Multi-Million Pound Transport Projects Show Commitment To UK's New Silicon Valley

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Cambridge's newest rail station is already helping to speed up journeys for commuters into and out of the city less than 2 months after opening.

Cambridge North station was officially opened by Transport Secretary Chris Grayling today (7 August 2017). On his visit to the city today he also met with key stakeholders on the innovative East West Rail () project.

The station is set to serve up to 3,000 commuters a day. It is helping to cut traffic congestion into the city centre and is making journeys to the Cambridge Science Park quicker and easier.

Mr Grayling said:

The opening of Cambridge North marks the start of our plans to transform journeys for passengers in Cambridgeshire and maximise growth for the wider region.

We are committed to making journeys across this region quicker and easier, as soon as possible. The new station is already contributing to that.

East West Rail is at the heart of that transformation and can be a critical part of our plans to make this region the UK's own Silicon Valley, a world renowned centre for science and innovation.

Meliha Duymaz, Network Rail's Route Managing Director for Anglia, said:

This station brings a welcome boost to the local economy as part of our railway upgrade plan.

It has improved the way people travel around the city with better connections to both Cambridge city centre and to London, and provides vital rail links to the science and business parks, to support jobs and create new opportunities.

is planned to link Cambridge and Oxford directly by rail for the first time in 50 years and is one of the UK's most strategically important rail projects. As well as helping to develop the region into the UK's own Silicon Valley it could boost other initiatives including housing, science, technology and innovation.

The aim is also to provide a new direct rail link between East Anglia, the south midlands and the south-west, helping to grow the UK's economy.

Upon completion, it will mean journeys between some of the country's most economically vibrant towns and cities will be quicker and easier.

Mr Grayling was joined at the official opening of Cambridge North station by Network Rail's Meliha Duymaz, Greater Anglia Managing Director Jamie Burles, and Nick Brown, Chief Operating Officer at GTR.

Upon successful completion, the new east-west line will have interchange stations with 5 main railway lines radiating out of London but will run under or over each, minimising risk of delay. The aim is to build a route that allows future upgrades to be incorporated with as little disruption as possible.

The Western section of the line between Oxford and Bedford is being progressively upgraded and is expected to completed by 2022, with Aylesbury to Milton Keynes expected to be completed in 2024 at the latest.

£10 million was allocated at the last Autumn Statement to identify a preferred route for the line to extend east of Bedford, via Sandy, to Cambridge. The original railway was closed in 1966.

An update on the next section of the planned route between Cambridge and Bedford will be published in the autumn and the preferred route confirmed by next summer.

Work also continues on a new Oxford-Cambridge expressway, with consultations on improving the A428

and delivering a major upgrade to the A14 later in 2017.

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