



**Melton
Borough
Council**



Charnwood

Improved Rail Connections for Melton, Charnwood and Nottingham



Alicia Kearns,
MP for Rutland and Melton

I am delighted to have backed, and been the MP sponsor for, the Restoring Your Railway project from Melton through Syston to Nottingham. I am also hugely grateful for the support of local MPs, particularly the two MPs in Charnwood Borough, Jane Hunt MP and Ed Argar MP. This project will boost housing and job growth in Melton and Charnwood, and will almost halve the travel time between Melton Mowbray and Nottingham. The Syston cord will reduce congestion and deliver an hourly service for residents across the East Midlands. Melton and Charnwood officers have worked extremely hard to make this a viable proposal, with input from across the community, and I will do everything in parliament to see this project advance to the next stage.



Joe Orson,
Leader of Melton
Borough Council

Melton Borough Council has been working with partners to look at how we can up open our borough to our surrounding areas and provide more and better access for Melton residents to Nottingham and vice versa. This will help encourage job creation, increase visits into the area and give our businesses access to a wider catchment of potential workers and customers. It has the added benefit of giving Melton residents better access to the leisure and entertainment facilities available in Nottingham as well. With this in mind, I am delighted that we have been able to take the next step and, with the support of partners such as MPs, neighbouring local authorities, and rail infrastructure providers, we have submitted a Strategic Outline Business Case to the Department for Transport. This seeks further funding to potentially open up the Syston chord, allowing a direct rail service to Nottingham. This will substantially reduce travel times between Melton, Nottingham and further afield, enhancing connectivity for our residents and businesses.



Why is this project important to Melton and Charnwood

To deliver Melton and Charnwood's housing and economic growth, improving the transport connectivity between these centres and Nottingham City Centre is vital. Currently a lack of connectivity, coupled with an ageing population and a skills gap is restricting growth for businesses which require additional labour and access to wider consumer markets to grow further.

Enhancing connectivity will offer businesses stronger connections to a wider labour pool and make Melton and Charnwood better connected for essential inward investment.

The infrastructure exists to operate a direct train service to Nottingham, via the Syston North Curve, however only infrequent services operate today. Other public transport access is poor, with only one bus service every 2 hours. Bus timetables do not align with average working hours, so for most commuters private car is the most feasible option. Private vehicles add to the already congested road network, with the region suffering from serious road congestion during peak periods. At present, several roads, including those in Melton Mowbray are at capacity, resulting in increased travel time and cost for the public and businesses, together with rising pollution levels.



Why is this project important to Nottingham.

This new link will assist in better connecting workers, students, day-trippers, customers and suppliers to Nottingham from a wide area. A link via Melton would provide the opportunity of connections to new locations including Peterborough, and potentially as far as Cambridge and Stanstead Airport in the future, increasing the City's sphere of influence across the East of England.

Walking and cycling in open spaces such as Melton Country Park, Egerton Park, Loughborough Meadows and The Outwoods will be put within easy access for day-trips from Nottingham.





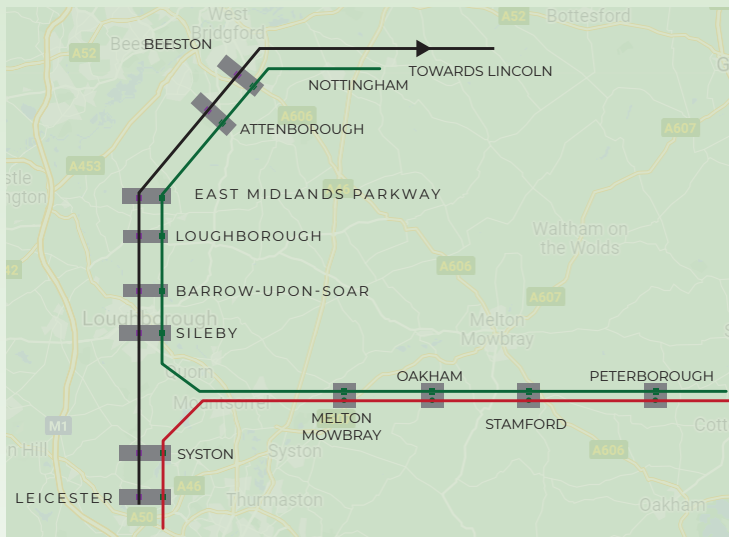
How does this benefit people who live, work or study here?

Planned local growth presents a huge opportunity for people who live, work and study here. A direct rail service will make it much easier to travel to jobs across a wider area. It will help students and apprentices gain skills locally, capitalising on the specialisms of agri-business in Melton, and Science and Sport in Loughborough. Better access to Nottingham's two universities will put more world class education opportunities on Melton resident's doorsteps. It will improve the quality of life for residents, offering simpler and quicker access to shopping, cinemas, bars and restaurants in Nottingham, not forgetting that Melton's historic charms will now be within easy reach of new destinations.



Charnwood and Melton borough councils, and the Department for Transport's Restoring Your Railway programme have funded the first stage of a business case to deliver enhanced rail connectivity between Melton, Loughborough and Nottingham via the Syston North Curve. This would add an additional train per hour from Melton Mowbray station, and would call at Sileby, Barrow-upon-Soar, Loughborough, East Midlands Parkway, Attenborough, Beeston and Nottingham. This would improve access to jobs, education, housing and leisure – boosting the regional economy and helping **level up the East Midlands**.

Capacity analysis found that the infrastructure already exists to operate this service today, as long as there were spare trains which could run the service. Our work also highlights the need for enhanced capacity for services at Nottingham Station, currently being studied elsewhere. Any improvements at Nottingham would also provide a key opportunity to further leverage the benefits of HS2 across Leicestershire. With major changes to the structure of the railway planned over the next five years, it is important to develop this project further now to ensure the benefits can be delivered in the most efficient and affordable way.



Why this project is important for the Midlands Engine.



Levelling up

- Support the delivery of housing and economic sites in Melton and Charnwood;
- Improving labour mobility, encouraging inward investment and making Melton and Charnwood even more attractive places to work and build a career;
- In addition to direct benefits from better access to jobs, employment, retail and leisure the scheme also supports sustainable housing growth and encourages investment in the local area.



Fighting the climate emergency

- Improve public transport mode share, reducing car traffic and congestion
- Can be delivered primarily through upgrades to existing infrastructure
- Reduce CO2 emissions;
- Reduce NOx emissions.



Improve Accessibility

- Reduce journey times between Melton, Loughborough, Nottingham and future connections with HS2;
- Connect to the Midland Rail Hub corridors;
- Form part of the Nottingham – Melton Mowbray – Peterborough / Cambridge Strategic Link

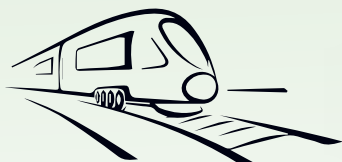


Improve health and wellbeing

- Increased walking and cycling mode shares; for first/final mile to stations and through more welcoming, less congested highways;
- Reduced emissions;
- Increased accessibility to activity venues;
- Reduce accident clusters and along roads in Melton and Charnwood.

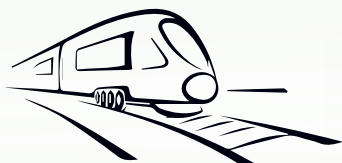
The table below shows the potential journey time benefits from a more frequent, faster, direct service:

	Rail (current)	Rail (future)	Journey time improvement
Nottingham to Melton Mowbray	1 hour 16 minutes 1 change	40 minutes	36 minutes Direct service
Loughborough to Melton Mowbray	36 minutes 1 change	29 minutes	10 minutes Direct service
Nottingham to Loughborough	20 - 36 minutes	27 minutes Additional service	1 minute (average)



Melton Mowbray would see a new, faster direct service to Nottingham and Loughborough, with no need to change trains at Leicester.

A second hourly train would operate at Sileby, East Midlands Parkway, Attenborough and Beeston.



Loughborough would receive a third direct train per hour to Nottingham.



Next steps

The Strategic Outline Business Case for this project has been submitted to the Department for Transport for their review, and a final decision on next steps is expected by the end of 2021. While there is work to do, if further development funding is approved then direct trains could be running as soon as 2026.



Timeline

Activity	Target date
DfT Business Case submission	Completed August 2021
DfT Panel decision	Late 2021 / Early 2022
Subject to the identification of further funding	
Identification of preferred train service option	Mid 2022
Outline Business Case (Single Option selected)	Winter 2022
Full Business Case (Detailed Design completed)	End of 2024
Services operational	2025 - 2026

Improved access across the region for leisure, work and study



Promoted by :

Melton Borough Council and Charnwood Borough Council



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