



**Board Meeting
9th March 2026
11.00am to 12.30pm**

Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams

AGENDA

1. Introductions and Apologies
2. Minutes & Actions of Board Meeting 15th December 2025*
3. Presentation by England's Economic Heartland
 - Naomi Green, MD & Ben North, Rail Technical Lead
4. National Highways in the East Midlands
 - Ian Doust, Programme Development Manager (Midlands Region)
5. East Midlands Rail Collaboration
 - Update from East Midlands Railway
 - Report of the Head of Rail Improvement*
6. TfEM Shared Priorities*
7. Any Other Business
8. Date of future Meetings:
 - 8th June 2026: 10.30am -12.00pm
 - 28th September 2026: 3.00pm - 4.30pm
 - 16th December 2026: 10.30am – 12.00pm

*Paper enclosed

TfEM Terms of Reference

- To provide collective leadership on strategic transport issues for the East Midlands.
- To develop and agree strategic transport investment priorities.
- To provide collective East Midlands input into Midlands Connect (and other relevant sub-national bodies), the Department for Transport and its delivery bodies, and the work of the National Infrastructure Services & Transformation Authority (NISTA).
- To monitor the delivery of strategic transport investment within the East Midlands, and to highlight any concerns to the relevant delivery bodies, the Department for Transport and where necessary the EMC Executive Board.
- To provide regular activity updates to Leaders through the EMC Executive Board.

TfEM Membership

TfEM will comprise elected members nominated by the LTAs - to be determined by each authority but with an expectation it would be the relevant portfolio holder. Senior representatives of the Department for Transport, National Highways and Network Rail will be invited to attend as ex-officio members.



**Board Meeting
Monday 15th December 2025**

Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams

Minutes

Present:

Mayor Sir Peter Soulsby (Chair)	Leicester City Council
Cllr Chris McGiffen (Vice Chair)	North Northamptonshire Council
Cllr Carol Wood	Derbyshire County Council
Cllr Gale Waller	Rutland County Council
Cllr Adam Tilbury	Leicestershire County Council
Cllr Linda Woodings	Nottingham City Council

In attendance:

Cllr Christine Wise	Rutland County Council
Ian Doust	National Highways
Kamaljit Khokhar	National Highways
Gavin Crook	Network Rail
Timothy Bellenger	EMCCA
Verna Bayliss	Derby City Council
Will Rogers	East Midlands Railway
Donna Adams	East Midlands Railway
Simon Pready	East Midlands Railway
George Selby	East Midlands Railway
Laura Etheridge	East Midlands Railway
Miles Pattison	East Midlands Airport
Penny Sharp	Rutland County Council
Chris Wragg	North Northamptonshire Council
Chris Carter	Nottingham City Council
Ann Carruthers	Leicestershire County Council
Adrian Hill	DfT
Jackie Reay	DfT (Rail)
Sarah Spink	Midlands Connect
Andrew Pritchard	East Midlands Councils
Kyle William Butterworth	East Midlands Councils

Apologies:

Cllr Michael Cheyne	Lincolnshire County Council
Cllr Carmel Swan	Derby City Council
Mayor Clare Ward	EMCCA

		ACTION
1.	Introductions and Apologies	
1.1	Apologies as noted above.	
2.	Minutes & Actions of Board Meeting 29th September 2025*	
2.1	Minutes were agreed as a correct record.	
2.2	There were no matters arising not the agenda.	
3.	Presentation by East Midlands Airport	
3.1	The Chair welcomed Miles Pattison, External Affairs lead at East Midlands Airport.	
3.2	<p>Miles' presentation covered the following issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EMA Business update: 2026 will see an increase in the number of passenger airlines serving EMA with new routes and increased services to existing destinations such as Belfast. Cargo volumes continue to grow – up 11.4% from last year. 7 new cargo airlines now operate out of EMA and both FedEx and Swissport have moved into larger premises on site to cope with demand. • Workforce & Commuting Review: EMA have undertaken its first major survey since 2018. Headline is that 64% of employees live in the Notts/Derbys/Leics area, working across 70 different organisations based at EMA. Despite a 39% uplift in workers since 2018, commuter modal-split has remained largely static, with c81% travelling by single occupancy car, c6% car-sharing and c11% by bus. Analysis has identified the potential to grow bus commuting along 'skylink' routes to help meet EMA's ambitious Sustainable Development Plan targets. • Airspace Modernisation: UK Airspace has changed little since the 1950's and is now in need of modernisation. The process for doing this has recently been simplified but is still based around a series of highly specified 'decision gateways'. Importantly, airports are required to pass through Gateway 3 in regional clusters. EMA is part of the Manchester Terminal Manoeuvring Area Cluster with Manchester, Liverpool John Lennon and Leeds-Bradford airports. As a result, EMA is unlikely to be able to begin public consultation on its proposals for airspace modernisation before the end of 2026. 	
3.3	Cllr Woodings welcomed the information detailing the origin locations of staff working at the Airport and their mode of travel and asked of the potential of a rail or fixed public transport link from East Midlands Parkway to EMA was being actively explored.	
3.4	Miles noted that previous studies had indicated that the high construction costs involved would make such a fixed link uneconomic. Andrew Pritchard observed that high-quality 'skylink' buses already serve a number of rail stations including Derby and Nottingham, and building on this offer may be a more effective way of increasing public transport patronage to EMA.	
3.5	The Chair thanked Miles for his presentation.	

		ACTION
4.	Government Update*	
4.1	<p>Andrew Pritchard gave a brief update on the 2025 Autumn Budget from a transport perspective, which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional £891m for the Lower Thames Crossing; • Introduction of milage based 'eVED' for electric vehicles and plug-in hybrid cars from April 2028; • Extending 5p fuel duty cut until end of August 2026 – returning to March 2022 levels by 2027; and • One year freeze on regulated rail fares 	
4.2	Details were provided of Local Authority Bus Grant allocations (capital and revenue) for all LTAs in the East Midlands, which appeared to represent a significant level of investment over the Spending Review Period.	
4.3	Andrew noted that the Midlands Connect Strategic Board had endorsed a proposed Transition Plan and budget for 2026-7, but that it was unlikely that the DfT would confirm any grant offer until early in the new year. The Chair highlighted the positive work Midlands Connect had undertaken over the last 10 years.	
4.4	The TfEM Board noted the report.	
5.	East Midlands Rail Collaboration*	
5.1	<p>Will Rogers, MD of East Midlands Railway, gave an update covering the following issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aurora 810 Launch: First Aurora entered into service on Wednesday 3 December. 33 new diesel/electric bi-mode trains will replace 27 c222 trains during 2026. This will result in 46% more seats over the whole fleet and 19% more leg room, compared to current fleet, and 136% increased luggage space. • Regional & Connect Refurbishments: First c360 undergoing refurbishment at Siemens' Kings Heath depot. Four refurbished c170s now in service. Second c158 unit is back with EMR following refurbishment in Bristol. Refurbishment of c158 units is also underway at Eastcroft Depot in Nottingham. • December 2025 – Regional Timetable Change: New timetable went live on the 14th December and will see an uplift in regional services across the Region. The changes are forecast to deliver a revenue uplift of around £1 million p.a. and generate wider economic benefits of approximately £2.4 million p.a. Since 2019 there has been a 50% increase in the number of carriages serving regional routes in the East Midlands. • Revenue Update: Revenue has increased by +5.6% YoY across the last three periods. However there have been negative impacts resulting industrial action elsewhere, an increase in trespass and fatalities and aggressive competition, including from bus and coach operators and Uber increasing market share in and around Luton Airport. • Performance Update: EMR's T-3 punctuality measured at all stations stops has been consistently improving for more than a year, with the moving average now at 75.6%. This has improved by 2% in the last 12 months and is the highest it has been since August of 2022. Both an improved regional fleet position and close collaboration with Network Rail are drivers for this improvement. 	

		ACTION
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Update: Works to upgrade several station car parks with Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) completed at East Midlands Parkway, Leicester, Derby, Kettering, Wellingborough, Market Harborough, Loughborough, Nottingham and Chesterfield. Lincoln due in January. EMR has achieved the Gold Standard Inclusive Employers Accreditation for the second consecutive time and continues to be a White Ribbon accredited organisation, demonstrating commitment to helping end violence against women and girls. • Community Engagement: Annual Community Rail Conference took place on the 10th October 2025 at the Motorpoint Centre in Nottingham – very well attended. • Political Engagement: EMR was delighted to welcome a number of regional leaders including the TfEM Chair Sir Peter Soulsby to the Aurora launch event on the 20th November in Derby. 	
5.2	The Chair thanked Will for his presentation and in particular welcomed the Aurora launch event and the subsequent entry into service of the first new train.	
5.3	Cllr Woodings also welcomed the introduction on the new Auroras but was concerned about over-crowding on existing trains during the roll-out and the suspension of seat reservations on some services. Will Rogers reported that EMR continued to monitor the situation closely and take steps to support vulnerable passengers where necessary.	
5.4	<p>Kyle Butterworth, TfEM’s Head of Rail Improvement provided a brief update on the following issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Railways Bill: The Bill as drafted highlights the continued role of the Secretary of State in setting an over-arching rail strategy and determining the scale of funds available to GBR. Proposed GBR partnership arrangements will focus on MCAs. • Lincoln Rail Connectivity: Kyle reported the recent TfEM publication ‘Keeping Pace’ which highlights the case for maintaining and improving rail connectivity to Lincoln, which also included quotes from the Mayor of Greater Lincolnshire and the Chair of EMC: Keeping Pace: Enhancing Lincoln City’s Rail Connectivity • TfEM Work Programme – Product 4: Finally, Kyle highlighted a working draft of an overarching analysis of the East Midlands economy and transport systems. A revised draft will be developed with officers and brought back the TfEM Board in due course. 	
5.5	<p>The TfEM Board agree to note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The benefits delivered to passengers by EMR through the launch of the Aurora train in December 2025, and the regional timetable uplifts also delivered in December 2025; • The legislation to create Great British Railways; and • Progress by officers and consultants on the TfEM workplan 	
6.	TfEM Shared Priorities Update*	
6.1	<p>Andrew Pritchard provided a brief update on progress against towards delivery of TfEM’s eight shared priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full Electrification of the Midland Main Line: The project has been indefinitely paused and there are no funds available during the period of the Spending Review. 	

		ACTION
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved Rail Connectivity between Nottingham, Leicester, and Coventry: Network Rail have confirmed the cost of undertaking an Outline Business Case (OBC) to £5m – however funding has yet to be identified. The capital cost of delivery is estimated to be c450m. • Improved Rail Connectivity between the Midlands, Leeds, and the North East: Government has yet to confirm any next steps for the MYNE Study. The OBC for the full Midlands Rail Hub (including improved services to the East Midlands) has yet to be published and any funding for FBC/delivery has yet to be confirmed. • Improvements on the A46 Growth Corridor including delivery of the A46 Newark Northern Bypass: The Newark Northern Bypass as secured DCO and funding has been confirmed. The Chair of TfEM and the Chair of EMC have written to Ministers to request that delivery of the scheme is expedited and a start date confirmed. EMR services between Lincoln, Newark and Nottingham will double from December 2025, creating an additional 2,000 seats a day. However, no funding has been identified to deliver the proposed line speed improvement. • Improvements to the A50/A500 Growth Corridor: Derbyshire County Council is continuing to progress a LUF funded access road from the A50 to the East Midlands Intermodal Park adjacent to Toyota’s manufacturing facility. Any further strategic enhancements will require funding through RIS3. • Improvements to the A5 Growth Corridor: Funding for a strategic enhancement not including in the Spending Review but potential for improvements to Dodwells and Gibbet Hill in RIS3. • Improving safety and reliability on the A1: Signage and road marking improvements completed. Initial gap closures programme underway. There remain a total of 94 public rights of way that cross the A1 in the East Midlands without segregated facilities, including several bridleways. • Improving capacity around the M1 Junction 24: National Highways has commissioned a strategic study to assess options for increasing capacity along the M1 between Junction 23a and Junction 25 of the M1 to accommodate planned growth, including that arising from the Freeport. However, delivery of any infrastructure improvements through the RIS process are unlikely before the early 2030s. 	
6.2	The Chair thanked Andrew for the update.	
7.	Any Other Business	
7.1	None Notified.	
8.	Date of Next Meeting	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9th March 2026: 11.00am – 12.30pm 	

Transport for the East Midlands

9th March 2026

ITEM 5b: Report of the Head of Rail Improvement

1. Introduction

1.1 This report updates members on the implementation of the Rail Collaboration Agreement¹ (RCA) between TfEM and Department for Transport (DfT) across policy, rail operations, rail enhancements, and the TfEM officer annual rail workplan.

2. Government and Policy

2.1 The ‘Passenger Rail Services’ legislation gained assent in late 2024. This legislation could enable the current East Midlands Railway (EMR) National Rail Contract (NRC) to be terminated at the end of its core term from October 2026, albeit no firm date has yet been confirmed for transition to DfTO operation. West Midlands Trains, previously operated by the same owning group as EMR, and who operated services inclusive of Northamptonshire in the East Midlands, were nationalised to DfTO in the period². CrossCountry are assumed to still be part of a later transition from October 2027. In the period the Secretary of State has appointed new chairs of both Network Rail and DfTO.

2.2 The second phase of rail reform legislation, ‘The Railways Bill 2026’, commenced in Parliament on November 5th 2025³, and sets out the power for the Secretary of State (SoS) to set up the body Great British Railways (GBR) – a new publicly owned company, which will bring together the management of passenger services and rail infrastructure. New ‘Business Units’ will form the regional structure of the organisation, but exact geographic boundaries are not yet confirmed. The Commons Transport Committee released the report of their enquiry into the Bill and concluded that: "The Government should investigate a role for MSAs and other LTAs on bodies reflecting GBR’s planned regional business units"⁴, implying a relationship for LTAs with GBR, and also to shape GBRs mechanisms for offering public accountability – both of which seek to push local collaboration beyond what has been set out already. It also says the new Bill should provide for a passenger growth target in addition to the one committed to for freight, despite

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/greater-voice-for-rail-passengers-in-new-collaboration-between-government-and-east-midlands-transport-leaders>

² <https://www.modernrailways.com/article/west-midlands-trains-enter-public-ownership>

³ <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/cbill/59-01/0325/240325.pdf>

⁴ <http://committees.parliament.uk/publications/51519/documents/285763/default>

the legislative amendment of the same aim being voted down already within the period⁵.

- 2.3 Nationally, the Treasury has released a revised ‘Green Book’⁶ which details the guidance to be used for investment appraisal. It is claimed by the Government that this responds to previous criticisms about investment being too London centric. Additionally, the international consultancy ‘Boston Consulting Group’ (BCG) released a piece of research which indicates that energy infrastructure and digital infrastructure are the priorities for developed nations like the UK – with improved rail transport identified as a less important option for improving the UKs productivity⁷.
- 2.4 In the Midlands, EMCCA completed their initial consultation on their Local Transport Plan⁸, noting that opportunities for significant interventions into rail and tram are only likely to be part of feasibility assessments initially⁹. Looking east, in the period, GLCCA setup ‘Transport for Greater Lincolnshire’¹⁰ and also chaired the first national forum on rural transport¹¹. An independent review which is looking at future midlands transport partnerships (jointly sponsored by EMCCA and WMCA), was, at the time of writing, due to provide its initial findings in March 2026.

3. **Operational Update** (Note: Members will receive a briefing from EMR at the Meeting)

EMR Strategy and Fleet Replacement Programme

- 3.1 The first new intercity Hitachi Aurora trains, originally scheduled for passenger service into the East Midlands in 2022, have been gradually introduced from December 2025. Existing Meridian units are being progressively taken out of service. Any *further* delays to receipt of high-performing trains beyond the latest plans will risk increasing the shortfall of units for EMR. The next key milestone is the approval for passenger use of the longer ‘10-car’ trains’; at the time of writing targeted for May 2026.
- 3.2 Following the launch of EMRs refurbished class 170 and class 158 regional train units, we anticipate the launch of the first refurbished class 360 unit. EMRs

⁵ <https://www.railmagazine.com/news/railways-bill-passenger-target-and-rolling-electrification-programme-amendments-rejected>

⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-green-book-to-ensure-that-investment-in-all-parts-of-the-uk-given-a-fair-hearing>

⁷ https://www.bcg.com/publications/2026/infrastructure-investments-in-an-uncertain-world?utm_source=linkedin&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=none&utm_description=organic&utm_topic=none&utm_geo=lon&utm_content=lab_q1_rr_video1

⁸ <https://www.eastmidlands-cca.gov.uk/mayors-transport-plan/>

⁹ <https://www.derbytelegraph.co.uk/news/derby-news/east-midlands-mayor-plays-down-10782534>

¹⁰ <https://greaterlincolnshire-cca.gov.uk/news/article/56/new-mayoral-transport-taskforce-set-to-transform-transport-across-greater-lincolnshire>

¹¹ <https://greaterlincolnshire-cca.gov.uk/news/article/55/rural-transport-group-to-champion-connectivity-and-investment-across-england-s-countryside-and-coast>

refurbishment programme will continue at least to 2027. Achieving a tipping point when East Midlands regional customers are more likely than not to be served by a refurbished unit will be a big benefit to the perception of rail travel in this region.

- 3.3 With the disappointing decision to pause any further electrification of the Midland Mainline, EMR will need to revisit their previous plans for long term fleet replacement as previous proposals assumed electrification would be in place. As a comparator for ambition, the nationalised operator 'Northern' has announced in the period an ambitious plan to procure up to 450 new trains¹². Nationally, a 'Long-term strategy for rolling stock and infrastructure' is anticipated to be published in 2026, which is particularly relevant for the rail agenda in the East Midlands, as the regional fleet requires a committed succession plan as a priority.
- 3.4 EMRs timetable restructure launched in December was implemented in union with the restructure of operating patterns on the East Coast Mainline. Passengers in this region, in the main, are benefitting from new connectivity and improved resilience. However, the ECML restructure did setback intermediate connectivity between EM stations served by LNER. In December 2026, TOCs are seeking further timetable changes, in particular to improve Sunday regional services. This opportunity is in line with priorities that TfEM members have campaigned for.
- 3.5 The Budget at the end of November¹³ included a new Government commitment to freeze regulated fares for a year¹⁴. Passengers will welcome this as a component of the cost of living, and additionally it has since been confirmed that this policy will not trigger any direct in-year adverse local budget trade-offs to fund this policy.
- 3.6 The Mayor of Greater Manchester named the first routes which will join the region's 'Bee Network' next year. At the moment, the Bee Network consists of Metrolink trams and franchised buses only. The first two lines, including to Glossop in Derbyshire, will join the Bee Network on 13 December 2026¹⁵.
- 3.7 EMR are continuing their interventions at Nottingham station to reduce anti-social behaviour incidents and reduce ticketless travel. It is now no longer possible to access platforms from the footbridge from 7pm on Fridays until 6am on Mondays. This is in addition to the previous restrictions between 7pm and 6am each day.

¹² <https://www.modernrailways.com/article/milestone-reached-planned-new-northern-train-fleet>

¹³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/budget-2025>

¹⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/first-rail-freeze-in-30-years-to-ease-the-cost-of-living>

¹⁵ <https://www.railnews.co.uk/news/2025/12/11-first-railways-to-join-manchesters.html>

Performance

- 3.8 For period 11 (4th January – 31st January), EMR performance was 80.7% for T-3 punctuality, which is strong for this region at this time of year. But even this strong local level is set against an 85.8% national average¹⁶, so 5.1 percentage points worse than the national average. There are enduring structural factors that mean East Midlands passengers currently face sustained punctuality levels lower than the national averages. Performance should be a priority to invest in, at-scale, such that punctuality performance is improved in the East Midlands absolutely, relative to national levels, consistently across the week and the seasons, and in all parts of the region.
- 3.9 EMR offered 1.6% of TOC on Self cancellations against an NRC upper target of 1.8%. The ToS cancellations is within a context of a 4.7% all-cancellations period score which is what customers experience.
- 3.10 In period 11, EMR offered short formations of 0.6% against an upper tier target of 0.9%.

4 Rail Enhancement Projects Update

TfEM Shared Priorities (Rail)

- 4.1 The 'TfEM Shared Vision'¹⁷ for transport investment priorities will be refreshed for a 2026 re-launch.
- 4.2 With regard to updating the priority for rail-led improved city connectivity; modelling for TfEM in 2025 identified that the top priority for most principle East Midlands cities is to improve generalised rail journey times to Birmingham. Relevantly, HS2 to the region has been cancelled, whilst HS2 Phase 1 continues and includes a seven-platform station at Birmingham Curzon Street designed to accommodate previous plans for HS2 services to the north and east. Options could now include how it might be possible to use this HS2 infrastructure to enable Midlands Rail Hub (MRH) outputs instead of the previously proposed platforms at Moor Street. In parallel, Network Rail are still developing a Programme-wide MRH Outline Business Case (OBC) using Moor St. TfEM should consider how promoting east-west rail connectivity opportunities should be progressed.
- 4.3 The Midlands Connect sponsored Coventry-Leicester-Nottingham service reinstatement proposal is seeking a further £5m from current DfT RNEP provisions

¹⁶ <https://www.networkrail.co.uk/who-we-are/how-we-work/performance/railway-performance/>

¹⁷ <https://www.emcouncils.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/TfEM-Shared-Vision-2024.pdf>

for development of the next stage of the design, estimate and business case. The proposals would almost halve today's journey times between Leicester and Coventry¹⁸.

Industry Enhancement Strategic Planning:

- 4.4 Network Rail are completing their MML route study, looking at the horizon for coping with forecasted growth, and also the opportunities for improvement; essentially refreshing the comprehensive study last maintained in 2016. With the recent decision to pause the electrification of the MML there are now no committed rail infrastructure improvements for the East Midlands, so this Network Rail advice could now be viewed with renewed importance. It is anticipated that to see any impetus for Midlands Rail Hub outputs for the East Midlands, this investment priority would need to be recommended through these industry strategic document vehicles.
- 4.5 The Network Rail Strategic Planning team continue their workstream looking at the East Coast Mainline constrained capacity, including locations that could see adverse change to their existing services, such as Lincoln-KX.
- 4.6 In the period the Government committed to a new plan for a series of phases of work under the moniker of 'Northern Powerhouse Rail'¹⁹. The proposals include £1.1bn within the current spending review period to develop schemes under a canopy of a total programme funding cap of £45bn, with local leaders expected to fund any delta. Relevantly, NPR schemes that will be developed will include electrification of Sheffield to Leeds, and a commitment to provide 'high speed trains' between Birmingham and Manchester. However, this is not a reinstatement of HS2, and the Government is yet to determine exactly what will be delivered.
- 4.7 The Government announced their preferred list of stations that will benefit from Access for All (AfA)²⁰ investment. None of the eight being progressed to delivery, or twenty-three being progressed to design, are in the East Midlands. All four East Midlands stations (Chinley, Stamford, Sileby, Sleaford) that were developed have not been granted further funding to improve accessibility.

5 TfEM Rail Work Programme

- 5.1 Due to the details that were proposed in the Devolution White Paper, the existing TfEM Rail Collaboration Agreement has been briefed to members and officers as subject to transition to Mayoral Strategic Authorities (MSAs) when GBR is

¹⁸ Now 56mins vs proposals for ~30mins.

¹⁹ <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2026/jan/14/northern-powerhouse-rail-plans-welcomed-but-big-questions-remain>

²⁰ <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/improving-accessibility-at-railway-stations-across-britain>

established in 2027. Due to the transfer of responsibilities from the DfT to the DfTO in April 2026 the TfEM Collaboration Agreement will need to be transferred to DfTO. TfEM and DfTO are in the process of appointing a new Head of Rail Improvement to lead the interface for the collaboration agreement until the end of March 2027.

- 5.2 The proposed TfEM anchor document ‘Routes to Prosperity’ on economic geography and transport previously shared at TfEM as a draft, has since been reviewed by LTA member officers and is being finalised. A final version will be uploaded to the TfEM section of the EMC website. The intention is that a summary of this document will be used as part of a timely TfEM response after the governments ‘Integrated Transport Strategy’ is published.
- 5.3 This period, an initial draft of the TfEM ‘all-mode’ freight document is circulated (APPENDIX A), in order to be reviewed by LTA member officers. This will be finalised addressing the comments received in the next period and also uploaded to the TfEM section of the EMC website.
- 5.4 In the next period, TfEM Officers and Systra will be moving on to commence the final document within the rail workplan, primarily on whole-region messaging to GBR for TfEMs rail priorities. This document product will now additionally benefit from new analysis that will be developed by the consultant on east midlands performance targets, east midlands station growth, and summarising east midlands fleet succession plan options.

6 Recommendations

- 6.1 The TfEM Board are invited to:
 - Note the quarterly board report.
 - Note the draft report on freight in Appendix A, to be reviewed by officers and finalised next period.

Key Contact:

Kyle William Butterworth, Head of Rail Improvement

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Appendices:

- APPENDIX A – WORKING DRAFT: ‘Freight in the East Midlands’

TECHNICAL NOTE



TRANSPORT AND THE ECONOMY

PRODUCT 4 – FREIGHT AND GROWTH IN THE EAST MIDLANDS

IDENTIFICATION TABLE

Client/Project owner	Transport for the East Midlands
Project	Transport and the Economy
Title of Document	Product 4 – Freight and Growth in the East Midlands
Type of Document	Technical Note
Date	DD/MM/YY
Reference number	GB01T25C28
Number of pages	42

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1.1 In order to understand the competing priorities of freight in the East Midlands, how freight currently operates across road, rail and air, and how future developments might impact these, SYSTRA has undertaken an evidence-based review of freight data and plans for the region.
- 1.1.2 This Technical Note sets out the findings of this review and the conclusions that can be drawn from it.

2. FREIGHT IN THE EAST MIDLANDS

2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 Situated at the centre of the UK's rail and road networks, combining strategic geography with a diverse mix of flows – intermodal, aggregates, bulk, and specialist traffic – the East Midlands is a crucial site within the UK's freight industry, both domestically and internationally. This section will focus on the modes of road, rail and air freight, providing an insight into the key statistics and flows associated with each mode of travel, and core hubs within the region which facilitate these flows.

2.2 Freight jobs in the region

- 2.2.1 Figure 1 presents the distribution of freight jobs across the East Midlands area. The jobs included are across a number of different freight sectors, including:

- Rail freight
- Road freight
- Sea and coastal water freight
- Inland water freight
- Air freight (including operation of terminals)



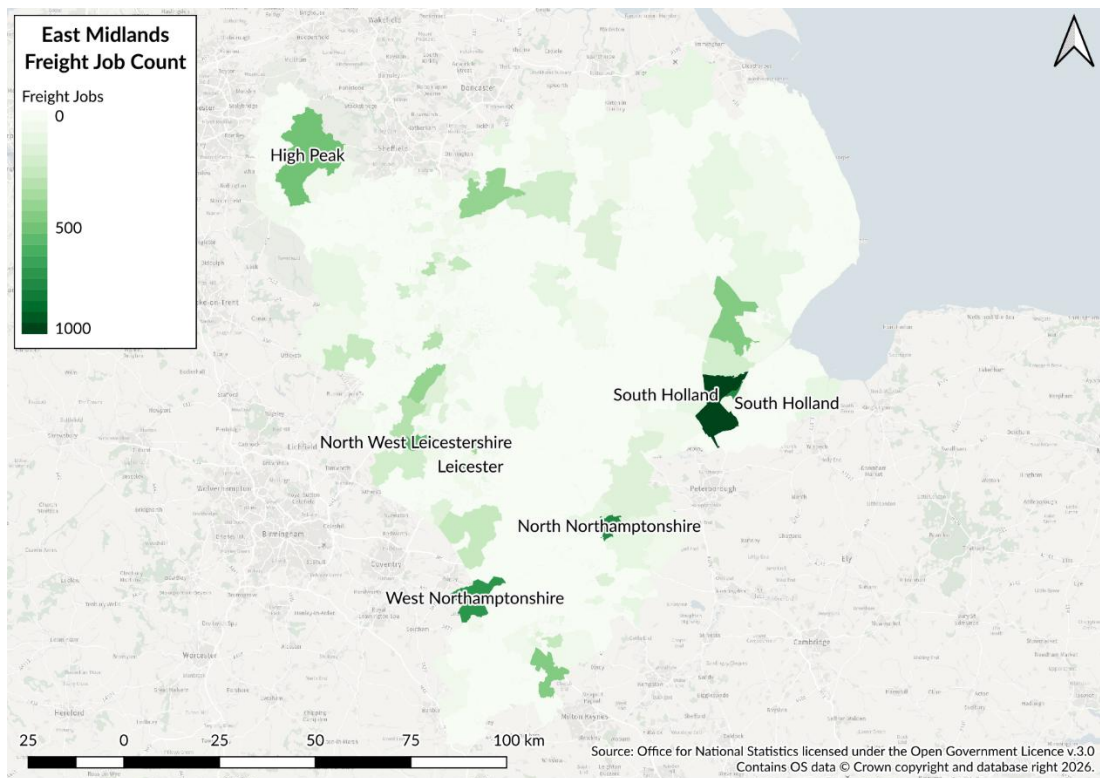


Figure 1 Distribution of freight jobs in the East Midlands (2021 Census)

- 2.2.2 Whilst there is generally an uneven distribution of freight jobs across the region, it is vital to acknowledge the key hubs across the East Midlands where significant numbers of freight traffic depart and arrive from. Within High Peak, **Peak Forest** serves as a key site in the Northwest of the region. The local authority of major quarries such as Tunstead, crushed stone aggregates are distributed to terminals across the UK, with the site accessible by rail via the Hope Valley Line. Additionally, this is also a key site for road haulage, with materials distributed to and from the area in the form of heavy goods vehicles (HGVs). The A6 is a vital artery facilitating movements from this area to other parts of the region, along with freight travelling to the North West.
- 2.2.3 Within North West Leicestershire, **East Midlands Gateway Terminal** plays a key role in facilitating intermodal freight movements to and from East Midlands Airport, where freight is loaded/offloaded onto cargo planes. Additionally, **Toton Yard** is an important site, supporting freight stabling and engineering, and is strategically situated in the middle of the region.
- 2.2.4 To the south west of the region, **Daventry International Rail Freight Terminal (DIRFT)** is an extensive rail freight terminal handling shipping containers from major ports, such as Southampton, Felixstowe, London Gateway and the Humber. Intermodal containers dominate the freight profile, at DIRFT, thus highlighting not only the expanse, but also the range of freight cargo which operates in and out of the East Midlands area.
- 2.2.5 **South Holland** in the south-east of the region is dominated by road freight services, with roads such as the A16/A17 connecting to the A52, a crucial east-west freight artery, and the A1, a primary north-south route for freight travelling through the East Midlands. This also links to the **Port of Boston**, which whilst handling significantly less freight than other major sea freight

termini such as Felixstowe and London Gateway, is a crucial site facilitating the export of agricultural produce from the east of the region.

2.3 Volume of freight movements in and through the region

2.3.1 This section will summarise existing freight movements through the region, each broken down by road, rail and air, and covering:

- External to external movements e.g. freight passing through the East Midlands.
- Internal movements e.g. internal to external, external to internal, and internal to internal flows.

Road

2.3.2 The East Midlands sits at the core of the national road system, with the M1 spine, A1 eastern corridor, and trans-Pennine links via the A50/A52 and A42/M42 enabling efficient north-south and east-west movements. This central position shortens trunk-haul distances to major conurbations, while proximity to key hubs such as East Midlands Airport, East Midlands Gateway (incorporating the Strategic Rail Freight Interchange), and clusters around Nottingham, Derby and Leicester support dense, time-reliable distribution. The network's interchanges and service areas host a critical mass of depots, cross-dock facilities (focusing on reducing handling and inventory dwell time) and maintenance operations that keep fleets moving. This section will highlight the key flows showing density of movements, direction of movements, and key origins and destinations of road freight traffic engaging with the East Midlands area.

2.3.3 Data for road freight flows has been extracted from Midlands Connect's MiHAM SATURN model, with the flows representing the 2024 base year.

Freight movements in the East Midlands

2.3.4 Considering road freight in the East Midlands, Table 1 and Figure 3 highlight the other geographical regions within the UK where this freight is travelling to.

Table 1 Origin or destination location and volume of daily road freight (LGVs and HGVs) in the East Midlands

ORIGIN OR DESTINATION LOCATION	DAILY FLOWS
Internal (within the East Midlands)	335,005
West Midlands	27,569
East of England	14,043
Yorkshire and The Humber	12,993
South East	7,619
North West	5,854

ORIGIN OR DESTINATION LOCATION	DAILY FLOWS
London	1,697
South West	1,321
Wales	1,230
North East	1,056
Scotland	412



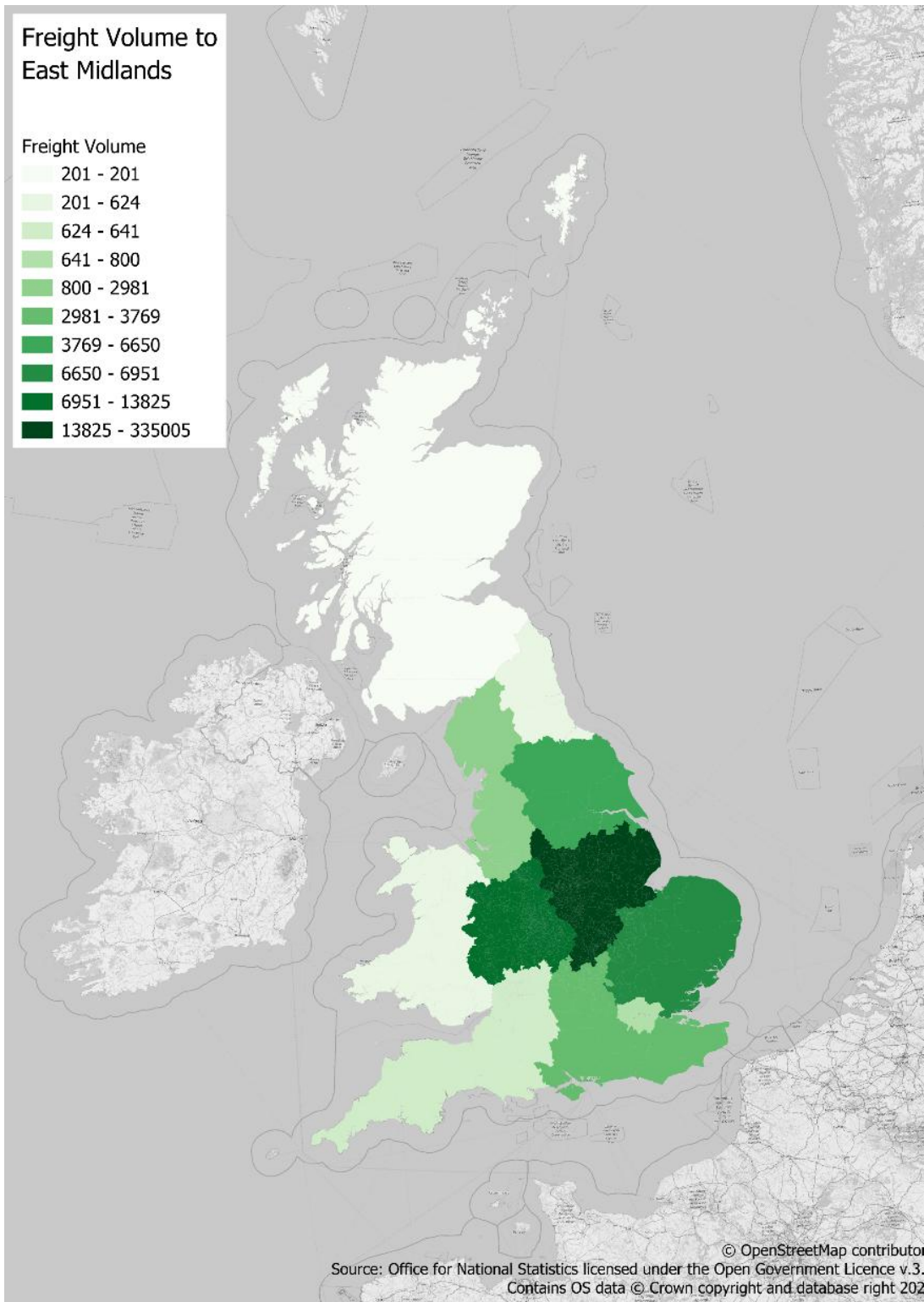


Figure 2 Origin location and volume of road freight (LGVs and HGVs) terminating in the East Midlands



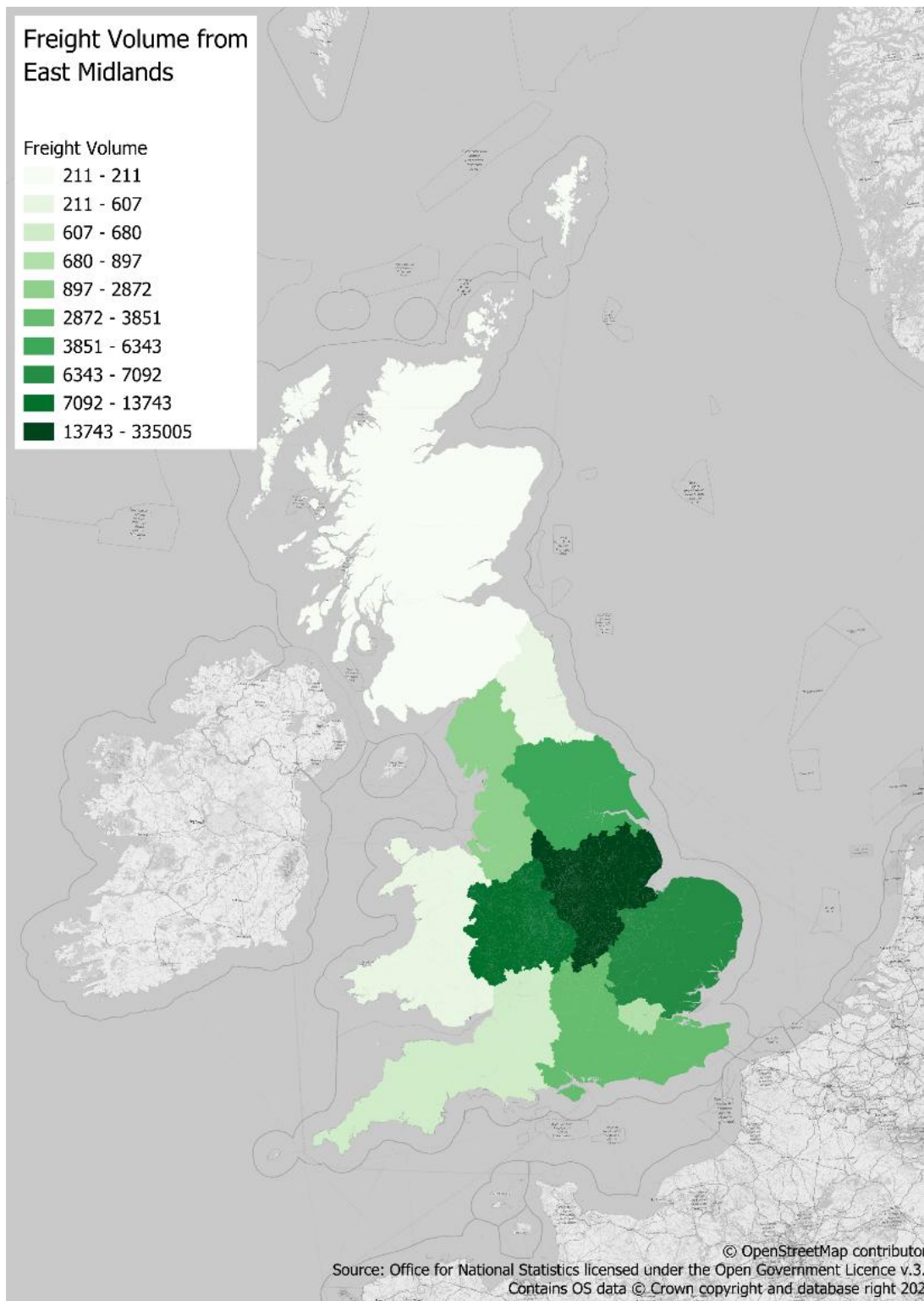


Figure 3 Destination location and volume of road freight (LGVs and HGVs) originating in the East Midlands

2.3.5 The greatest amount of road freight flows are internal within the region, both originating and terminating at locations in the East Midlands. Other than internal movements, the volume of freight is predominantly highest to neighbouring regions, led by the West Midlands, followed by the East of England and Yorkshire and the Humber. There is almost twice as much road



freight traffic going to and from the West Midlands compared to the East of England and Yorkshire and The Humber. As might be expected from regions furthest away and with less developed strategic road networks, the lowest amount of freight volume terminates in Scotland from the East Midlands, followed by the North East and then Wales.

2.3.6 The flows of road freight terminating in the East Midlands follow a very similar trend to flows originating from the region. The highest flows are from the neighbouring regions of the West Midlands, East of England, and Yorkshire and the Humber. The lowest amount of road freight originates from Scotland.

2.3.7 Figure 4 presents the distribution of external origin flows by time of day and destination location, demonstrating the dominance of flows to the West Midlands and East of England. The data also demonstrates that overall flows are lowest in the off-peak, and higher in the inter-peak compared to the evening peak. Flows during the evening peak are only around 64% of those compared to the morning peak.

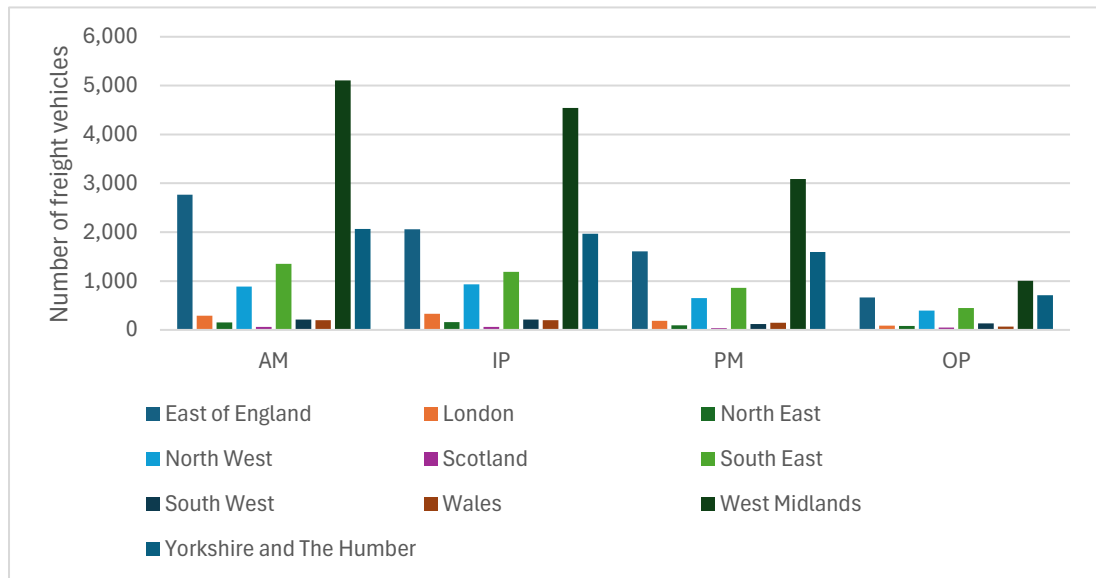


Figure 4 Time and location distribution of external road freight flows originating in the East Midlands

2.3.8 When looking at freight flows departing the East Midlands at a local authority level, Figure 5 depicts the amount of freight leaving from each area.



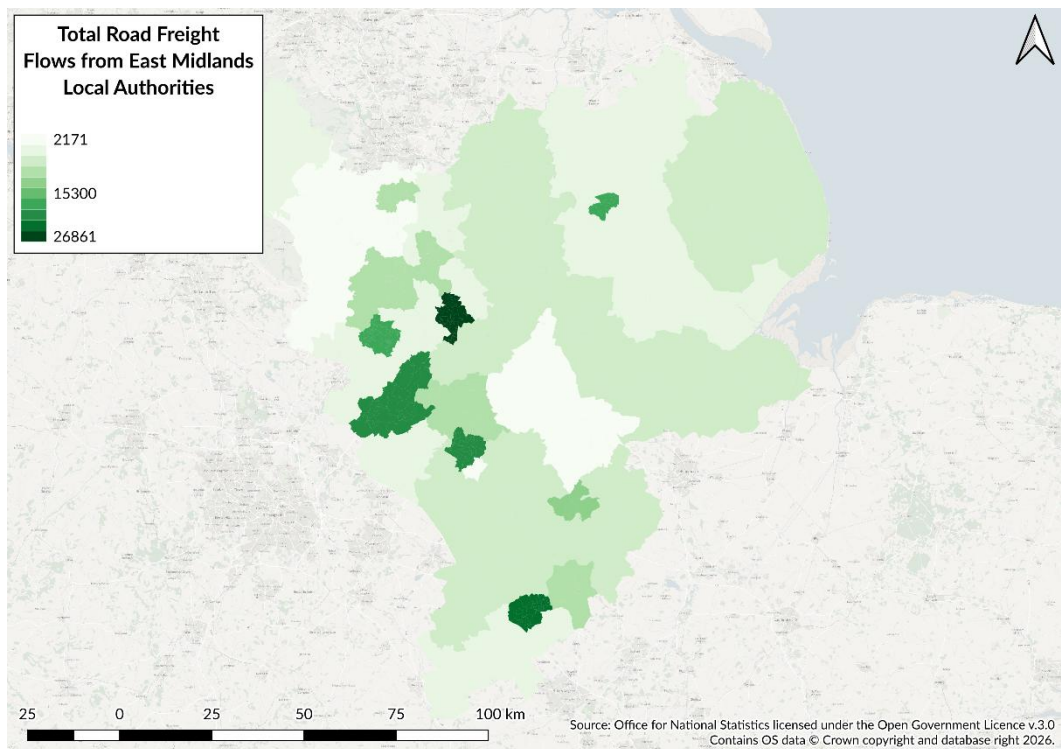


Figure 5 Total daily road freight flow originating in the East Midlands by local authority

- 2.3.9 Whilst origin freight flows are distributed across the region, the local authorities with the highest origin flows are Derby, Leicester, Lincoln, North West Leicestershire, Northampton and Nottingham. These locations are key economic hubs within the region and are also in proximity to freight termini. Comparatively, local authorities in rural areas with less economic activity present have significantly less freight departing, such as Derbyshire Dales, Oadby & Wigston and Rutland.
- 2.3.10 Figure 6 presents the distribution of external flows by time of day and destination location, which present a similar distribution to that of Figure 4. Overall flows are lowest in the off-peak, and higher in the inter-peak compared to the evening peak. Flows during the evening peak are 74% of those compared to the morning peak.



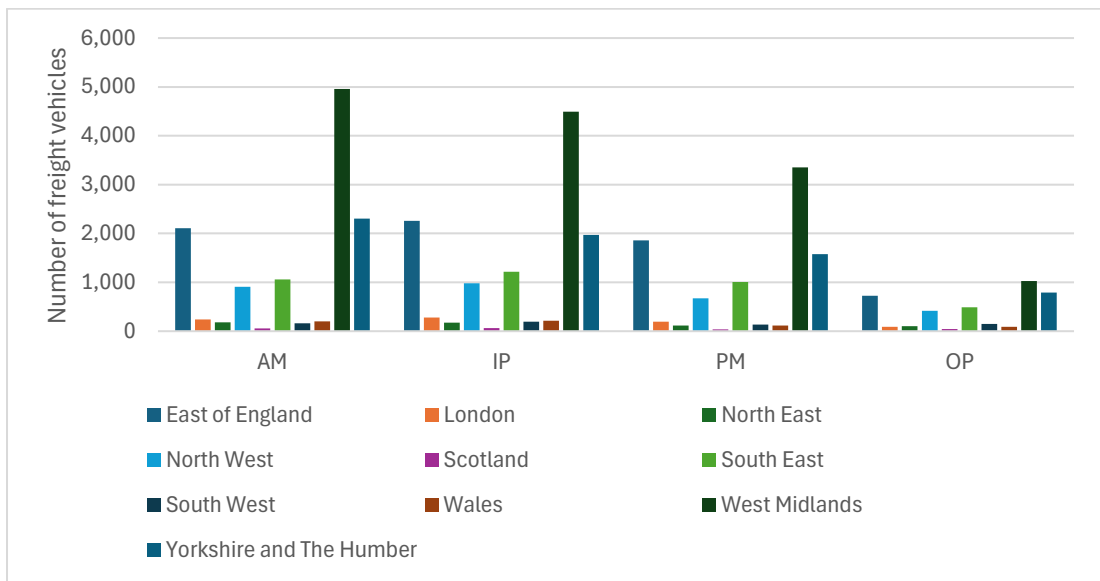


Figure 6 Time and location distribution of external road freight flows terminating in the East Midlands

2.3.11 Daily profile of freight flows on the strategic road network

2.3.12 To understand the daily profile of freight flows on the strategic road network, flow data was extracted from the National Highways WebTRIS database. The data in Figure 7 is for a counter on the M1 northbound just south of East Midlands Airport and the junction with the M42, and is for vehicles longer than 5.21m which has been used as a proxy for LGVs and HGVs. The data is for the time period of Monday 13th October to Sunday 18th October 2025.



Day/Time	00:00	01:00	02:00	03:00	04:00	05:00	06:00	07:00
Monday	176	211	173	215	229	424	709	729
Tuesday	407	381	398	449	391	524	776	903
Wednesday	346	375	378	425	398	536	767	983
Thursday	314	287	277	323	355	515	763	1017
Friday	272	276	286	323	380	508	783	869
Saturday	232	237	246	246	225	219	289	306
Sunday	117	153	124	104	116	109	119	152

Day/Time	08:00	09:00	10:00	11:00	12:00	13:00	14:00	15:00
Monday	877	839	884	898	1078	1055	1104	1050
Tuesday	855	872	943	1044	1168	1091	1158	1155
Wednesday	1034	1027	993	1128	1154	1145	1211	1060
Thursday	895	937	956	1106	1211	1249	1206	966
Friday	1026	987	897	754	1186	1229	1087	904
Saturday	319	367	351	400	379	344	355	287
Sunday	176	210	263	289	296	279	287	297

Day/Time	16:00	17:00	18:00	19:00	20:00	21:00	22:00	23:00
Monday	891	637	461	390	408	390	474	431
Tuesday	948	685	546	415	374	490	481	415
Wednesday	946	723	499	445	393	395	369	335
Thursday	883	745	213	345	455	382	327	307
Friday	743	481	422	395	374	343	333	295
Saturday	274	221	225	227	193	134	191	157
Sunday	328	255	271	248	214	235	226	197

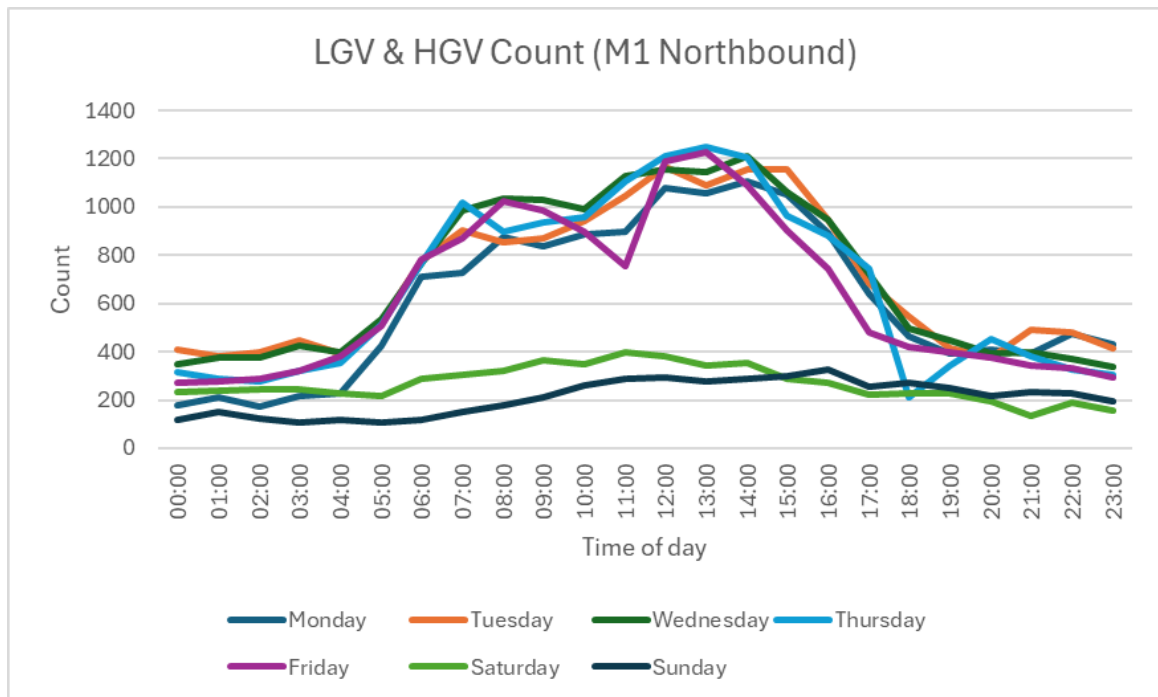


Figure 7 M1 northbound daily freight flow profile

- 2.3.13 The most common times of day for freight traffic travelling are between the hours of 07:00-08:00 in the early morning peak, and then 13:00-16:00 in the inter-peak afternoon period, particularly during weekdays. Interestingly, there is a significant dip between the hours of 08:00-11:00 on a weekday before levels increase again for the afternoon period. Flows in the typical morning peak period are consistently below those in the mid-afternoon.
- 2.3.14 There is consistently less road freight traffic operating at weekends compared to during the week, especially during the daytime.
- 2.3.15 The data in Figure 8 is for a counter on the A52 eastbound just south of Nottingham during the time period of Monday 3rd November to Sunday 9th November 2025.

Day/Time	00:00	01:00	02:00	03:00	04:00	05:00	06:00	07:00
Monday	19	20	23	37	72	168	268	330
Tuesday	29	21	28	39	65	147	273	328
Wednesday	30	33	32	35	71	140	270	302
Thursday	35	33	25	44	74	153	256	347
Friday	31	34	32	42	65	174	251	351
Saturday	21	24	30	36	49	53	73	142
Sunday	30	22	9	10	21	29	41	75
08:00 - 15:00								
Day/Time	08:00	09:00	10:00	11:00	12:00	13:00	14:00	15:00
Monday	381	437	437	397	403	441	431	414
Tuesday	351	431	428	412	423	411	399	389
Wednesday	358	439	438	404	420	440	399	398
Thursday	359	434	392	409	420	431	395	380
Friday	372	424	450	427	392	415	363	313
Saturday	178	197	176	184	182	184	151	148
Sunday	89	136	141	173	159	157	142	148
16:00 - 23:00								
Day/Time	16:00	17:00	18:00	19:00	20:00	21:00	22:00	23:00
Monday	323	204	142	131	86	78	54	36
Tuesday	303	175	139	105	91	65	46	46
Wednesday	264	198	153	142	112	71	52	31
Thursday	236	162	166	114	97	70	48	41
Friday	227	169	143	133	113	61	58	37
Saturday	135	126	106	62	60	58	43	30
Sunday	140	153	113	74	60	56	38	62



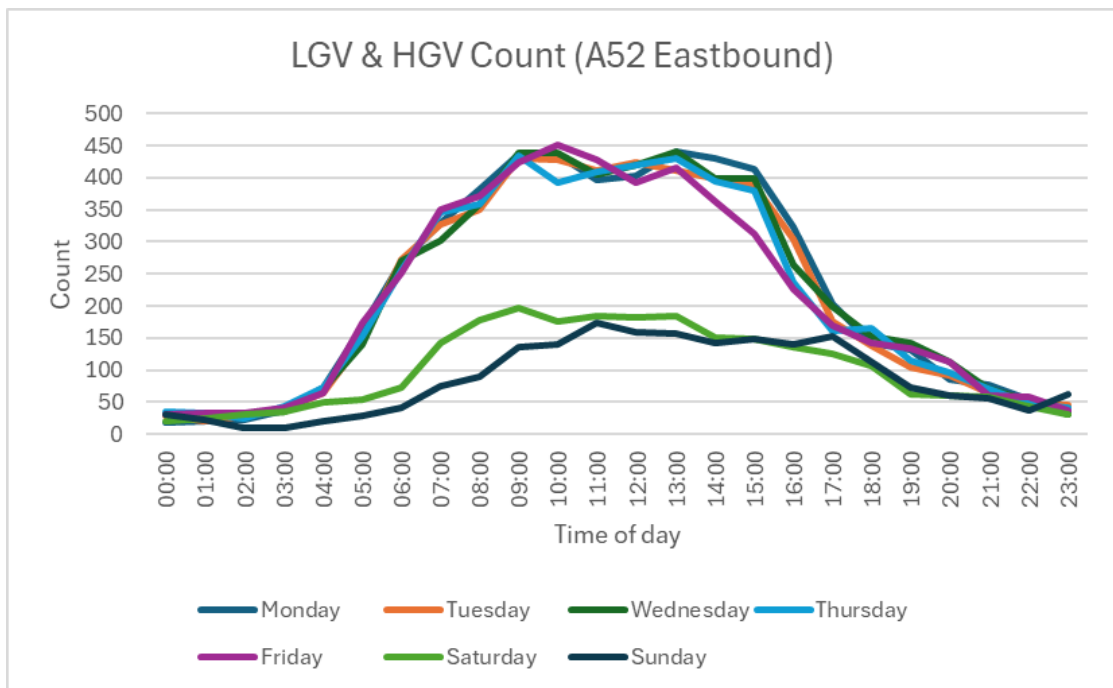


Figure 8 A52 eastbound daily freight flow profile

- 2.3.16 The highest amount of freight flows occur between 08:00 and 16:00 during the weekdays, and levels remain generally consistent on each weekday, before tailing off in the early evening from around 17:00. Weekend freight flows are considerably lower than weekday flows, although there is less variation during the evening and throughout the night than during the daytime.
- 2.3.17 The data in Figure 9 is for the A1 northbound just south of Retford during the time period of Monday 3rd November to Sunday 9th November 2025.



Day/Time	00:00	01:00	02:00	03:00	04:00	05:00	06:00	07:00
Monday	66	98	82	104	210	297	503	576
Tuesday	119	121	87	133	230	391	576	638
Wednesday	86	86	110	142	237	457	581	591
Thursday	110	105	113	139	247	428	599	625
Friday	109	125	119	154	211	411	519	608
Saturday	100	87	88	103	107	131	198	222
Sunday	69	47	50	48	58	78	109	123
Day/Time								
Day/Time	08:00	09:00	10:00	11:00	12:00	13:00	14:00	15:00
Monday	572	595	605	522	591	614	575	642
Tuesday	587	553	615	606	617	684	661	591
Wednesday	625	604	566	623	654	689	688	689
Thursday	640	526	622	669	622	807	709	737
Friday	588	601	624	649	682	740	668	607
Saturday	248	273	275	234	242	243	221	204
Sunday	148	184	187	216	296	234	229	227
Day/Time								
Day/Time	16:00	17:00	18:00	19:00	20:00	21:00	22:00	23:00
Monday	496	436	296	213	158	142	112	103
Tuesday	556	435	291	225	171	141	110	99
Wednesday	570	447	313	226	178	136	118	117
Thursday	604	491	291	307	216	122	108	109
Friday	439	343	324	180	181	125	120	97
Saturday	191	176	123	110	89	63	62	66
Sunday	278	225	165	136	103	101	103	143



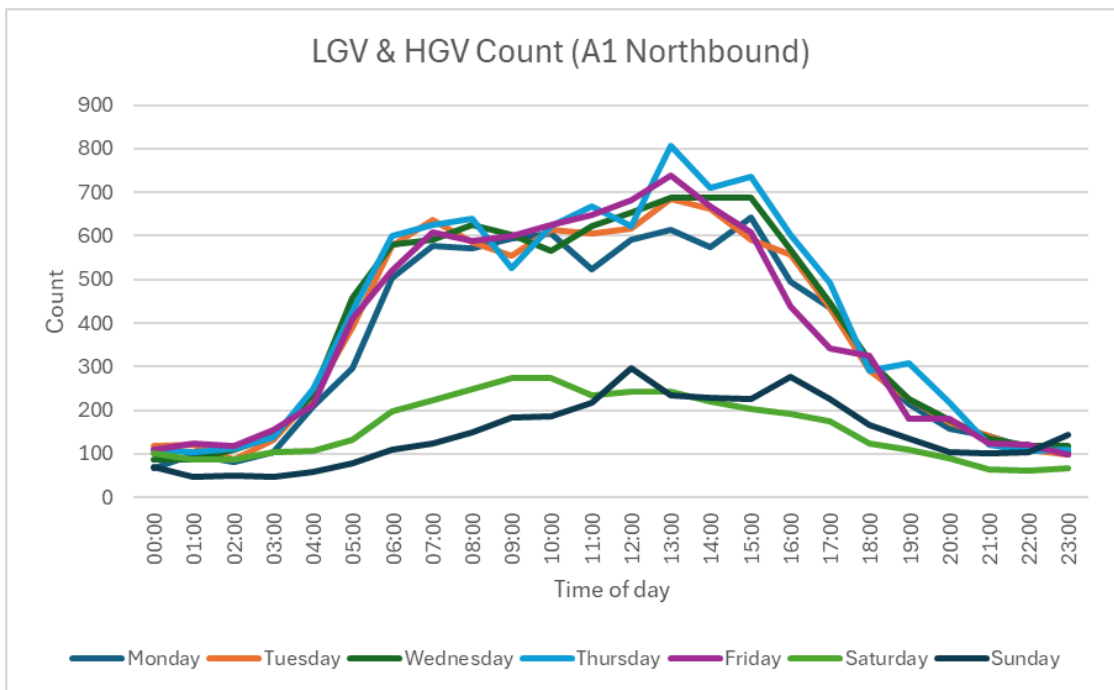


Figure 9 A1 northbound daily freight flow profile

2.3.18 Freight flows along this section of road follow a very similar pattern to those along the M1, with generally the highest freight flows occurring the mid-afternoon and afternoon peak periods. It is worth noting that the data for the A1 indicates more freight travelling on Sunday afternoons and evenings than at the equivalent times on a Saturday. The highest freight flows occur during the middle of the day from Wednesday to Friday.

Distribution of freight flows within the East Midlands

2.3.19 When looking at freight flows arriving in the East Midlands at a local authority level, Figure 10 depicts the amount of freight terminating within each area.

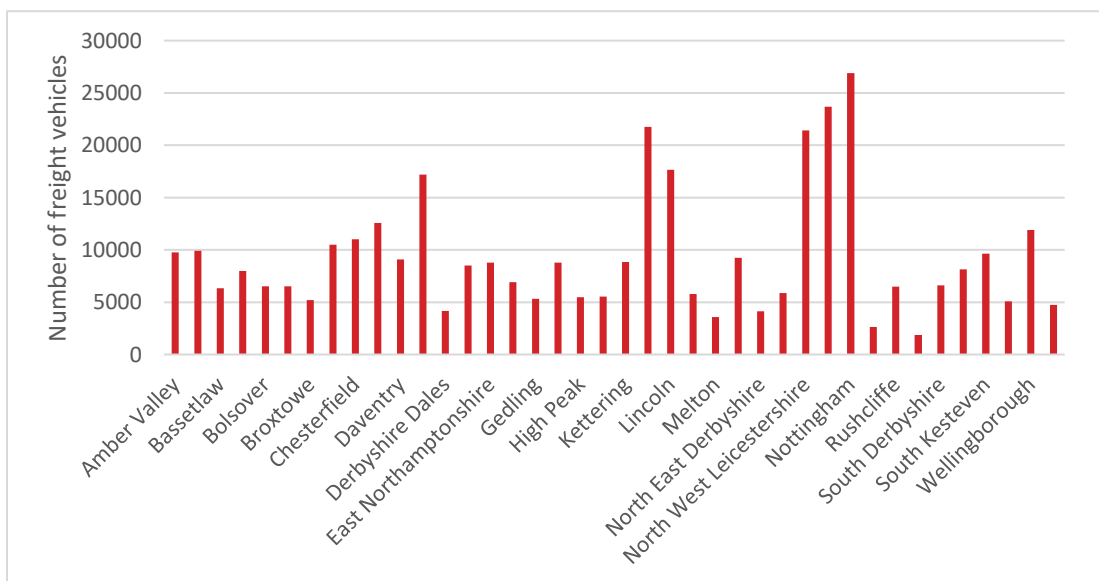


Figure 10 Total daily road freight flow terminating in the East Midlands per local authority

2.3.20 Freight flows arriving at East Midlands local authorities largely follow a similar trend of freight departing. Nottingham, Northampton and North West Leicestershire receive the highest amount of road freight within the region, with Rutland receiving the lowest amount of freight by road.

Entry and exit points

2.3.21 When considering the entry and exit points in and out of the East Midlands region, the following roads play vital roles in facilitating these flows:

- **North to south motorway spine:**
 - The M1 is the East Midlands' principal north–south artery, running through the counties of Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, and Leicestershire. It connects the region southwards to the M25 and Greater London, and northwards to South Yorkshire and beyond. Junctions around Nottingham, Derby and Leicester act as major entry and exit points for regional distribution and long-haul HGV flows.
- **East to west trunk corridors** – several high-capacity A-roads provide critical east-west gateways used for external road freight travelling to other regions within the UK:
 - **A14 and A1 corridor:** The A14 links the Midlands to the East of England ports and the A1. Freight moving between the East Midlands and the East of England/London.
 - **A50/A52 corridor:** The A50 (and sections of the A52) connect the M1 with the North West via the M6, acting as the main trans-Pennine access for East Midlands–North West flows.
 - **A46/A47 corridor:** The A46 provides a continuous link from the M1/M69 through Leicester towards the Lincolnshire area, with the A47 offering another east–west route toward the East of England.
- **Additional strategic connecting roads:**
 - **A38:** Runs from the M1 near Derby south-west towards the M6, supporting East Midlands–West Midlands connectivity.
 - **A1:** Skirts the eastern side of the region, providing direct access north–south outside the M1, supporting flows with Yorkshire and the Humber and the North East.
 - **A6 and A42/M42:** Provide supplementary north–south and south-west links, including access toward the West Midlands and the M42/M6 corridors.
 - **M69:** Links the M1 near Leicester to the M6 near Coventry, with onward connectivity to Birmingham and further south-west.

Rail

2.3.22 The East Midlands sits at the heart of the UK's rail network, where north-south and east-west routes intersect. Core arteries include the Midland Main Line (MML) through Leicester, Derby, and Nottingham; connections to the East Coast Main Line (ECML) towards the Humber and

the North; cross-country links towards the West Midlands; and routes east towards key sea freight terminals. This positioning enables efficient trunk haulage between southern deep-sea gateways, northern manufacturing bases, and inland distribution centres.

2.3.23 This section will highlight the breakdown of flows by commodity type, showcase the flows interacting within the region (highlighting key active freight terminals), and provide a discussion on mothballed rail terminals.

Freight Operating Companies (FOCs)

2.3.24 Nine FOCs operate services within the East Midlands area, running trains both internally and externally to and from the region. DC Rail, DB Cargo and Legge Infrastructure Services comprise a significant proportion of services operating, through the area, with over three quarters of all freight services run by these companies. This split between FOCs is presented in Figure 11.

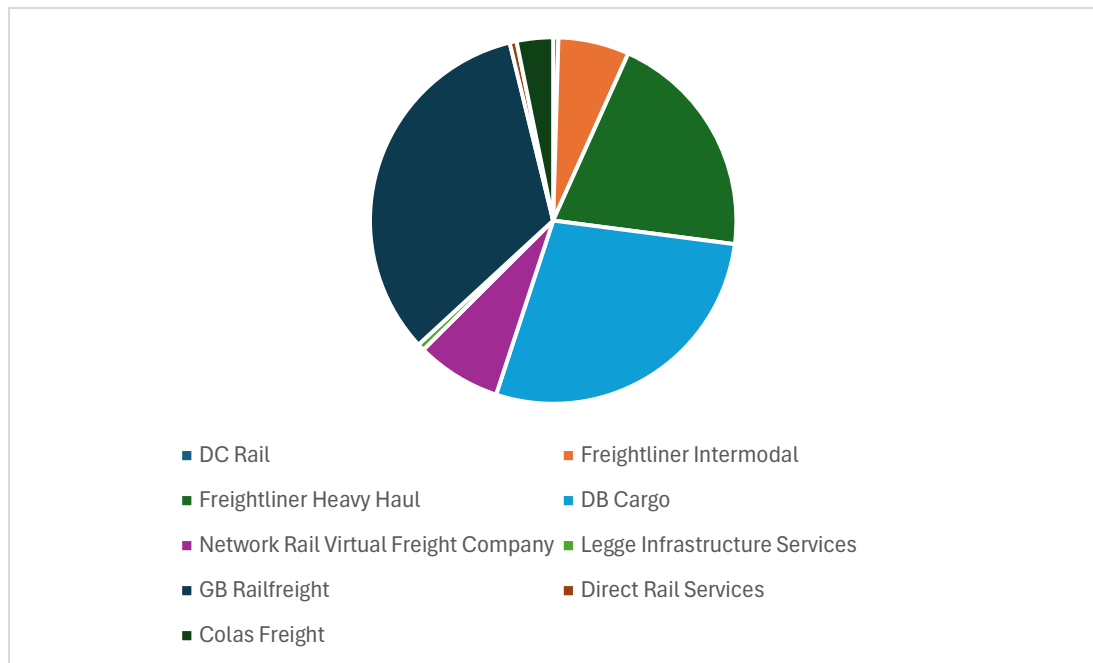


Figure 11 Proportion of services run by FOCs in the East Midlands

Daily rail freight services arriving and departing from the East Midlands

2.3.25 **Error! Reference source not found.** presents the number of daily train paths serving the East Midlands region based on the most common origin and destination locations.



Table 2 Freight paths serving the East Midlands

ORIGIN LOCATION	ORIGIN REGION	NUMBER OF PATHS	DESTINATION LOCATION	DESTINATION REGION	NUMBER OF PATHS
Mountsorrel Sidings	East Midlands	28	Mountsorrel Sidings	East Midlands	24
Toton North Yard	East Midlands	22	Toton North Yard	East Midlands	22
Hope (Earles Sidings) FHH	East Midlands	13	Hope (Earles Sidings) FHH	East Midlands	17
Doncaster Up Decoy	Yorkshire and The Humber	8	East Midlands Gateway Terminal DBC	East Midlands	13
Dowlow Quarry FLHH	East Midlands	8	Bardon Hill GBRf	East Midlands	9
East Midlands Gateway Terminal DBC	East Midlands	8	East Midlands Gateway Terminal GBRf	East Midlands	8
East Midlands Gateway Terminal GBRf	East Midlands	8	Immingham HIT (GBRf)	Yorkshire and The Humber	8
Wellingborough Up TC GBRf	East Midlands	8	Peak Forest Cemex GBRf	East Midlands	8
Peak Forest R.M.C Sidings	East Midlands	6	Doncaster Up Decoy	Yorkshire and The Humber	7
Toton Centre	East Midlands	6	Toton Up Sidings	East Midlands	7
Whitemoor Yard	East of England	6	Tunstead Sidings (FHH)	East Midlands	6
Bardon Hill GBRF	East Midlands	5	Peak Forest R.M.C. Sdgs	East Midlands	5

ORIGIN LOCATION	ORIGIN REGION	NUMBER OF PATHS	DESTINATION LOCATION	DESTINATION REGION	NUMBER OF PATHS
Barrow Hill Up Sdgs No. 2 and 3	East Midlands	5	Basford Hall Yard (FL)	East Midlands	4
Bradwell Up Sidings Colas	West Midlands	5	Dowlow Quarry FLHH	East Midlands	4
Felixstowe North EWS	East of England	5	Elstow Redland Sdg	East of England	4
Peak Forest Cemex GBRF	East Midlands	5	Mountsorrell GBRF	East Midlands	4
Toton Up Sdgs	East Midlands	5	Wellingborough Up TC GBRf	East Midlands	4
Bescot Engineers Sdgs	West Midlands	4	Barham	East of England	3
Boston Sleaford Sidings	East Midlands	4	Bescot Engineers Sdgs	West Midlands	3
Corby B.S.C.	East Midlands	4	Bradwell Up Sidings Colas	West Midlands	3

2.3.26 There is generally a low and even distribution of rail freight paths both originating and terminating within the East Midlands, with notable peaks from internal-only services. These include **Mountsorrel Sidings** (south of Barrow-on-Soar on the Midland Main Line), **Toton North Yard** (Erewash Valley Line), **Hope (Earles Sidings)** (Hope Valley Line), and **East Midlands Gateway Terminal DBC** for East Midlands Airport. It is particularly worth noting Mountsorrel Sidings, which receives at least three times more freight paths than any location outside of the top five list, thus highlighting the predominance of this as a location within the region.

2.3.27 The locations not within the region in the list in **Error! Reference source not found.** are from the following regions: East of England, West Midlands, and Yorkshire and The Humber: all of which border the East Midlands geographically, thus highlighting the predominance of the highest rail freight flows to the region being either internal or from locations close to the border.

2.3.28 It is also important to recognise how no trains to and from key freight handling termini in the UK such as London Gateway and Southampton appear on this list, and whilst Felixstowe does appear on the list of paths terminating in the East Midlands (with five daily paths) this number

is significantly lower than other locations which have more freight serving the East Midlands both terminating and originating from them. It is also important to note that these are freight paths, and are therefore not services guaranteed to run every single day.

Region entry and exit locations

2.3.29 Figure 12 highlights the key entry and exits points for rail freight interacting with the East Midlands region.

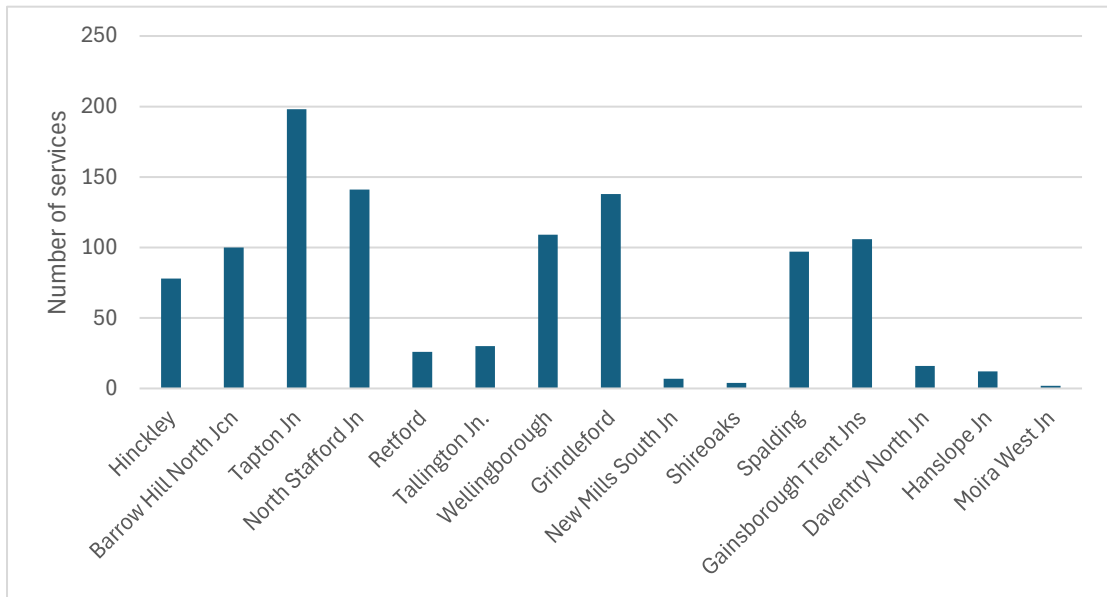




Figure 12 Number of rail freight services at East Midlands border locations

- 2.3.30 Many of the entry and exit points with the higher volumes of rail freight traffic entering and exiting the region are located on key arterial routes connecting to other regions. Examples of these include **Tapton Junction** (north of Chesterfield), which serves as a key route for freight travelling north, and this junction sees the highest amount of freight passing in and out of the region.
- 2.3.31 In the south-west of the region, **North Stafford Junction** sees a similarly high amount of freight traffic passing through, which is the key route in a south-westerly direction, along with **Wellingborough** on the Midland Main Line heading south. Additionally, locations such as Barrow Hill also see significant rail freight traffic, a line which is typically used by freight services with limited passenger services, unlike the examples mentioned previously.
- 2.3.32 The same can be said for **Gainsborough Trent Junction**. Additional examples such as **Grindleford** on the Hope Valley line receive significant freight traffic going to and from key freight termini along the line, such as Hope (Earle Sidings) and Peak Forest.

Rail freight by commodity type

- 2.3.33 Rail freight flows in the region have been divided into commodity type, using the following categories:
- **Construction:** services to/from quarries/cement works etc.
 - **Energy:** services to/from oil terminals etc.

- **Intermodal:** services to/from ports/container terminals etc.
- **Rail Infrastructure:** typically yards, sidings and trains running to support Network Rail infrastructure maintenance and renewal work
- **Steel:** services to/from steelworks.
- **Other:** any other small number of service types that do not fall into the above categories.

2.3.34 Figure 13 depicts the counts of freight traffic originating and terminating within the East Midlands by commodity type:

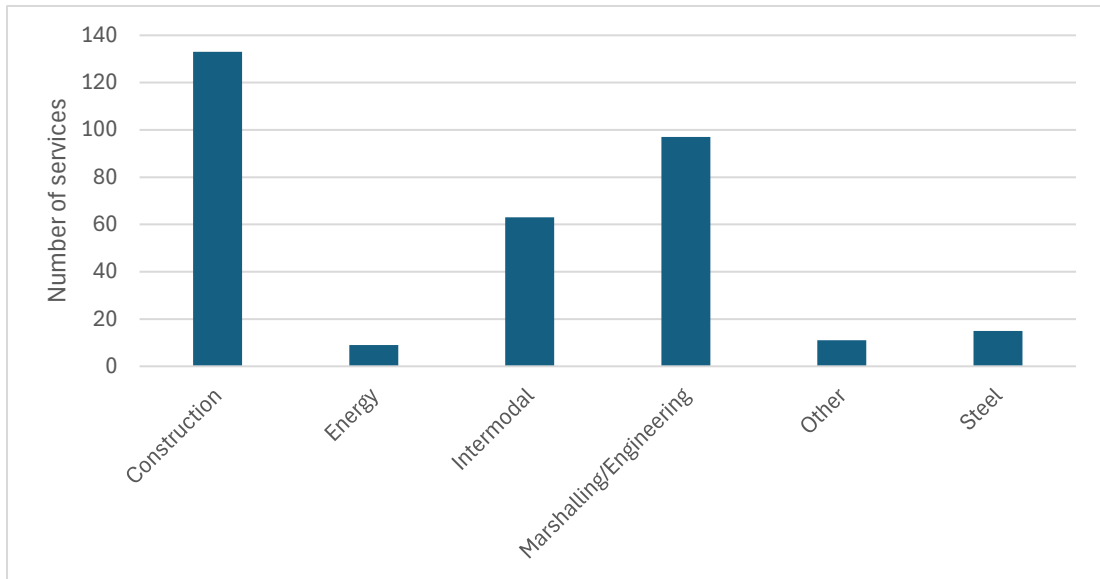


Figure 13 Number of rail freight services serving the East Midlands by commodity type

2.3.35 The number of rail freight services serving the East Midlands are dominated by three core types: construction, marshalling/engineering and intermodal; with freight trains transporting goods for the construction industry comprising the largest proportion of services. Marshalling/engineering and intermodal services comprise around three quarters and two thirds of the levels of construction services respectively, with a much smaller proportion of services operating for the steel and energy sectors.

2.3.36 Whilst these flows are distributed around the region, Table 3 and Table 4 present the locations which have a larger number of services for a specific commodity type originating and terminating at them.

Table 3 Primary commodity type for origin locations for rail freight services operating to the East Midlands

ORIGIN LOCATION	PRIMARY COMMODITY TYPE	NUMBER OF PATHS
Mountsorrel Sidings	Construction	28
Toton Yard	Network Rail	28
Hope (Earles Sidings) FHH	Construction	13

ORIGIN LOCATION	PRIMARY COMMODITY TYPE	NUMBER OF PATHS
Dowlow Quarry FLHH	Construction	8
East Midlands Gateway Terminal	Intermodal	16
Wellingborough Up TC GBRf	Intermodal	8
Peak Forest R.M.C Sidings	Construction	6

Table 4 Primary commodity type for terminus locations for rail freight services operating from the East Midlands

DESTINATION LOCATION	PRIMARY COMMODITY TYPE	NUMBER OF PATHS
Mountsorrel Sidings	Construction	24
Toton Yard	Network Rail	29
Hope (Earles Sidings) FHH	Construction	17
East Midlands Gateway Terminal	Intermodal	21
Bardon Hill GBRf	Construction	9
Peak Forest Cemex GBRf	Construction	8
Tunstead Sidings (FHH)	Construction	6

- 2.3.37 The core origins and destinations follow a similar trend to the total commodity type counts, with the construction industry representing the highest rail freight counts within the region, which are centred around the key hubs of **Mountsorrel Sidings, Hope (Earles Sidings), Dowlow Quarry, Bardon Hill, Peak Forest and Tunstead Sidings**.
- 2.3.38 When considering core marshalling/engineering sites across the region, **Toton** acts as a primary site for these services originating and terminating. Additionally, sites including **East Midlands Gateway** and **Wellingborough GBRf** are important locations when it comes to intermodal freight flows in and out of the region.
- 2.3.39 This range in commodity types flowing both internally across and externally in and out of the region emphasises the importance of the East Midlands from a regional and national perspective in handling a diverse range of freight materials.

Freight passing through the East Midlands without stopping

- 2.3.40 The following table presents the number of daily train paths passing through the East Midlands region without stopping based on the most common origin and destination locations.

Table 5 Freight paths passing through the East Midlands

ORIGIN LOCATION	ORIGIN REGION	NUMBER OF PATHS	DESTINATION LOCATION	DESTINATION REGION	NUMBER OF PATHS
Felixstowe North GBRF	East of England	11	Felixstowe North F.L.T.	East of England	14
Felixstowe South GBRF	East of England	11	Felixstowe North GBRF	East of England	14
Felixstowe North F.L.T.	East of England	10	Felixstowe South GBRF	East of England	11
Doncaster Iport GBRF	Yorkshire and The Humber	9	Doncaster Iport GBRF	Yorkshire and The Humber	10
Leeds F.L.T.	Yorkshire and The Humber	8	Masborough N&W GBRF	Yorkshire and The Humber	9
Tinsley S.S.	Yorkshire and The Humber	8	Leeds F.L.T.	Yorkshire and The Humber	8
Felixstowe North EWS	East of England	7	London Gateway GBRF	East of England	7
Hams Hall GBRF	West Midlands	7	Doncaster Up Decoy	Yorkshire and The Humber	6
London Gateway GBRF	East of England	7	Masborough F.D.	Yorkshire and The Humber	6
Masborough N&W GBRF	Yorkshire and The Humber	7	Peterborough North Yd GBRF	East of England	6
Tinsley Yard GBRf	Yorkshire and The Humber	7	Southampton M.C.T.	South East	6



ORIGIN LOCATION	ORIGIN REGION	NUMBER OF PATHS	DESTINATION LOCATION	DESTINATION REGION	NUMBER OF PATHS
Doncaster Up Decoy	Yorkshire and The Humber	6	Tinsley S.S.	Yorkshire and The Humber	6
Masborough F.D.	Yorkshire and The Humber	6	Tinsley Yard GBRf	Yorkshire and The Humber	6
Whitemoor Yard	East of England	6	Wakefield Europort RFD	Yorkshire and The Humber	6
Southampton M.C.T.	South East	5	Hedon Road Sidings	Yorkshire and The Humber	5
Belmont Down Yard	Yorkshire and The Humber	4	Immingham Sorting Sidings	Yorkshire and The Humber	5
Doncaster EPT (F'liners)	Yorkshire and The Humber	4	Kingsbury Oil Sdgs	West Midlands	5
Kingsbury Oil Sdgs	West Midlands	4	Margam T.C.	Wales	5
Lindsey Oil Refinery COLAS	Yorkshire and The Humber	4	Felixstowe North EWS	East of England	4
Margam T.C.	Wales	4	Hams Hall GBRF	West Midlands	4

2.3.41 The largest proportion of trains passing through the East Midlands are travelling either to or from the Port of Felixstowe, with over three times the number of daily paths to and from this key freight hub even compared to the second highest terminal at Doncaster Iport GBRF. However, whilst a significant proportion of paths are associated with Felixstowe, a consistent distribution either originates or terminates across Yorkshire and The Humber, including hubs such as Masborough F.D., Tinsley S.S. and Leeds F.L.T. There are no freight paths passing through associated with the North East, North West, South West or Scotland.

2.3.42 The flows passing through the region have been split by commodity type and this is presented in Figure 14.



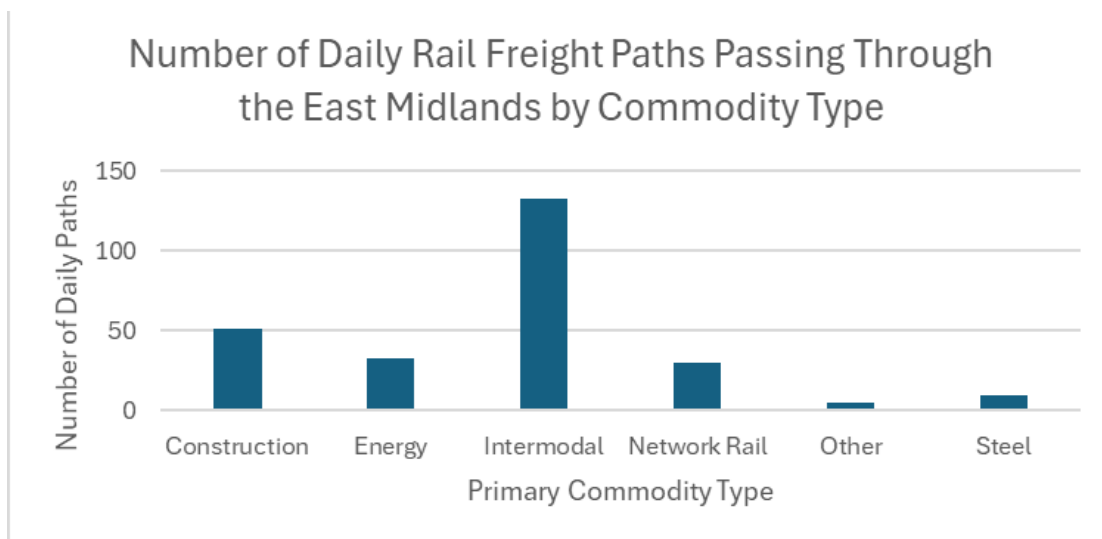


Figure 14 Rail freight paths passing through the East Midlands by commodity type

2.3.43 The vast majority of freight paths passing through the East Midlands are those travelling either to or from key intermodal freight hubs, with this figure around three times higher than the second highest commodity type in the form of construction.

2.3.44 Key routes that are being used by freight passing through the East Midlands are:

- The GNGE Joint Line between Peterborough and Doncaster via Lincoln. A total of 63 (two way) freight paths are planned for this route each day with intermodal services dominating. The route was specifically upgraded to accommodate freight traffic diverted from the ECML, however the volume of pace of freight traffic limits the scope for developing passenger traffic further
- Trent – Toton – Chesterfield - around 70 trains paths per day (two way) exist for freight on this route with services being a mixture of intermodal traffic and aggregate traffic – some of which is routed via the Hope Valley Line to and form quarries in the Peak District
- Derby – Chesterfield – approximately 30 paths per day existing on this route, with the majority being at night or the evening when fewer passenger services are operating. Key flows include steel traffic to and from South Wales
- Birmingham – Derby – approximately 60 freight paths exist on this route with a mixture of intermodal, steel and oil traffic. As well as through traffic there is some East Midlands orientated traffic such as intermodal trains and from East Midlands Gateway

It is a notable that number of routes such as the ECML and the Nottingham – Newark Line see comparatively few freight trains. In the case of the former this is in part due to the decline of il traffic from the South Humber Bank to the Midlands and in the case of the latter a lack of available paths due to passenger traffic.

Mothballed rail terminals

2.3.45 Across the region, facilities associated with historic coal traffic and steelwork supply chains have been prime candidates for mothballing. Former power-station reception sidings and private industrial branches often retain track and basic access but lack regular movements,



effectively placing them in an 'out of use' status. Meanwhile, some private sidings tied to specific customers can oscillate between dormant and active depending on contracts.

2.3.46 Examples of mothballed sites within the East Midlands include:

- **Ratcliffe-on-Soar** (Nottinghamshire/Leicestershire border): Extensive rail infrastructure associated with the power station; flows ceased, with portions reported as out of use pending site redevelopment timelines.
- **West Burton and Cottam** (Nottinghamshire): Former coal reception sidings and loops; rail access still visible in places though regular freight movements have ceased since station closures.
- **High Marnham** branch remnants (Nottinghamshire): Legacy infrastructure from power generation era; sections listed as out of use, with parts repurposed for test/maintenance but freight handling long ceased.

Air

2.3.47 East Midlands Airport (EMA) serves as the key hub for air freight passing in and out of the region, and in 2025 the airport recorded its third highest year on year increase in cargo in its history. In 2023, EMA's freight productivity contribute £2.6bn in GVA to the UK economy. EMA serves as a cargo-focused airport, with extensive night operations enabling fast turnarounds and broad domestic and international connectivity. EMA is the main base for DHL, and other important air cargo airlines such as UPS and FedEx also operate out of the airport internationally, along with Royal Mail for domestic air cargo movements. This section will outline the key figures relating to air cargo passing through the terminal, along with highlighting the importance of EMA compared to other UK airports.

Tonnes of freight through EMA

2.3.48 Figure 15 presents the total tonnes of freight cargo passing through EMA over a 14-year period, running from 2010 to 2024.

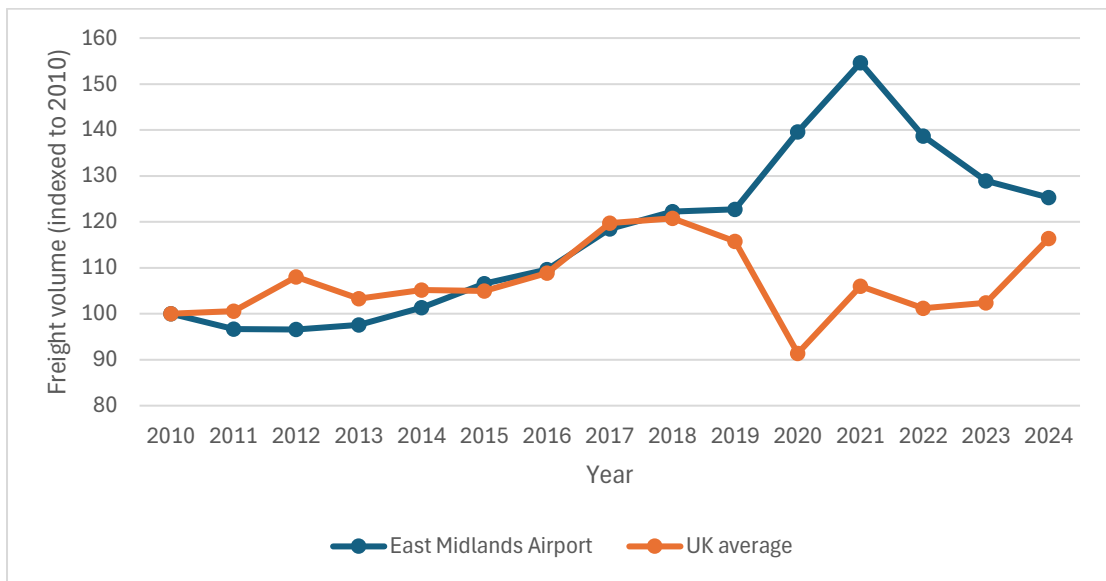


Figure 15 EMA and UK average air freight cargo (indexed to 2010)

2.3.49 It is evident that EMA serves as a crucial hub for freight cargo within the UK, with a consistent rise in annual tonnage of cargo passing through the airport from 2012-2021, and this value has remained higher than the national average since 2018. Whilst this not only highlights the growth of freight handling within the airport compared to other UK airports, it is worth noting that – in contrast to the national average – its cargo volume increased during the COVID-19 pandemic. Whilst the national average fell, EMA levels grew over the same time period. Whilst this number has since reduced, this is perhaps a reflection of its central location in the country and a concentration of air freight cargo at EMA during the restrictions imposed due to the pandemic.

2.3.50 Figure 16 presents the volume of freight passing through EMA compared to other UK airports.



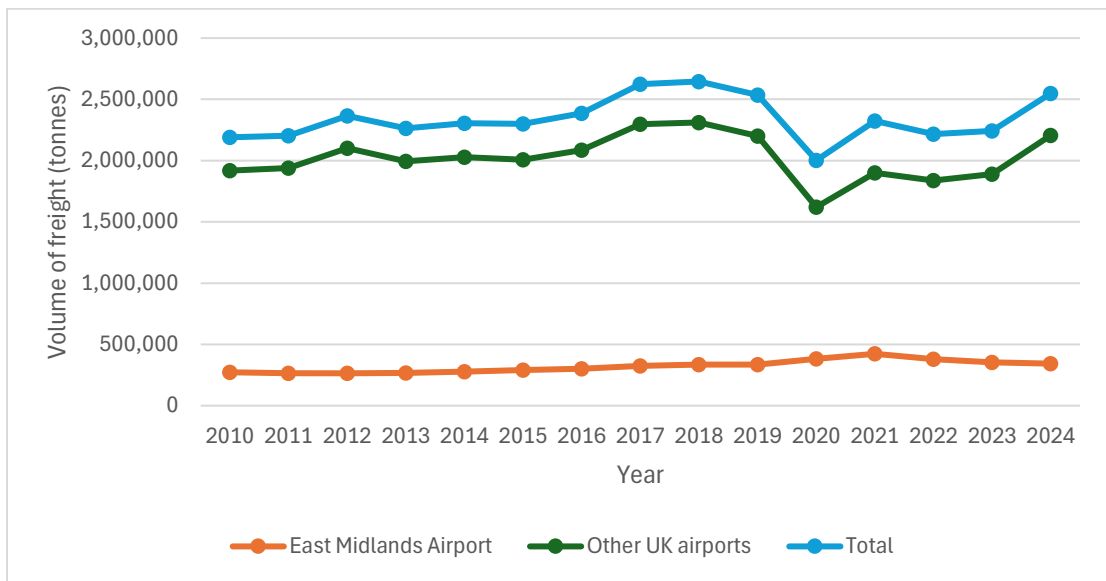


Figure 16 Air freight volume at EMA and other UK airports

2.3.51 It is apparent that EMA is a key hub for air freight within the UK, having consistently handled around one fifth of all air freight within the UK over the 14-year period. Although, whilst London area airports (Gatwick, Heathrow, London City, Luton, Southend and Stansted) handle the most cargo within the UK, it is important to recognise that EMA handles more cargo than the rest of the non-London UK airports combined, thus highlighting its prominence as a key freight hub within the UK outside of the capital. Figure 17 presents data for 2023 demonstrating this.

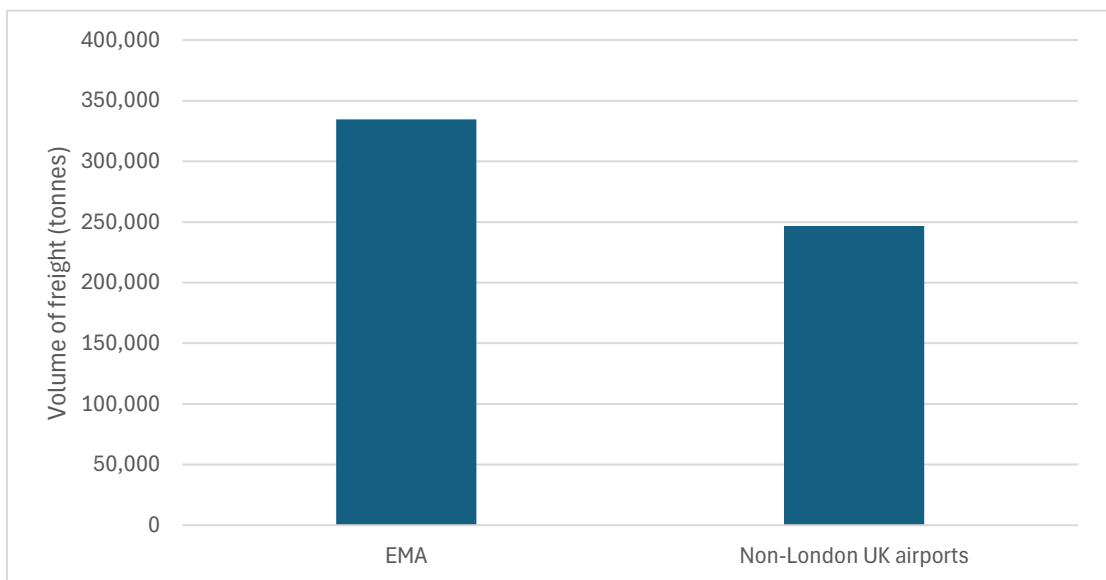


Figure 17 Total volume of freight cargo at EMA and non-London UK airports in 2023

2.3.52 Figure 18 and Figure 19 present data for road freight arriving and leaving North West Leicestershire, the local authority EMA sits within. The data demonstrates that road freight for North West Leicestershire is more than double the East Midlands average, demonstrating the role of EMA within the region and how it influences the pattern of road freight flows.



These road freight flows play a crucial role in last mile delivery and air cargo trucking, ensuring that goods can be transported to and from the airport efficiently to meet required demand.

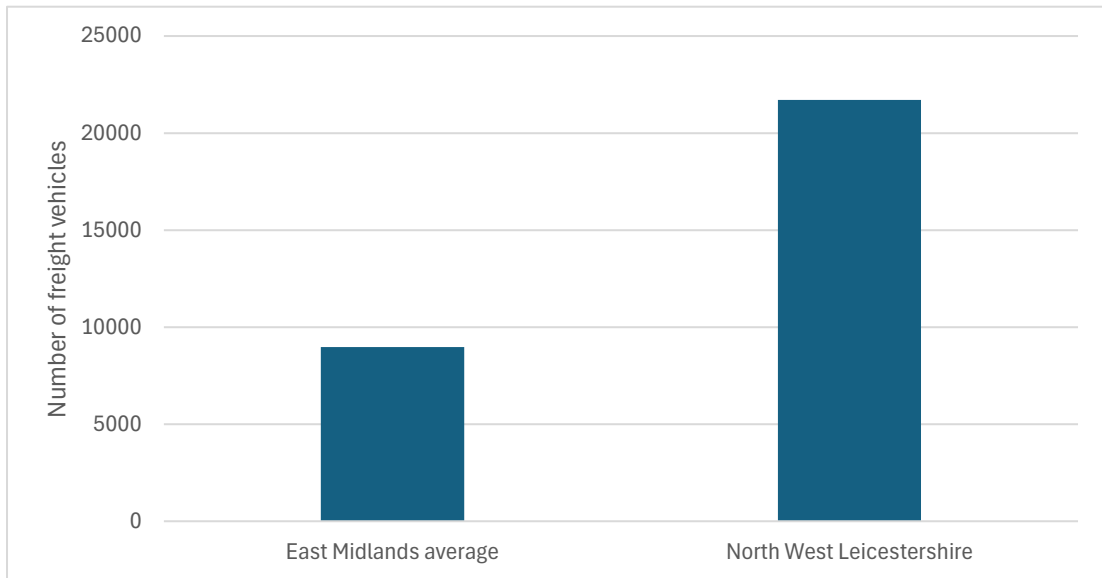


Figure 18 Origin road freight flows associated with EMA. (Source: MiHAM Data).

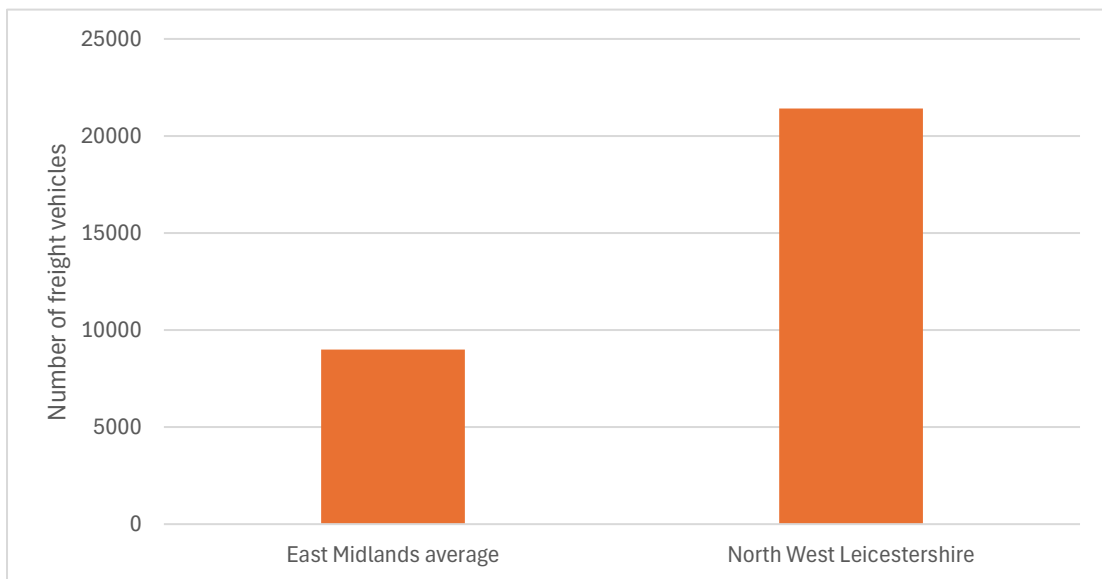


Figure 1. Figure 19 Destination road freight flows associated with EMA. (Source: MiHAM Data).

2.4 Constraints and performance

Constraints

2.4.1 Analysis of the Midland Mainline (MML) by Network Rail on constraints to freight services has identified the following:

- Electrification and power supply. No electrification at the following locations constrains freight performance and decarbonisation objectives:

- North of Wigston
- Between Birmingham and Derby/Trent junction
- Felixstowe to Midlands freight route
- Limited track and junction capacity:
 - Derby to Birmingham and at Stenson Junction
 - Trent and Sheet Stores Junctions
 - Leicester area
- Line speeds:
 - Slow lines south of Kettering North junction causes conflicts with passenger services
- Loading gauge constraints currently means that the MML cannot be used by class 4 freight traffic to relieve or act as a diversionary route for congested East and West Coast Mainlines. Particular constraints are at the following locations:
 - Between Trent and Syston junctions
 - Corby to Manton Junction
 - Kettering to Wigston Junction
 - Between Bedford and Radlett
 - Between Cricklewood and Carlton Road junctions

2.4.2 Furthermore, the Lincolnshire Rail Strategy has identified the following infrastructure constraints to freight services in the region:

- **Barton-upon-Humber – Harborough – Cleethorpes:**
 - Volume of freight services into Immingham constrains what is primarily a single track line.
- **Grimsby (Cleethorpes) – Market Rasen – Lincoln – Nottingham – Leicester:**
 - One freight path per hour across the Newark Flat Crossing, alongside a passenger path per hour, constrains expansion of operations.
- **Doncaster – Lincoln – Sleaford – Spalding – Peterborough:**
 - The lengthy signalling headway on the line south of Lincoln reduces flexibility and provides limited opportunities to regulate freight in this area.
- **Sheffield – Lincoln:**
 - There may be a requirement for additional freight traffic on this corridor to reduce pressure on the Newark Flat Crossing and at Lincoln station.



Performance

2.4.3 Network Rail analysis demonstrates that technical and fleet delays are the most common cause of freight service delays, closely followed by terminal and yards. The data is presented in Figure 20.

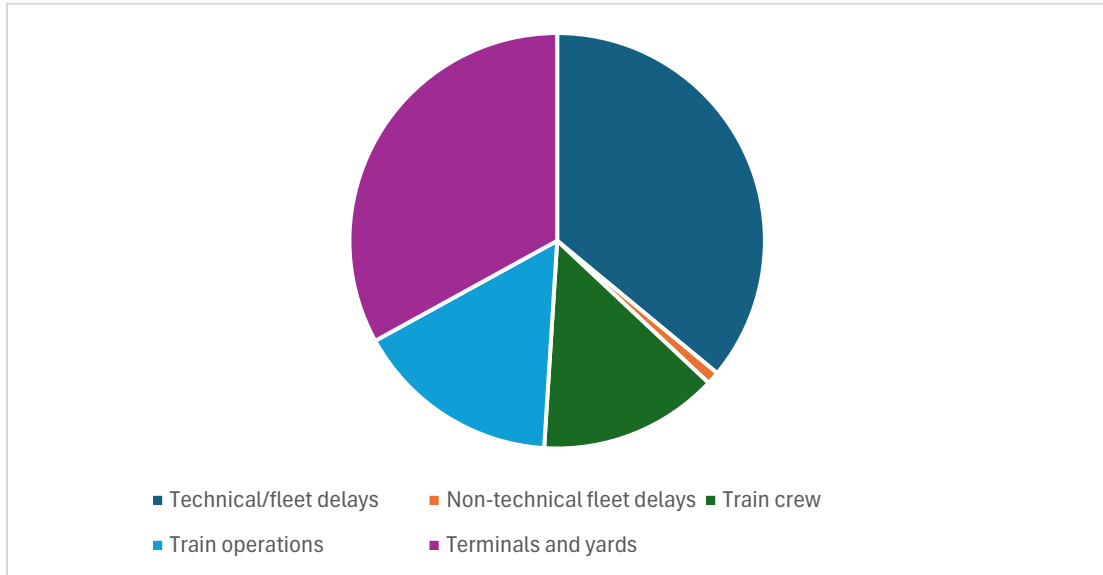


Figure 20 Causes of freight service delays in the East Midlands

2.4.4 Performance data for the whole MML route suggests that freight services are above industry targets and have been improving since 2023/24. For the most recently available data, cancellations are at 1% (compared to 5.5% towards the end of 2023/24).

2.5 Summary

2.5.1 The above analysis has highlighted the following key messages for the current situation regarding freight in the East Midlands:

○ Jobs in freight:

- There is a high concentration of jobs in freight in South Holland in Lincolnshire, High Peak in Derbyshire, and related to the Daventry International Rail Freight Terminal in West Northamptonshire.
- The 'logistics triangle', particularly around East Midlands Gateway and Toton Yard also has a high concentration of jobs in the freight sector, making use of its central location in the country and in the strategic road and rail networks.

○ Freight movements by road:

- Freight flows by road are dominated by internal movements, making up 82% of all freight flows in the region.
- Out of flows in and out of the region, to and from the neighbouring West Midlands is the dominant movement (likely utilising the A38, A42 and M69 corridors), followed by Yorkshire and the Humber (M1 and A1), and the East of England (A1, A46/A47 and A17).

- Morning peak flows are generally higher than the evening peak.
- Internal flows are dominated by Derby, Leicester, Lincoln, North West Leicestershire, Northampton and Nottingham.

○ **Freight movements by rail:**

- Freight services are primarily operated by DC Rail, DB Cargo and Legge Infrastructure Services, the latter headquartered in the region in Nottingham.
- The most common origin or destination locations for freight services in the region are Mountsorrel Sidings, Toton North Yard and Hope (Earls Sidings) FHH.
- The freight termini at Immingham HIT and Doncaster Up Decoy are the most used termini outside the region for services that operate inside the East Midlands, with Tapton Junction the most used entry and exit point on the regional border. Grindleford on the Hope Valley line receives significant freight traffic operating to and from High Peak.
- North Stafford Junction and Wellinborough are used for freight heading south and west.
- Rail freight services in the region most commonly carry construction materials heading to Mountsorrel and Hope (Earls Sidings), followed by Marshalling and Engineering operating out of Toton.

○ **Freight movements by air:**

- East Midlands Airport (EMA) has consistently operated above the UK average of freight cargo tonnage since 2018. This gap grew markedly during the COVID-19 pandemic, but has since closed.
- EMA handles around one fifth of all air freight in the UK, and handles more cargo than all non-London airports combined.
- The impact of freight through EMA is highlighted by road freight flows in and out of North West Leicestershire, which is more than double the regional average.



3. ALIGNMENT WITH PRIORITIES AND GAP ANALYSIS

3.1.1 There are a number of regional and local priorities around the development of freight which are described below.

3.2 Midlands Connect: Our Freight Routemap for the Midlands

3.2.1 The freight route map for the Midlands sets out the aspirations for the development of the freight sector across the Midlands. The emphasis of the route map is on the development of rail freight as this represents the most sustainable approach to developing the sector. The Routemap has five objectives:

- 1. Economy:** Exploit the natural advantages of the region's location and ensure freight is able to support and grow the Midlands and wider economy.
- 2. Rail capacity:** Ensure rail capacity, particularly by HS2, benefits rail freight so that the network is able to accommodate a growth in freight moved by rail.
- 3. Mode shift:** Where practicable, encourage modal shift to more sustainable modes.
- 4. Decarbonisation:** Decarbonise freight movements with a particular focus on road freight, contributing to the 'Net Zero' Carbon Target.
- 5. Integration:** Enhance integration between freight modes to provide a more resilient and effective supply chain.

3.2.2 The objectives address a blend of themes covering transport directly such as rail capacity and mode shift, decarbonisation, and the effect on the economy, with the Midlands in general, and East Midlands in particular, being well-located to make freight a feature of the economy.

3.3 Proposals from Lincolnshire Rail Strategy

3.3.1 The Lincolnshire Rail Strategy has identified a number of opportunities to develop rail freight across the county.

- **South Lincolnshire Rail Freight Hub** – this would serve the UK's largest food processing and logistics cluster.
- **Gainsborough-Northorpe doubling** to increase freight capacity on the route between Gainsborough and Barnetby, increasing capacity for freight traffic between Immingham and South Yorkshire.
- **Reduce freight services over Newark Flat Crossing** and into Lincoln.
- **Re-signal Leicester-Peterborough-Felixstowe to Midlands**, a key freight route.

3.4 Upgrade of Nottingham-Newark-Lincoln paper

3.4.1 The Nottingham – Newark – Lincoln paper highlights a number of interventions that would support freight:

- **Electrification** would be the first step to providing an electrified route to Immingham Docks.
- **Lincoln area infrastructure upgrade** to allow the handling of increased freight services diverted from the ECML.

3.4.2 Both of these points act as enablers for increasing the efficiency of freight movements and, in tandem with other changes, might support mode shift.

3.5 Gap analysis

3.5.1 In principle, the current transport infrastructure in the East Midlands should be well-placed to support the above. As the data in section 2 has shown, the area is already a hub for freight and logistics and its central position in the UK and its strong strategic transport links by rail, road and air make it uniquely positioned to specialise in freight.

3.5.2 Road haulage is already in a strong position to meet many requirements but does so in a way which, whilst financially efficient, may not be the most sustainable or make the best use of scarce road capacity. In contrast, air freight will always fill a very limited role for high value, low volume and international traffic.

3.5.3 In contrast, the rail sector represents a way of providing bulk freight movements in a sustainable way, but at the current time is operating only in selected markets. The majority of flows are in tow market areas, construction and maritime-associated intermodal traffic. The construction market plays heavily to the strengths of rail, involving the movements of large quantities of very heavy products over a medium to long distance, often originating in areas with poor road access, such as the Peak District.

3.5.4 Similarly, long distance trunk flows of intermodal traffic from major ports such as London Gateway, Southampton and Felixstowe also provide markets where rail is a strong competitor to road, though in this market there is a greater sensitivity to distance than there is in the construction sector. As the economy has changed, so too has the nature of rail freight, with markets such as coal having disappeared entirely and flows related to steel and oil having declined. All of these were areas where rail was historically very strong, and all represented primary products feeding into production processes. In contrast, the available markets are more likely to be the outputs of production and distribution process with internal intermodal, high value low volume goods, and time sensitive traffic (including both bulk and non-bulk flows) representing future markets.

3.5.5 Capturing these markets requires the rail freight sector, and the rail industry as a whole, to evolve to provide a more competitive offering against road haulage to avoid rail occupying a space where it is used by customers in the markets described above as a form of social value or “greenwashing”.

3.5.6 To address this, the rail sector needs to address a number of gaps that currently hinder the efficiency of rail freight. These include:

- **Low average speeds driven by a lack of capacity** for freight traffic amongst passenger traffic, causing freight traffic to have to wait in loops for significant periods, extending journey times and increasing costs.
- Improving the performance of the rail network so that customers could have **greater confidence in the movement of time sensitive goods**.
- **Increasing the coverage of rail freight terminals** to help capture more commodities and serve a wider geography.
- **Gauge clearance** on key routes.

- 3.5.7 The first two points are interwoven with issues the passenger network faces. A lack of track capacity and mixed traffic routes, for example on the Birmingham – Derby route, hinders the development of both markets. In the case of freight this manifests itself with journey times that are extended whilst freight is recessed for passenger traffic. This issue was addressed on the East Coast Main Line by upgrading the GNGE Joint Line via Lincoln, allowing freight traffic to be diverted. Whilst this increases the distance travelled it has limited impact on journey times and increases capacity substantially.
- 3.5.8 The freight industry is moving to partially address this issue with the use of more powerful hybrid locomotives, with two operators introducing tri-mode electric-battery-diesel locomotives, replacing conventional diesel locomotives. These are able to accelerate trains more effectively and make better use of the speed profile of a route, although they are most effective when operating with electric traction. In the case of the East Midlands, this again highlights the limitations of not electrifying the Midland Mainline in full.
- 3.5.9 Addressing the issues above contributes to making rail freight more competitive, which in turn can support the development of new flows. For the East Midlands, the markets where there might be the greatest opportunity are:
- Increase in intermodal flows from ports to the East Midlands.
 - Development of more internal flows from logistics hubs in the East Midlands to other parts of the country.
- 3.5.10 Perceived and actual network performance is also an issue. The rail network has over the last 25 years moved away from the movement of time sensitive goods for a variety of reasons and to return to their movement requires a high level of confidence in network reliability, both from operators and clients. A good example of this is the proposed South Lincolnshire Rail Freight Hub, which would be based around the South Lincolnshire food cluster. The movement of any perishable products or anything in the commercial food chain that operated on a “just in time” basis would require services to be operated reliably.
- 3.5.11 Improving performance may also open up a market for high value low volume traffic that could travel on passenger trains. This is an area that the railway historically served comprehensively, both through Royal Mail traffic, but also a wider parcels network. Whilst road haulage impacted this market, the rise in the number of small packages being conveyed presents an opportunity for movement by train especially to city centres. Companies such as Varamis have experimented with full train loads in this market, running an overnight Glasgow – Birmingham service, but movement by passenger train may be more efficient by allowing a network of high frequency services to be used. Finding a way to tie this into East Midlands freight and logistics hubs may provide a marketable product for rail, with major cities such as London, Birmingham, Sheffield and Leeds all being within two hours’ travel time, and even cities such as Bristol being less than three hours away.
- 3.5.12 The East Midlands has a number of railfreight terminals, though there are some gaps in coverage. For example, Lincolnshire lacks any form of intermodal terminal, though the proposed South Lincolnshire Railfreight Hub would address this.
- 3.5.13 Gauge clearance is one of the most significant issues, and the Midland Mainline in particular is constrained by a lack of gaps in gauge clearance for larger containers, meaning that they have to travel on specially designed pocket wagons which reduce the number of containers that can be moved in each train. Issues around gauge clearance are often (though not

exclusively) caused by the dimensions of overbridges. The work required to deliver electrification would also deliver gauge clearance and, as such, the impact on freight traffic is a further side effect of the cancellation of the Midland Mainline electrification programme. Addressing gauge clearance issues will assist with the development of rail freight in the East Midlands but will also help the freight sector more widely as it would support the re-routing of services from other routes.



4. FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

4.1 Future rail investment

- 4.1.1 The gaps identified above for rail highlighted a number of themes that are complementary to the development of the passenger network, notably capacity and electrification. For example, schemes to enhance capacity for example those associated with MYNE, would help to increase freight capacity on key routes such as Birmingham – Derby. However, electrification would be the most significant way of enhancing freight traffic.
- 4.1.2 Electrification would allow freight traffic to accelerate better and maintain speeds more consistently using capacity more efficiently helping to reduce journey times both directly and as result of the reduced need for services to be looped to allow passenger trains to overtake. The gaps in electrification in the East Midlands present a barrier for both local traffic and traffic passing through the area. The completion of electrification from Birmingham via Derby/Toton, and Sheffield/Barrow Hill to the East Coast Mainline and Leeds and Midland Mainline electrification from Wigston to Derby would, along with East-West Rail upgrades allow an increase in the number of freight paths and simultaneously address gauge clearance issues.
- 4.1.3 Exploring the concept of high value low volumes parcels traffic by both dedicated services and passenger services would represent a new market for rail in the East Midlands and would link to the presence of logistics hubs and potentially provide a more sustainable approach to moving these consignments to city centres. The emergence of GBR as a single body managing passenger rail services may help this as an effective approach is likely to involve the use of a network of passenger services with GBR able to plan this in a more coordinated way than might previously have been possible.

4.2 Future roads investment

- 4.2.1 Responsible for the strategic road network (SRN) in England, National Highways publishes a Road Investment Strategy (RIS) every five years. RIS 2, for the Road Period (RP) 2 (2020 to 2025), set out a number of schemes to be delivered for the East Midlands. Subsequent delivery plan updates, the 2025 Spending Review, and shifting priorities in the run-up to the publication of RIS 3 in March 2026, have necessitated changes to some of these plans. However, a number of improvements have already been delivered, and will be delivered in the near future, for the benefit of strategic road freight movements in the region.
- 4.2.2 These plans are summarised in Table 6.

Table 6 Status of major National Highways SRN upgrades in the East Midlands (RIS)

SCHEME NAME	DETAIL AND BENEFITS	INITIAL DELIVERY PLAN 2020-25	CURRENT STATUS
A52 Nottingham junctions	Signalisation and junction reconstruction at several junctions. Reduced congestion and delay on key east-west link.	To be delivered in RP2	Six junctions delivered, Nottingham Knight and Wheatcroft junctions to be delivered by 2027 (RP3).
A38 Derby junctions	Upgrades to junctions west and north of Derby city centre. Improved journey times and reliability between Birmingham, Derby and M1.	To be delivered in RP2	Funding confirmed in 2025 Spending Review, development and survey work ongoing.
M1 junctions 13 to 19	Upgrade to All Lane Running (ALR), £373m. Improved traffic flow and reduced congestion on primary north-south freight corridor.	To be delivered in RP2	ALR delivered between junctions 13 to 16 in 2023.
A45/A6 Chowns Mill junction	Upgrade to roundabout junction. Improved journey times and safety.	To be delivered in RP2	Delivered in 2021
A5 Dodwells to Longshoot	Upgrade from single to dual carriageway. Improved traffic flow and journey time reliability.	To be delivered beyond RP2	Cancelled in Delivery Plan Update 2021-22 due to poor value for money.
A46 Newark bypass	Upgrade of 6.5km from single to dual carriageway. Improved journey time and reliability along A46 corridor between Lincoln and Leicester.	To be delivered beyond RP2	Development Consent Order approved by Secretary of State in October 2025. Delivery timescales to be updated in publication of RIS 3 in March 2026.

4.3 Future growth and development at EMA

- 4.3.1 The draft 2025 East Midlands Airport Sustainable Development Plan sets out a vision for developing the airport over the next 20 years. The Plan was consulted upon between March and June 2025, with the final Plan awaiting publication.
- 4.3.2 The Plan sets out a vision for EMA to be ‘the UK’s global gateway for air cargo, enabling seamless trade.’ Amongst other aims relating to passenger growth, the Plan states that to achieve the vision it aims to:
- Make the case for improved connectivity to/from cargo catchments
 - Capitalise on EMA’s place as the UK’s most important airport for express air cargo
- 4.3.3 The growth of EMA’s cargo operations is supported by national aviation policy, which encourages the operators of airports outside the South East to make the best use of their existing runway capacity¹. The Plan quotes independent analysis which suggests that almost **half of companies expect to increase their use of express freight services** in the future, and that there will be a **strong growth of express freight at EMA over the next 20 years** given the airport’s strategic position to take advantage of this growth.
- 4.3.4 It is anticipated that **cargo activity could reach 800,000 tonnes per year** in the period up to 2040, **doubling its current operations**. It is expected that **cargo movements** will also continue to grow, impacting the surrounding road and rail networks, but **at a slower rate** to tonnage through the introduction of new and larger cargo aircraft. Therefore, while not quite double the cargo movements at the airport, a significant increase in freight operations is planned over the next 10-15 years.
- 4.3.5 While the Plan states that the majority of cargo operations are at night, between the early evening and the early morning, with cargo staff working overnight shifts that avoid peak period traffic, this increase in freight operations in future years is likely to place significant additional pressure on surrounding road and rail networks.
- 4.3.6 In terms of rail, a priority for the airport is, at least, to maintain freight capacity at the existing connections at East Midlands Gateway, Ratcliffe-on-Soar, and East Midlands Intermodal Park, and to improve capacity where necessary.
- 4.3.7 Regarding road connections, EMA states that a priority for developing the airport and the nearby Freeport should be enhancing access from the **A453 and M1 junction 21a in particular**. Furthermore, given that the majority of cargo operations occur outside of the traditional peak periods, **managing roadworks and closures** is crucial to preventing significant impacts on freight operations at EMA.
- 4.3.8 In terms of future development at the airport, the Plan suggests that future growth to the 800,000 tonne target can largely be achieved by **optimising current facilities and expanding existing cargo hubs within the existing operational area**. Through utilising available airport land and safeguarding it for new cargo development, there are further proposals to develop:

¹ Beyond the horizon: The future of UK aviation – making best use of existing runways (2018)

- An additional cargo apron, providing up to 20 more multi-use stands capable of handling the largest commercial aircraft.
- Additional 8-10 stands on safeguarded land adjacent to the UPS hub

APPROVAL

Version	Name		Position	Date	Modifications
1	Author	Ollie Melville Laurence Venables James Jackson	Assistant Consultant Associate Director	05/02/2026	
	Checked by	James Jackson	Director	19/02/2026	
	Approved by	James Jackson	Director	19/02/2026	
2	Author			DD/MM/YY	
	Checked by			DD/MM/YY	
	Approved by			DD/MM/YY	

Transport for the East Midlands

9th March 2026

Item 6: Shared Priorities Update

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report provides a status update on the TfEM-Midlands Connect Shared Priorities, last updated in 2024 and available at: [Our Shared Vision for the East Midlands Our Shared Vision for the East Midlands](#)

2. Status Update as of December 2025

- 2.1 A progress update against all eight priorities is set out below.

Full Electrification of the Midland Main Line

- 2.2 Following the termination of original electrification scheme at Bedford back in the early 1980s, the proposal to extend northwards through the East Midlands to Sheffield was given the go-ahead by Government in 2012, paused in 2015, reinstated then cancelled in 2017 and again reinstated in 2021. During this time, electrification was initially extended to Corby/Kettering, then Market Harborough and then South Wigston. The wires south of Bedford were also upgraded from 100mph to 125 mph in anticipation of new Aurora 810 bi-mode rolling stock being introduced in 2025.
- 2.3 A Full Business Case decision was expected in mid-June 2024 on proposals to electrify through Leicester to Trent Junctions (south of Nottingham) and for detailed design to Nottingham, Derby, Chesterfield and Sheffield. In anticipation of this TfEM coordinated a letter of support from key political and business leaders across the north and midlands, including the Chair of TfEM and the EMCCA Mayor.
- 2.4 EMR also developed a business case to transition to a new fleet of regional battery-electric regional rolling stock to replace the existing fleets of c170, c360 and c158 trains in due course.
- 2.5 However further electrification was 'indefinitely paused' by DfT following the Spending Review and the East Midlands will remain the most 'diesel dependant' railway region in the UK for the foreseeable future.

Improved Rail Connectivity between Nottingham, Leicester, and Coventry

- 2.6 Midlands Connect launched a revised Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) for the project in Coventry of the 28th of February with the Chair of TfEM, the Leader of Coventry City Council and a number of MPs ([mc-publications-design-breaking-down-barriers-v3.pdf](#)).
- 2.7 Subsequent work led by Network Rail has confirmed that the cost of progressing to Outline Business Case would be in the region of £5m, although as yet there has no financial commitment from Government though the Rail Network Enhancement Pipeline (RNEP) towards the scheme.

Improved Rail Connectivity between the Midlands, Leeds, and the North East

- 2.8 Following the cancellation of HS2 East the Government has initiated the Midlands to Yorkshire & the North East (MYNE) Study to consider lower cost options for improving rail connectivity along the former Eastern Leg corridor.
- 2.9 Initial work has focussed on the costs and benefits of serving the East Midlands through making use of redundant platform capacity at the new Birmingham Curzon Street Station under construction and connecting to existing rail network at Burton, compared to the delivery of Midlands Rail Hub (MRH) East. A programme-wide business case for Midlands Rail Hub (including benefits for the East Midlands) is nearing completion.
- 2.10 A decision about how (if at all) to take this work forward has yet to be made by Ministers.

Improvements on the A46 Growth Corridor including delivery of the A46 Newark Northern Bypass

- 2.11 The Development Consent Order (DCO) for the A46 Newark Northern Bypass was approved in October 2025 and the Government confirmed in the Spending Review that funding is available to deliver the scheme. However, as yet no start date has been confirmed and there is concern that this could slip from the previously published date of 2027. As a result, the Chair of TfEM and the Chair of EMC wrote to the Secretary of State highlighting the need to expedite the scheme.
- 2.12 In relation to the Castle Line (Lincoln-Newark-Nottingham), at present there has so far been no DfT funding identified to deliver the line speed improvement scheme promoted by Midlands Connect ([All change: The Castle Line](#)).

- 2.13 However, EMR has successfully implemented a half hourly service between Lincoln, Newark and Nottingham from December 2025 as part of the 'Project Abraham' timetable enhancements, which has added an extra 2,000 seat a day along the route.
- 2.14 TfEM and GLCCA highlighted the strategic importance of this this rail corridor in the recent 'Keeping Pace' publication: [Keeping Pace: Enhancing Lincoln City's Rail Connectivity](#).

Improvements to the A50/A500 Growth Corridor

- 2.15 Derbyshire County Council is continuing to progress a LUF funded access road from the A50 to the East Midlands Intermodal Park adjacent to Toyota's manufacturing facility. However, any further strategic improvements to the corridor in the East Midlands will require funding through the RIS3 process (2025-2030), which will be confirmed by the end of March 2026.

Improvements to the A5 Growth Corridor

- 2.16 Although National Highways have undertaken work to develop a strategic enhancement to the A5 between the M69 and the M42 (Hinckley and Tamworth), delivery of any scheme will need to be funded through RIS3. The same is true for the improvement to the junction between the A5 and A426 at Gibbet Hill identified by Midlands Connect and the roundabout at Dodwells – although both these schemes appear small enough to have a chance of delivery.

Improving safety and reliability on the A1

- 2.17 National Highways has delivered a programme of improvements to road signage and lane markings along the route in the East Midlands. In addition, National Highways is progressing an initial phase of eight 'gap closures' along the route to improve safety and consistency with the rest of the SRN. However, there are currently no plans to develop any strategic enhancements for delivery in RIS3.

Improving capacity around the M1 Junction 24

- 2.18 National Highways has commissioned a strategic study to assess options for increasing capacity along the M1 between Junction 23a and Junction 25 of the M1 to accommodate planned growth, including that arising from the Freeport. However, delivery of any infrastructure improvements through the RIS process are unlikely before the early 2030s.
- 2.19 Segro has submitted a Development Consent Order Application for an expansion on its operations at the East Midlands Gateway Freight Interchange which includes proposed improvements to M1 Junction 24. The scheme application is currently at the Pre-Examination Stage: [East Midlands Gateway Phase 2 - Project information](#)

2.20 The Freeport is looking to make available resources to support National Highways to development and implement a strategic intervention to M1J24, and details were announced at a Parliamentary Reception hosted by James Naish MP on the 3rd March 2026.

3 Recommendations

3.1 Members are asked to note progress on the eight shared priorities and direct officers accordingly.

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