



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

Kit Malthouse MP
Minister of State for Housing

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13 March 2019

Dear Chris,

Oxford to Cambridge Arc – Spring Statement Update

As you will be aware, the Government has designated the Oxford to Cambridge Arc an economic priority, and I wanted to write to you, as your constituency is within the Arc, to let you know we will be re-affirming our commitment to realising its full potential in the Spring Statement on 13 March.

There is an exciting economic opportunity for the Arc to become a truly world leading place that demonstrates the best of British business and innovation. Realising its full potential will require new infrastructure such as East West Rail and the Expressway, as well as up to 1 million new homes by 2050 to address the housing affordability issues already felt in many parts of the Arc and to provide places to live for future communities attracted by the Arc's economic opportunities.

But the Government is keenly aware that realising this potential will rely upon a real understanding of – and role for – local institutions, businesses and communities. I am therefore pleased to have agreed a joint declaration between the Government, local authorities, LEPs and England's Economic Heartland, to be published at Spring Statement. This will set out how we will work together to meet the potential of the Arc, focussed around four agreed priority areas of productivity, placemaking, connectivity and the environment. We have also agreed to embark on a joint public engagement exercise about the Arc over Summer 2019.

My department, MHCLG, is leading a cross-government portfolio for the Oxford to Cambridge Arc, backed by ministers across Government. Defra is making good progress on Natural Capital Planning for the Arc and DfT is progressing important transport projects at pace. Consultation on a preferred route for East West Rail Central Section has recently concluded, the preferred corridor for the Oxford to Cambridge Expressway was announced last year, and the preferred route for the A428 Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet scheme was announced in February.

I recognise that over the coming months and years the Government will need to work closely with local institutions, businesses and communities, as plans and decisions are taken forward. I believe the joint declaration and the proposed public engagement exercise are a good starting point but appreciate much more work is required to achieve our shared ambition.

I hope to rely on your support so that new jobs, new homes and other benefits can be realised for your constituents. I will be holding a drop-in surgery after the Spring Statement on 14 March at 10:45 and 13:15 and would be pleased to discuss how we can best work together to deliver our ambitions and unlock the potential of the Arc.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Kit Malthouse". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

KIT MALTHOUSE MP