the econometric analysis.

Figure 5.7: Total employment in Corby and Daventry, 2003-15 (local units analysis)



Source: Business Structure Database, ONS

5.39 The analysis indicated the presence of a small positive increase in overall employment in Corby relative to Daventry, although this was not statistically significant. There was a statistically significant increase in employment amongst small firms (<10 employees) but a decrease amongst larger employers. Increased connectivity as a result of the rail station re-opening in Corby does appear to have led to higher average employment among some firms in the area, over both the short term (two years) and medium term (six years) following the station reopening.

5.40 The new service and rail station was hypothesised to increase economic activity by improving the connectivity of Corby, and consequently increasing economic activity in the Corby area. The results do show an increase in average firm employment over the time-period in question, that correspond to that which might be expected from the new rail service and station opening. However, this was found to be unequally distributed throughout the local economy in Corby, with growth in average firm employment found for smaller firms<sup>13</sup>, of 2.2% over the short term, increasing to 2.6% over the medium term. Surprisingly, larger firms<sup>14</sup> were observed to have experienced decreased employment over the time period (-3.9% short term, -4.2% medium term).

<sup>13</sup> Local units with employment of less than 10

<sup>14</sup> Local units with employment of 10 or more

- 5.41 Data was also disaggregated by sector, according to the Standard Industrial Classification 2003 (SIC-03). Firms operating in the Retail sector are hypothesised to be particularly likely to benefit from increased footfall following the introduction of the new service and re-opening of the rail station, and this sector did experience higher growth in the medium term, increasing by 7%. It would therefore seem that the benefits to employment in the Retail sector anticipated by local council members in the run-up to the station reopening are being realised.
- 5.42 In addition, the Wholesale, Transport and Storage sector was thought to be likely to be directly impacted by the new rail service and new station, as the public investment in infrastructure should both increase employment in Transport and Storage directly at the rail station, but also indirectly increase demand for complementary transport and wholesale services such as taxis, auxiliary storage facilities etc. Average employment per firm in these sectors did increase following the new rail service and new station (5.5% short term, 6% medium term)<sup>15</sup>, although the latter results were less supported by common trends before the new rail service and new station<sup>16</sup>.
- 5.43 However, the analysis did not find robust evidence to indicate that the new rail service and new station increased employment across the local economy as a whole. While the makeup of the economy within Corby has changed significantly following the new service, with a reduction in the percentage of jobs in the Manufacturing sector from 27.6% to 23.1% between 2008 and 2015, with a corresponding rise in the percentage of employment in Education and Human Health, it is difficult to isolate any impact of the new rail service. Employment in Manufacturing was already high relative to Daventry, and the wider region, and it is likely the significant fall in employment in this sector is a result of wider rebalancing towards the service sector, stimulated and encouraged by local regeneration efforts and new employment growth.
- 5.44 These findings are summarised in Table 5.2 below. A summary of the D-i-D results are shown in Table 5.2 below.

**Table 5.2: Summary of econometric employment analysis findings**

Effect	Statistically significant?	Impact relative to comparison area
Increase in overall employment	No	Small positive effect, but not statistically significant. There was a statistically significant increase in employment amongst small firms (<10 employees), but a decrease amongst larger employers
Increase in Retail sector employment	Yes	Over a 6-year horizon, there was a 7% increase.
Increase in Wholesale, Transport & Storage sector employment	Yes	Over a 6-year horizon, there was a 6% increase.

<sup>15</sup> Note that due to limited support for ‘common trends’ (a key assumption in econometric D-i-D analysis) before the re-opening of Corby stations, these results should be treated with caution.

<sup>16</sup> Note that the statistical significance of this result could be spurious if firm size is correlated within towns.

**Table 5.3: Results of Difference-in-Difference analysis for employment, fixed effects model, local units, 2003-15**

	Model 1a Medium-term effect, (6 years after station opening)	Model 1b Short-term effect, (2 years after station opening)	Model 2a Medium-term effect, (6 years after station opening)	Model 2b Short-term effect, (2 years after station opening)	Model 3a Medium-term effect, (6 years after station opening)	Model 3b Short-term effect, (2 years after station opening)	Model 4a Medium-term effect, (6 years after station opening)	Model 4b Short-term effect, (2 years after station opening)	Model 5a Medium-term effect, (6 years after station opening)	Model 5b Short-term effect, (2 years after station opening)
Disaggregation	Entire area	Entire area	Small firms	Small firms	Large firms	Large firms	Retail sector	Retail sector	Wholesale, Transport and Storage sector	Wholesale, Transport and Storage sector
Reported effect	0.9%	1.0%	<b>2.6%</b>	<b>2.2%</b>	<b>-4.2%</b>	<b>-3.9%</b>	<b>7.0%</b>	4.4%	<b>6.0%*</b>	<b>5.5%*</b>
P-value	0.207	0.251	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.005</b>	<b>0.004</b>	<b>0.016</b>	<b>0.006</b>	0.126	<b>0.001</b>	<b>0.010</b>
Standard error	(0.007)	(0.008)	<b>(0.007)</b>	<b>(0.008)</b>	<b>(0.015)</b>	<b>(0.017)</b>	<b>(0.026)</b>	(0.029)	<b>(0.018)</b>	<b>(0.021)</b>
Observations										
Corby	16,850	10,838	<b>13,320</b>	<b>8,511</b>	<b>3,530</b>	<b>2,327</b>	<b>1,166</b>	742	<b>3,603</b>	<b>2,260</b>
Daventry	33,591	22,805	<b>29,161</b>	<b>19,824</b>	<b>4,430</b>	<b>2,981</b>	<b>2,720</b>	1,858	<b>5,693</b>	<b>3,807</b>
Total	50,441	33,643	<b>42,481</b>	<b>28,335</b>	<b>7,890</b>	<b>5,308</b>	<b>3,886</b>	2,600	<b>9,296</b>	<b>6,607</b>

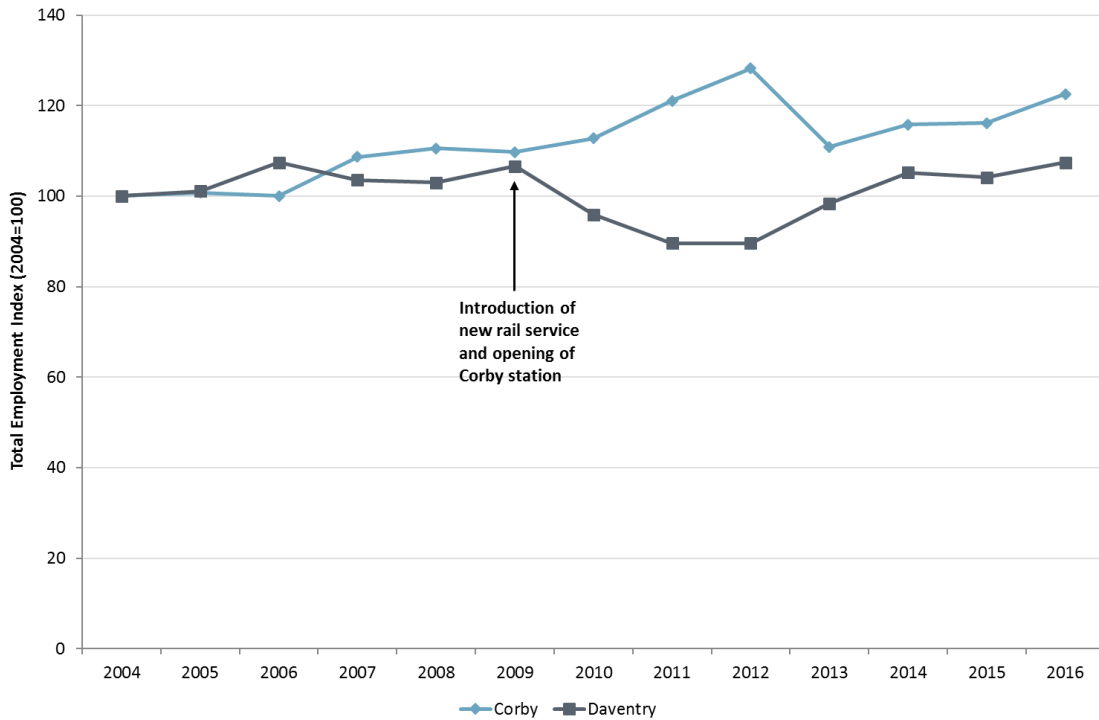
Notes: Data is at local units level, all models estimated with local units fixed effects, Statistically significant results highlighted in bold (\*Less evidence for common trends)

Source: BSD (ONS) and own calculations

**Local labour market**

5.45 ONS data regarding local employment supports the conclusions of the econometric analysis that local employment in Corby has outperformed Daventry since the opening of Corby station and the arrival of new rail services. Figure 5.8 outlines the change in the employment index (the total number of individuals in work) within Corby and Daventry, both before and after the transport intervention.

**Figure 5.8: Total Employment Index in Corby and Daventry Local Authority, 2004-2016**

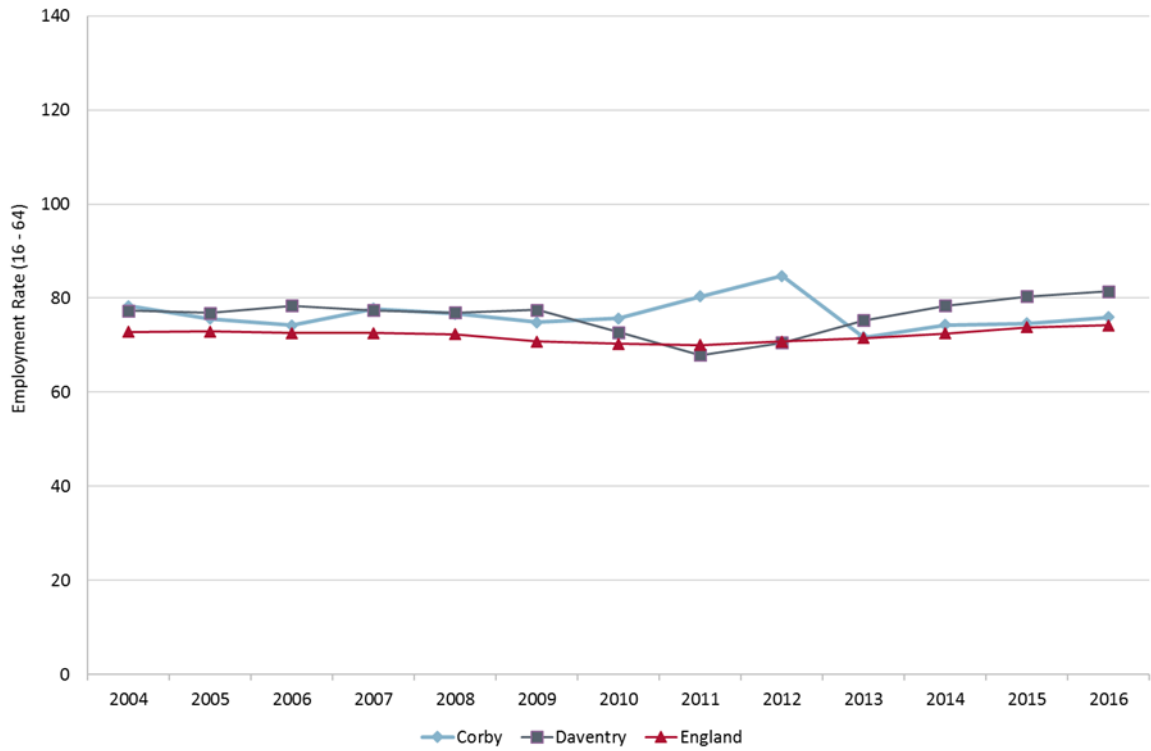


Source: Office of National Statistics (accessed 2017)

5.46 Employment has clearly risen strongly since the opening of the station in 2009, despite the impacts of the late 2000s recession, whilst employment in Daventry fell sharply from 2009–2012 as the effects of the recession were felt. Whilst employment did fall sharply in 2012/13, which was potentially linked to large plant closures within the manufacturing sector (110 jobs were lost at Tata Steel and 115 at the Aquascutum clothing factory in 2012), overall employment growth has continued to outperform growth in Daventry since 2009.

5.47 The trend in the employment rate in Corby, compared to the Daventry and the England average, performs similarly over this period, as shown in Figure 5.9.

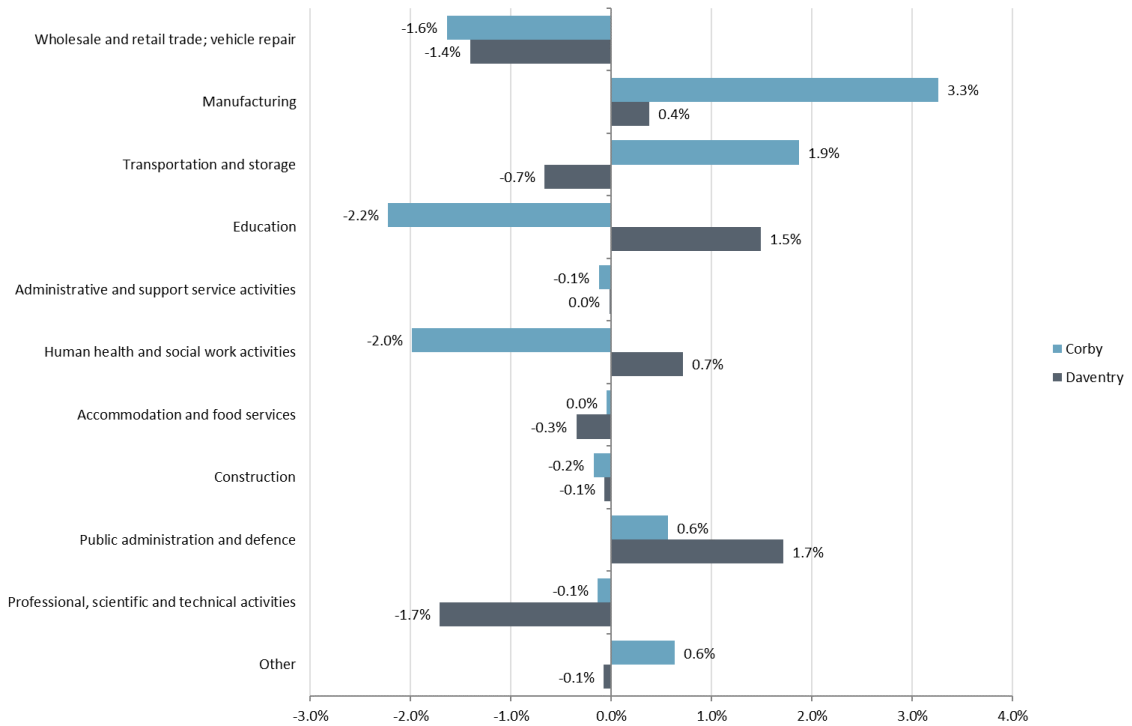
Figure 5.9: Employment Rate in Corby and Daventry local authority, 2004-2016



Source: Office of National Statistics (accessed 2017)

5.48 Meanwhile, in terms of the sectoral composition of employment, the change between 2008 and 2015 is illustrated in Figure 5.10. This data indicates that there has been a pronounced increase in employment in the Manufacturing and Transportation and Storage sectors, over the period since the rail intervention. The finding for Transportation and Storage in particular is most likely related to the establishment of passenger services from Corby.

**Figure 5.10: Change in the sectoral composition of employment in Corby and Daventry, 2008-2015**



Source: Annual Business Inquiry/Business Register and Employment Survey, ONS (accessed 2017)

### Summary

5.49 Both the econometric analysis, and that of the local labour market data, indicates that the Corby employment market has performed more strongly than Daventry, and the wider economy, in the period following the opening of the new station and arrival of the new rail service in 2009, which was coincident with the recovery from the late-2000s recession. Firm employment effects were statistically significant within the Retail and Wholesale, Transport and Storage sectors, with a small positive effect in overall employment, which was not statistically significant. Overall employment in Corby, as recorded by the ONS, grew strongly following the recession, although it did fall sharply in 2012/13.

5.50 While these specific sectors may have benefited directly from the introduction of the new services and station (such as through demand for associated services and increased retail footfall), resulting in additional employment, it is difficult to conclusively demonstrate that the new rail service was responsible for these effects. Corby’s economy has continued to grow strongly throughout the recession (except 2012-2013), in contrast to the wider economy, and could be a result of a combination of factors, such as regeneration initiatives and significant



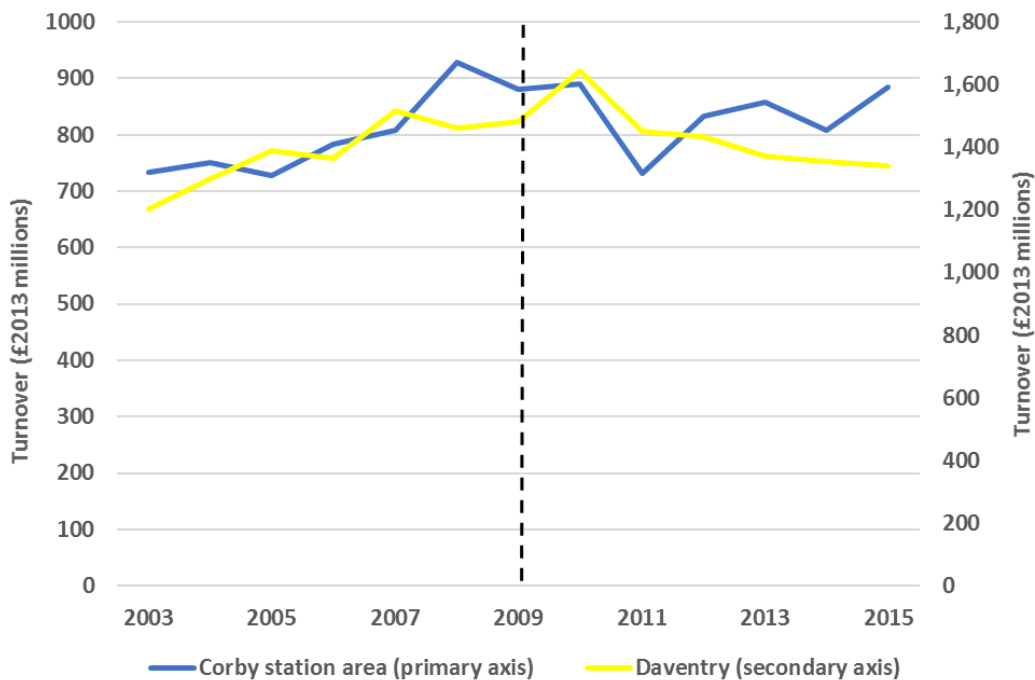
population growth, which are not able to be disaggregated from the role played by the new rail services.

## Productivity effects

### Firm turnover

- 5.51 Econometric analysis was also undertaken using the i-D to identify the impacts of the new rail service at Corby on firm turnover. Enterprises, rather than local business units, were used as the unit of analysis<sup>17</sup>.
- 5.52 Turnover refers to the annual volume of sales of firms located within a given area; an increase in turnover would be expected to be correlated with increased business productivity and profitability. Firms which rely on rail connectivity would be expected to benefit from the new station and services at Corby through journey time savings, reducing the cost of producing their output, and hence becoming more competitive and able to increase overall output and sales.
- 5.53 Figure 5.11 outlines the aggregate turnover data, as analysed within the econometric analysis. Turnover data is presented for the Corby station area, which restricts the sample of local units or enterprises to those which are within approximately half a mile of the rail station.

Figure 5.11: Total turnover in Corby station area and Daventry, 2003-15 (enterprise analysis)



Source: Business Structure Database, ONS

<sup>17</sup> An enterprise is any number of individual sites or workplaces (or local units) which forms one ‘business’, or the smallest legal unit (based on VAT and or PAYE records) with a certain degree of autonomy. Whilst local unit data is more disaggregated, enterprise data contains a measure of turnover which is not available in the local unit data. Where an enterprise has several local units, the location of an enterprise is generally the main operating site or the head office. Hence, for regional analysis, our sample may include data for local units outside of Corby if their head office/main operating site is located within Corby, and likewise data for some local units in Corby may be excluded if their head office/main operating site is located outside of Corby. This is a limitation of the available data.

- 5.54 Compared to Daventry, there was a non-statistically significant increase in turnover in Corby station area amongst Wholesale, Transport & Storage sector businesses, but a non-statistically significant decrease in overall turnover for Corby local authority area. There is therefore a lack of robust evidence to demonstrate that average enterprise turnover increased as a result of the new rail service and station, either across the local economy or in Wholesale, Transport and Storage in the station area.
- 5.55 This may be due to a variety of causes, including the failure of the hypotheses to fully capture the effects of the station re-opening, other unanticipated and unknown factors, or simply the limitations of the data or econometric techniques employed. Further commentary regarding these issues is provided within the accompanying Technical Report, and a summary of the D-i-D results is shown in Figure 5.4 overleaf.

**Table 5.4: Results of Difference-in-Difference analysis for turnover, fixed effects model, enterprises, 2003-15**

	<b>Model 6a</b> Medium-term effect, (6 years after station opening)	<b>Model 6b</b> Short-term effect, (2 years after station opening)	<b>Model 7a</b> Medium-term effect, (6 years after station opening)	<b>Model 7b</b> Short-term effect, (2 years after station opening)
Disaggregation	Corby, Total sectors	Corby, Total sectors	Corby station area, Wholesale, Transport and Storage sector	Corby station area, Wholesale, Transport and Storage sector
Reported effect	-4.5%*	-5.2%*	6.7%*	5.1%*
P-value	0.415	0.381	0.281	0.480
Standard error	(0.056)	(0.061)	(0.060)	(0.071)
Observations				
Corby	665	490	676	445
Daventry	2,753	1,841	4,781	3,235
Total	3,418	2,331	5,457	3,680

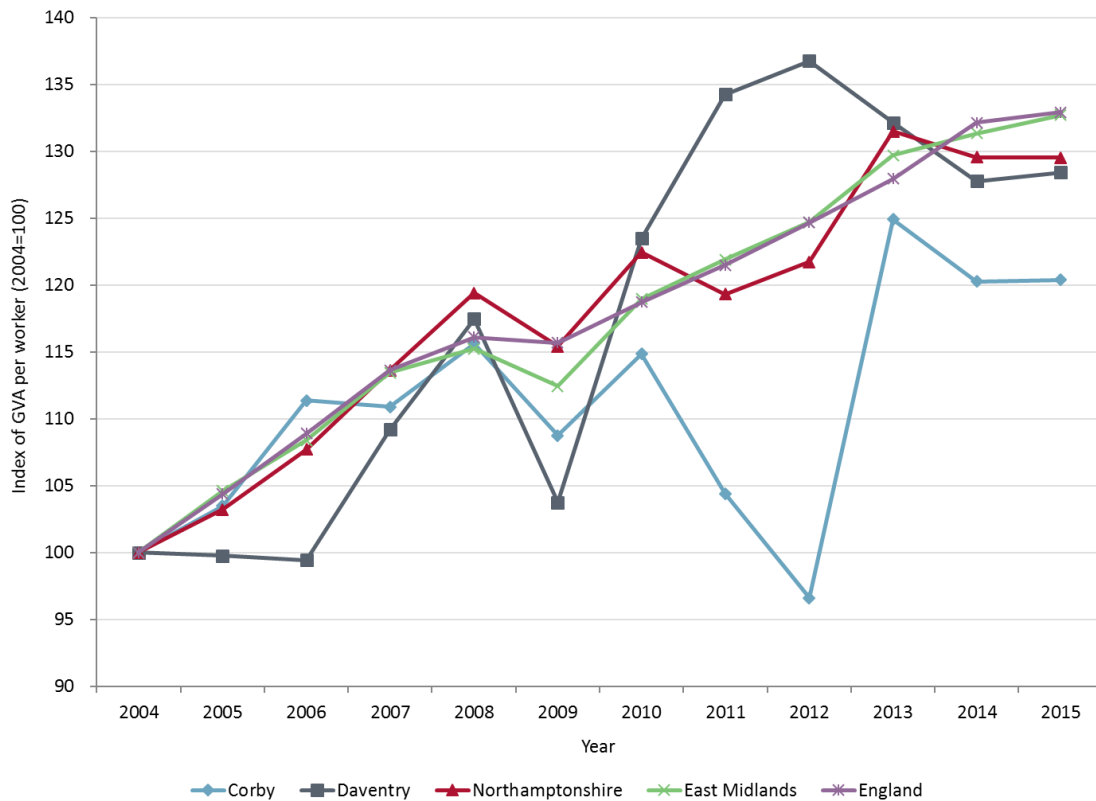
Notes: Data is at enterprise level, all models estimated with enterprise fixed effects, statistically significant results highlighted in bold (\*Less evidence for common trends)

Source: BSD (ONS) and own calculations

### Gross Value Added

5.56 Figure 5.12 outlines the change in GVA per worker, or the total value of goods and services produced, within Corby, Daventry and three regional comparators. This similarly suggests that the impacts of the new station and associated rail services on improving local productivity were limited.

Figure 5.12: Change in GVA per worker, 2004 - 2015



Source: Annual Population Survey, 2017 and Regional GVA by Local Authority in England, ONS, 2017 (accessed 2017)

- 5.57 In 2015, GVA per worker in Corby was £44,600, two per cent lower than the East Midlands average of £45,600, and significantly lower than the England average of £56,500. Within the local authority of Corby, GVA per worker increased in line with the national and regional average from 2004 to 2008, prior to the opening of Corby station.
- 5.58 GVA in Corby fell between 2010 and 2012, increased sharply from 2012 to 2013, although it has remained largely stable until 2015, and remains less than the Northamptonshire, East Midlands and England average. Indeed, GVA growth appears to have performed more strongly in Corby than in the Daventry comparator prior to the opening of the station, but significantly worse since.
- 5.59 Notably, the large decrease in GVA per worker in Corby between 2010 and 2012 negatively correlates to the increasing employment trend. While this could be a result of additional employment being generated within lower-value, less skilled jobs, or in smaller firms, it could also be an employment estimate used within the GVA per worker calculation. Annual

Population Survey employment estimates, used to calculate GVA per worker, rely on a sampling methodology. Hence, in the absence of a corresponding fall in output, it is possible that the increase in employment (and hence reduction in GVA per worker) is a result of a sampling problem, rather than an observed phenomenon. Based on the GVA data and analysis, it is therefore difficult to determine whether the opening of the station at Corby has had any appreciable impact on the productivity of local employees.

### **Summary**

- 5.60 Econometric analysis, undertaken using the Business Structure Database, of firm turnover – an indicator of changing productivity - indicates that the opening of the station at Corby and arrival of new rail services does not appear to have impacted on business productivity. While there was a non-statistically significant increase in turnover amongst Wholesale, Transport & Storage sector businesses in the area within half a mile of the station, overall turnover experienced a non-statistically significant decrease (in each case, relative to the trends in Daventry). Similarly, data of the change in GVA per worker indicates that businesses within close proximity to Corby station have underperformed relative to the comparator of Daventry.
- 5.61 Overall, the opening of Corby station does not appear to have had any impact on business productivity within the town. Similar to the discussion regarding employment, this is likely to be a result of the limited reliance of businesses in the town on rail connectivity.

## 6 Conclusions

- 6.1 Corby station opened in February 2009, with the full hourly service to London operating from April, granting eight years over which the impacts might be felt. Whilst it is likely that the transport impacts of the new station – in terms of increased rail patronage – will have been felt, feedback from stakeholders indicates that economic impacts may take years to fully emerge.
- 6.2 This chapter summarises the impacts of the new station and services on Corby, drawing from the content in Chapters 4 and 5, and comments on how these economic impacts may further materialise in the future.

### Transport impacts

**Transport impacts – has the new rail service and new station at Corby, by making rail travel more convenient for local people, encouraged additional rail trips?**

- 6.3 Evidence from station user and residents surveys, together with ORR station usage data, suggests that the rail demand at Corby is partly a result of abstraction from neighbouring stations and partly newly-generated rail trips (some of which appear to be due to modal shift), and additional leisure trips.
- 6.4 Over half of Corby station users are reported to have increased their overall use of rail since the opening of the station, with the major reason given for their increased usage being the greater convenience the new rail service and station offers. Resident surveys in Corby and Daventry report that, while 61% of Corby residents travel by rail at least once a month, this is just 50% for Daventry residents, illustrating that the station at Corby is likely to have contributed towards an increase in overall rail use.
- 6.5 Rail usage data indicates that immediately following the opening of the new station in Corby in 2009 there were 115,000 rail trips starting or finishing at the station, increasing to 278,000 by 2015/16. However, growth in rail trips was subdued at the nearby stations of Kettering and Market Harborough (where some new rail trips at Corby would have been expected to have been abstracted from) over the same time period, with the volume of trips falling during the economic downturn, albeit recovering afterwards. Across all three stations, usage of rail increased from 1.83m in the year prior to Corby opening (2008-9) to 2.19m in 2015/16, an increase of 20% compared to an increase across the whole network of 34%, and the same increase for the East Midlands region. Approximately 20% of rail trips from Corby appear to be to / from Kettering – and hence entirely new trips since this is a flow previously not possible by rail.

- 6.6 Overall, the new rail service and station at Corby, through making rail travel more convenient for local people, has encouraged additional rail trips, both newly-generated and from other modes, although the rail usage data does suggest the majority of trips were abstracted from other local stations at Kettering and Market Harborough.

### **Economic impacts**

#### **Investment effects – has the rail service and new station has made Corby a more attractive place to live, work or locate a business?**

- 6.7 Research amongst local residents and businesses within Corby indicates that for some the availability of rail services was one of their considerations when choosing where to live, where to work and where to locate a business. However, this number was limited; for example, only a quarter of people felt that rail connectivity was an important consideration in choosing where to live. Furthermore, the research also indicated that there was a higher level of satisfaction with local rail services in Corby compared with the comparator area, Daventry. For example:
- 27% of Corby and 21% of Daventry residents said that rail services were an important factor in choosing where to live;
  - 12% of Corby and 9% of Daventry residents said that rail services were an important factor in choosing where to work;
  - 12% of Corby and 2% of Daventry businesses who had moved within the last 7 years said that rail services were an important factor in choosing where to locate;
  - 30% of Corby and 21% of Daventry businesses said that rail services are important for clients or suppliers visiting the site; and
  - 74% Corby and 19% of Daventry businesses said they were satisfied with the station that they used.
- 6.8 This illustrates that individuals and businesses located in Corby tend to value rail accessibility more than those in Daventry, who do not benefit from close proximity to rail services. This suggests that some individuals and businesses who value rail connectivity – such as those who rely on access to larger labour markets and customers and clients in London – may have decided to locate in Corby, rather than other towns such as Daventry which lack rail connectivity.
- 6.9 It should be stressed, however, that the quantitative evidence for these effects was limited, and it is unlikely that, for most businesses and individuals, the new rail service and station played a significant role in their decision to locate. Most residents and businesses did not view rail connectivity as an important factor in their locational decisions (reflected in the evidence above), with rail connectivity only important for specific businesses in specific sectors.
- 6.10 While population growth in Corby has remained high relative to Daventry, this is more likely to be a result of planning policy and land availability, albeit perhaps supported by improved rail connectivity post-station opening, and represents the continuation of a pre-2009 trend. Similarly, there is no evidence from the analysis of local property prices above suggesting that the opening of the station at Corby has resulted in an increase in local property values; however, no thorough analysis of property price trends has been conducted and as such a property price effect cannot be ruled out.



### **Employment effects – has the rail service and new station lead to an increase in local employment in Corby?**

Econometric analysis using the Business Structure Database identified a small, positive increase in overall firm employment in Corby relative to Daventry, but this was not statistically significant. Firms operating within both the Retail and Wholesale, and Transport and Storage sectors in Corby did appear to benefit from a statistically significant increase in overall employment compared to Daventry, with a 7% and 6% increase over a 6-year horizon respectively. Small firms, with less than 10 employees, also reported a statistically significant increase, perhaps indicating that any employment response to the new rail service was focused amongst smaller, local businesses – rather than larger retail and manufacturing firms.

- 6.11 While this could have been a result of the station investment – increased footfall following the introduction of the rail service benefitting retailers, and an increase in employment in transport and storage both directly at the station and as a result of complementary transport (e.g. taxis) – it is not possible to specifically identify the station as the *cause* of the increased employment. It should be noted that the rapid growth of Corby over this time period results in difficulty in disaggregating the impacts of the new station at Corby, separately from wider initiatives
- 6.12 ONS local labour market data supports this conclusion, indicating that employment continued to grow strongly throughout and since the recession, in contrast to Daventry and the wider UK economy, despite a brief fall in employment in 2012/13.

### **Productivity effects – has the rail service and new station improved access to employees, customers and suppliers, resulting in greater productivity amongst businesses in Corby?**

- 6.13 Econometric analysis was also undertaken to identify any impacts of the new station and rail service on firm turnover. Increased turnover could indicate increased firm productivity and profitability, as firms increase economic output as a result of a transport improvement reducing the cost of producing output and enabling them to become more productivity.
- 6.14 Evidence of any change in firm turnover in Corby, relative to Daventry, was limited. While there was a non-statistically significant increase in turnover amongst Wholesale, Transport and Storage sector businesses, overall turnover in Corby actually decreased, although again this effect was not statistically significant. Data on the change in GVA by worker, a measure of the total productivity of the local economy, also suggests that Corby has underperformed relative to Daventry and the wider economy. Hence, it is difficult to identify any relationship between productivity in Corby and the opening of the station and the arrival of new rail services, or comment on the mechanism (such as improved access to customers or increased agglomeration) through which this may have occurred.

### **Future impacts and concluding comments**

- 6.15 Some economic impacts, such as business relocation, can take place over many years, and hence have been difficult or impossible to capture within our research. For Corby, part of the impacts originally hypothesised with the new station were for the economy to become more diversified, and it is reasonable to suppose that this will take longer than growth in existing industries. Furthermore, the late 2000s recession is likely to have delayed the positive economic impacts of the station through suppressing business growth.

- 6.16 It should also be noted that, overall, the rail accessibility of Corby for a town of its size remains limited compared to other towns and cities within the East Midlands. Whilst the new services and station at Corby have undoubtedly improved the towns' rail accessibility, it still remains limited compared to Peterborough, Kettering, Bedford or Northampton, all of which benefit from more frequent and often faster services to London and elsewhere along a 'main line', compared to the hourly service to London that Corby enjoys, with no frequent direct links to the north. This is likely to improve following the future electrification of the branch, with the service frequency to London expected to increase to two trains per hour<sup>18</sup>, which could lead to further economic impacts in the longer term.
- 6.17 Future work could therefore be considered, following a longer period after station opening, to identify any longer-term economic impacts arising from the change in rail accessibility which may take longer to materialise.

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<sup>18</sup> Details of proposed future services, and the timescales for electrification of the route to Corby are currently unclear, although (as highlighted in the East Midlands Franchise Consultation) it is expected that the town will benefit from more frequent, electric trains to London in the medium term.

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