

# Rail Industry Association disappointed by news that rail enhancements budget reduced by £1 billion

December 4, 2020



The Chief Executive of the Railway Industry Association says it is very disappointing to see that rail enhancements investment will reduce by more than £1 billion over the current five-year funding period.

Darren Caplan says taking the foot off the pedal on rail investment will not help for when passengers return following the coronavirus pandemic.

The reduction was confirmed in a parliamentary question by Labour MP Jim McMahon, who asked “with reference to the Spending Review 2020, what revised estimate he has for the (a) total £10.4 billion rail enhancements budget and (b) total £30.9 billion operations, maintenance and renewals budget within Network Rail’s Control”.

In response, Rail Minister Chris Heaton-Harris said: “Network Rail’s operations, maintenance and renewals budgets have not been changed as a result of Spending Review 2020 and workbanks will continue to be based on the five-year regulatory funding settlement for 2019-2024. The Spending Review settlement

means that the comparable figure for the enhancements budget over the same period would now be £9.4bn. As part of SR2020 over £2 billion of funding has been confirmed in 2021-22 for rail services and builds on the estimated £12.8 billion of support for transport services that the government has already committed to provide in 2020-21.

“The Spending Review Settlement includes over £58 billion of investment confirmed for road and rail transport between 2021-22 and 2024-25, delivering some of government’s largest capital portfolios and levelling up across the country. This includes record investment in strategic roads and rail.”

Commenting on the news, Darren Caplan, Chief Executive of the Railway Industry Association, said: “Recent confirmation, following the Spending Review, that rail enhancements investment will reduce by more than £1 billion over the current five year funding period, is very disappointing. Rail enhancements are essential in ensuring our rail network is fit for the future, improving reliability, connectivity, customer experience and helping to reduce carbon emissions. Taking our foot off the pedal now on rail investment will not help for when passengers return following the Coronavirus pandemic.

“The rail industry still doesn’t have sight of what rail enhancement projects are coming up – we were told earlier this year that there are more than 80 projects in the Government’s Rail Network Enhancements Pipeline, yet with the news today that there is over £1 billion less in the funding pot, it is unclear what schemes will be going ahead and what will not be. In line with RIA’s Speed Up Rail Enhancements, SURE, campaign, we strongly urge the Government to publish this list of rail enhancement projects as soon as possible, to help rail businesses plan and invest, at what is such a critical time for the UK economy.”

*Photo credit: Railway Industry Association*

---

For today’s rail news from [railbusinessdaily.com](https://railbusinessdaily.com) [click here](#).