



HM Treasury, 1 Horse Guards Road, London, SW1A 2HQ

Councillor Martin Tett  
Chairman, England's Economic Heartland  
EEH Business Unit  
c/o Buckinghamshire County Council  
County Hall  
Walton Street  
Aylesbury  
HP20 1UA

10th November 2018

Dear Martin,

#### MAXIMISING THE POTENTIAL OF THE OXFORD-CAMBRIDGE ARC

Thank you for your letter of 25 September setting out your thoughts on how best to maximise the potential of the Oxford-Cambridge Arc.

I am aware that you have also contacted some of my Ministerial colleagues across Whitehall. Let me reassure you that the whole of government is fully committed to ensuring that the economic potential of the Oxford-Cambridge Arc is realised. Clearly this will not be possible without local support, and I welcome England's Economic Heartland's (EEH) shared ambition for transformational growth in the Arc and your collaboration to date.

Alongside the recent Budget, the government published our response to the National Infrastructure Commission report on the Arc, in which we set out our progress, detailed our future plans and reaffirmed our long-term commitment to the Arc. Over the coming months we will continue to work closely with England's Economic Heartland and other local partners to develop an ambitious Arc-wide joint vision statement, which we will publish by Spring 2019.

As you say, a strong collaborative working relationship between the government and local partners is essential. The government has established a single coordinated cross-Whitehall delivery programme for the Arc, led by the Ministry



of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). The government will continue work closely with local partners to put in place a governance structure that supports the delivery of local growth and facilitates streamlined working between government and local stakeholders, while retaining appropriate democratic accountability, by Spring 2019.

As a first step, at Autumn Budget 2018 the Chancellor announced that the government will appoint a Ministerial Champion for the Arc to provide further focus and facilitate additional coordination across Whitehall. He also announced that we will appoint an independent business Chair for the Arc to provide expert advice and act as an advocate and champion to help galvanise local, national and international support for the Arc. I am confident that these two appointments will help drive forward progress.

The government continues to commit significant investment to the Arc to realise our ambitions, including in strategic infrastructure schemes such as the Expressway and East West Rail. You will be aware that at the recent Budget, we provided £20 million to the East West Rail company to develop a strategic outline business case, which will explore which routes best support the government's vision to unlock up to 1 million new homes by 2050.

I appreciate England's Economic Heartland's positive contributions to our work to date and I look forward to reviewing the findings from your connectivity study in due course. I know that EEH are in discussion with officials at MHCLG about your proposals for a National Policy Statement for the Arc. My officials and the Infrastructure and Projects Authority are liaising with MHCLG on these proposals, as well as other opportunities which may support the successful delivery of our collective ambitions for the Arc, as part of the coordinated government programme.



Yours ever,

Robert.

Robert Jenrick  
Exchequer Secretary to the Treasury

I look forward to seeing you again soon.  
Please don't hesitate to contact me as  
this is a project I want to remain closely  
involved with and support in any way I  
can.