



# Swindon-Didcot-Oxford Connectivity Study

Call for Evidence  
March 2022



# Introduction

Welcome to the call for evidence for England's Economic Heartland's connectivity study for Swindon, Didcot and Oxford.

Since March 2020, the world has changed significantly. People are making different travel choices and businesses and services are operating more flexibly as technology opens up new ways of delivering and accessing services and opportunities.

These changes provide the opportunity for us to plan a different future: one where travel remains a necessity but at not the same time each day and not necessarily as frequently. Planned correctly, and with public transport supported to grow to pre-pandemic levels and beyond, the opportunity for change is significant.

This is not a 'traditional' transport study. Instead, we are working with partners and stakeholders to set the desired outcomes for the defined study area from which we can collectively identify the investment requirements that are needed.

Taking this approach ensures that, as we plan connectivity in the future, we are doing so in a way that can achieve the region's long-term ambitions. The output from the study will be taken forward as part of the Investment Pipeline associated with the Transport Strategy.

During the development of EEH's transport strategy we worked with partners to identify a programme of connectivity studies based on an independent assessment of a long list of corridors.

The first three studies we are undertaking are:

- Oxford-Milton Keynes
- Peterborough-Northampton-Oxford
- Swindon-Didcot-Oxford

# The call for evidence

We are seeking to develop a comprehensive evidence base for the connectivity study and develop a clear position on the opportunities and challenges that need to be addressed.

We are holding an online survey in March 2022 (open from Monday 7 March to midnight on Monday 28 March) to help inform the study.

The survey is open to all interested parties and residents. The outputs of the call for evidence will feed into the study evidence base and will be published alongside a final study report (currently scheduled for October 2022).



# Purpose of connectivity studies

The overall purpose of our programme of connectivity studies is to :

- identify opportunities and solutions to maximise current and future connectivity in defined corridors or areas
- build on the policy framework in the EEH Transport Strategy – in effect providing a strategy for the area/ corridor to help achieve the Transport Strategy’s ambition to:

**“Support sustainable growth and improve quality of life and wellbeing through a world-class, decarbonised transport system which harnesses the region’s global expertise in technology and innovation to unlock new opportunities for residents and businesses, in a way that benefits the UK as a whole.”**

Each study scope has been developed with our partners: the local transport authorities, local planning authorities and local enterprise partnerships along the corridor. It is anticipated that each study will identify interventions and solutions to improve connectivity within the corridor or area. These will be fed into the EEH Investment Pipeline.

The studies are multi-modal and therefore it is anticipated that the measures identified are likely to be a package of interventions (including digital).

# Our Transport Strategy

The connectivity studies will build on the policy framework in our Transport Strategy, published in February 2021.

The strategy, *Connecting People, Transforming Journeys*, was developed in collaboration with partners and government, informed by technical studies and ISA, and shaped by feedback from two public consultations.

It sets out the step-change required to decarbonise the transport system while supporting economic growth. It includes an ambition for net zero transport emissions by 2040.

The outputs of the connectivity studies will inform the iterative development of the strategy's Investment Pipeline.

The strategy's five-point plan of action is on the following page.





# The Transport Strategy's five-point action plan

**ONE:** Focus on **decarbonisation** of the transport system by harnessing innovation and supporting solutions which create green economic opportunities

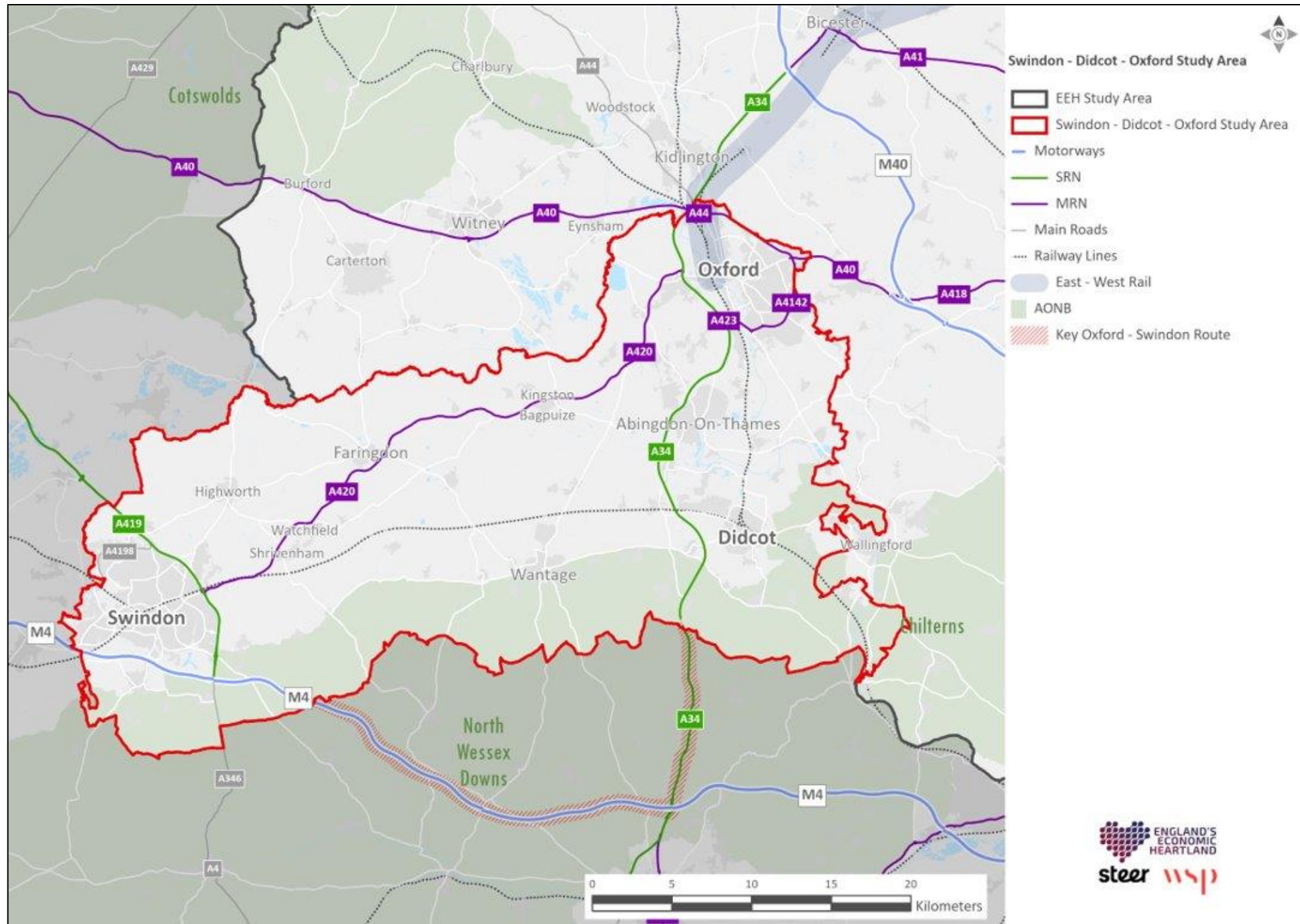
**TWO:** Promote investment in **digital** infrastructure as a means of improving connectivity

**THREE:** Use delivery of East West Rail and mass rapid transit systems as the catalyst for the transformation of our strategic **public transport** networks

**FOUR:** Champion increased investment in active travel and shared transport solutions to improve **local connectivity** to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to realise their potential

**FIVE:** Ensure that our **freight and logistics** needs continue to be met whilst lowering the environmental impact of their delivery

# Study area





# Study approaches

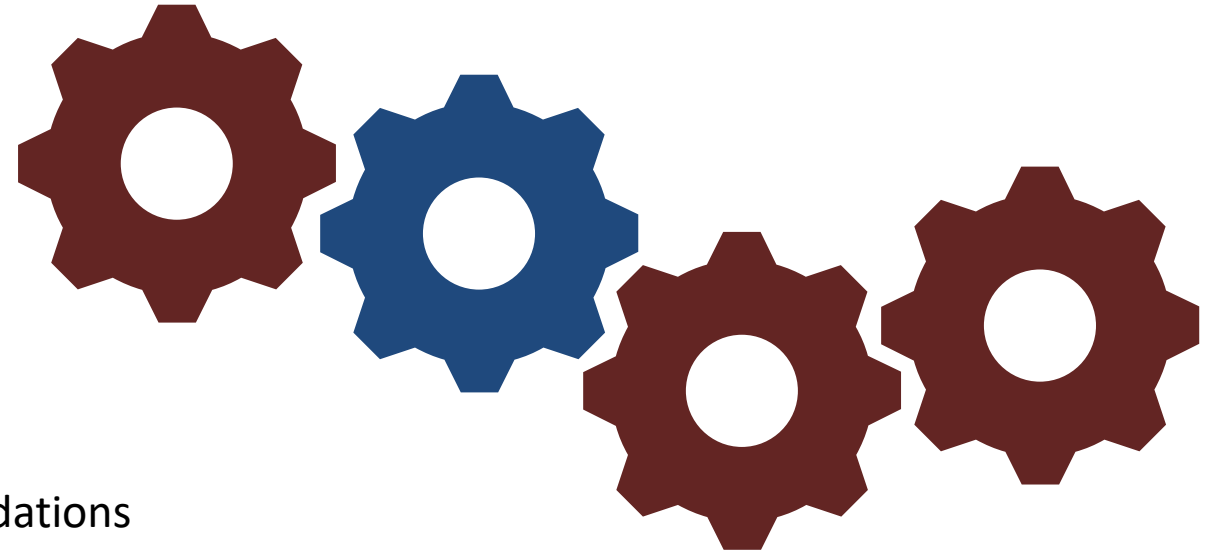
The connectivity study will run in four stages:

Phase 1: Methodology development

**Phase 2: 'Setting the scene'**

Phase 3: Delivery of the study and producing recommendations

Phase 4: Final report



We are moving into Phase 2 of our study development. During this phase we are developing our evidence base for the study and would like your input to identify opportunities, challenges, themes and potential interventions for each of the study areas.

The outputs from the survey will be presented to the study steering group and form part of the evidence base outputs, to be published alongside the conclusion of the study in October 2022.



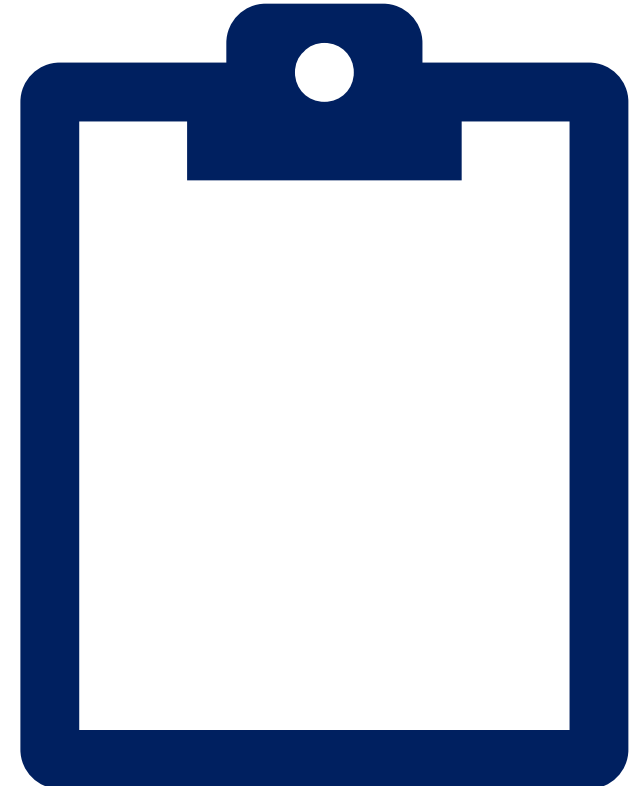
# About the survey

We are seeking your input into the studies. We want to know your views on the challenges and opportunities for improving connectivity in each corridor. The study covers a large geography and is therefore strategic in nature.

The following pages explain the questions being asked in the online survey.

[The Swindon-Didcot-Oxford survey can be found here.](#)

The survey will run from March 7 to midnight on 28 March 2022.



# Question One:

## What are the key themes for the study area?

What are the over-arching themes that the connectivity study should look to consider when developing a package of potential measures? Please identify three themes you consider to be the most important.

These could include:

- Decarbonisation
- Accessibility
- Safety
- Levelling up
- Access to public transport or walking and cycling provision
- Digital connectivity
- Environment



## Question Two:

# What do you consider to be the key movements in the area?

For example:

- Based on your experience, what are the key journeys being made in the study area?
- How are these journeys being made? Could they be made by a different mode of travel in the future (including virtually)?
- Why are these journeys being made (employment, leisure etc)?
- Are there gaps in connectivity which means that people cannot easy connect between key places?



## Question Three:

# What are the key connectivity opportunities and challenges in the study area?

For example:

- Where are the opportunities to improve connectivity (location specific)?
- What types of opportunities and challenges exist?
- Who do you think would benefit from improving connectivity in this area?





## Question Four:

# What interventions do you think the study should consider?

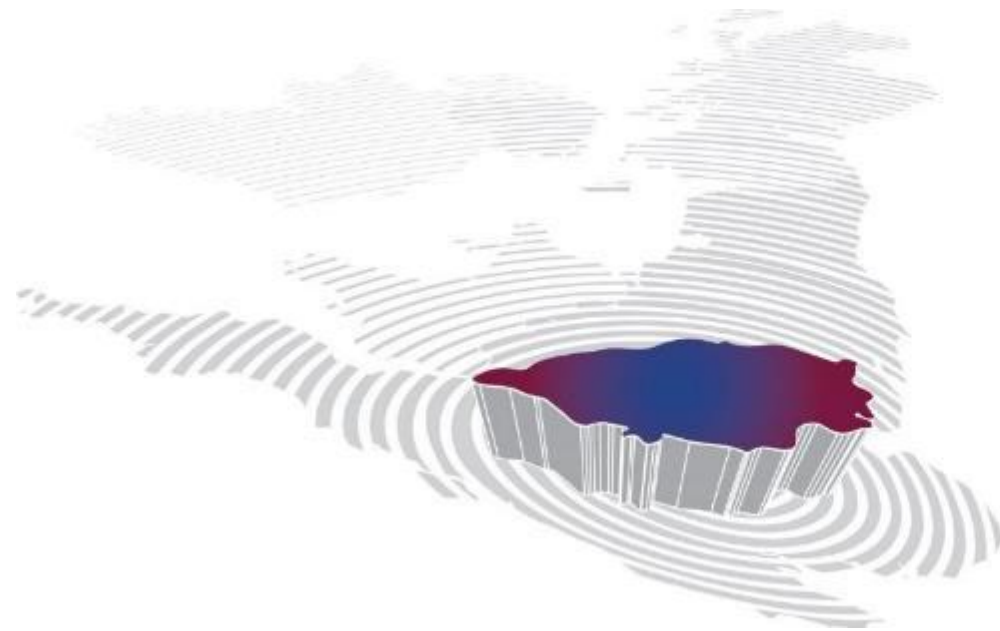
The outcomes of the study will be a package of interventions to improve connectivity in the region.

Are there any interventions you think should be considered during the development of the study?

These could include:

- Bus priority
- Walking and cycling routes
- Bicycle hire schemes
- Direct bus or rail connections
- Electric vehicle hire clubs
- Road dualling





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