

The Future Of The Marshlink

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Rye, 19th March 2014*

Current Situation on Tonbridge Line

- Tonbridge line has experienced 6 landslips over winter
- Network Rail has devoted hundreds of engineers to resolve various landslips
- Remaining serious landslip at Whatlington, suffered further technical issues
- Re-open date at this site remains unknown



Background

- Group Strategy will be leading Kent Route Strategy looking at requirements over next 5-30 years, draft due in 2015
- Known poor connectivity to Hastings area
- Tonbridge line to retain Cannon Street services in 2018
- Growing travel market on Marshlink via Ashford & HS1
- Some peak over-crowding of Brighton fast services
- In context of growth on HS1 services in Kent



Currently in Progress

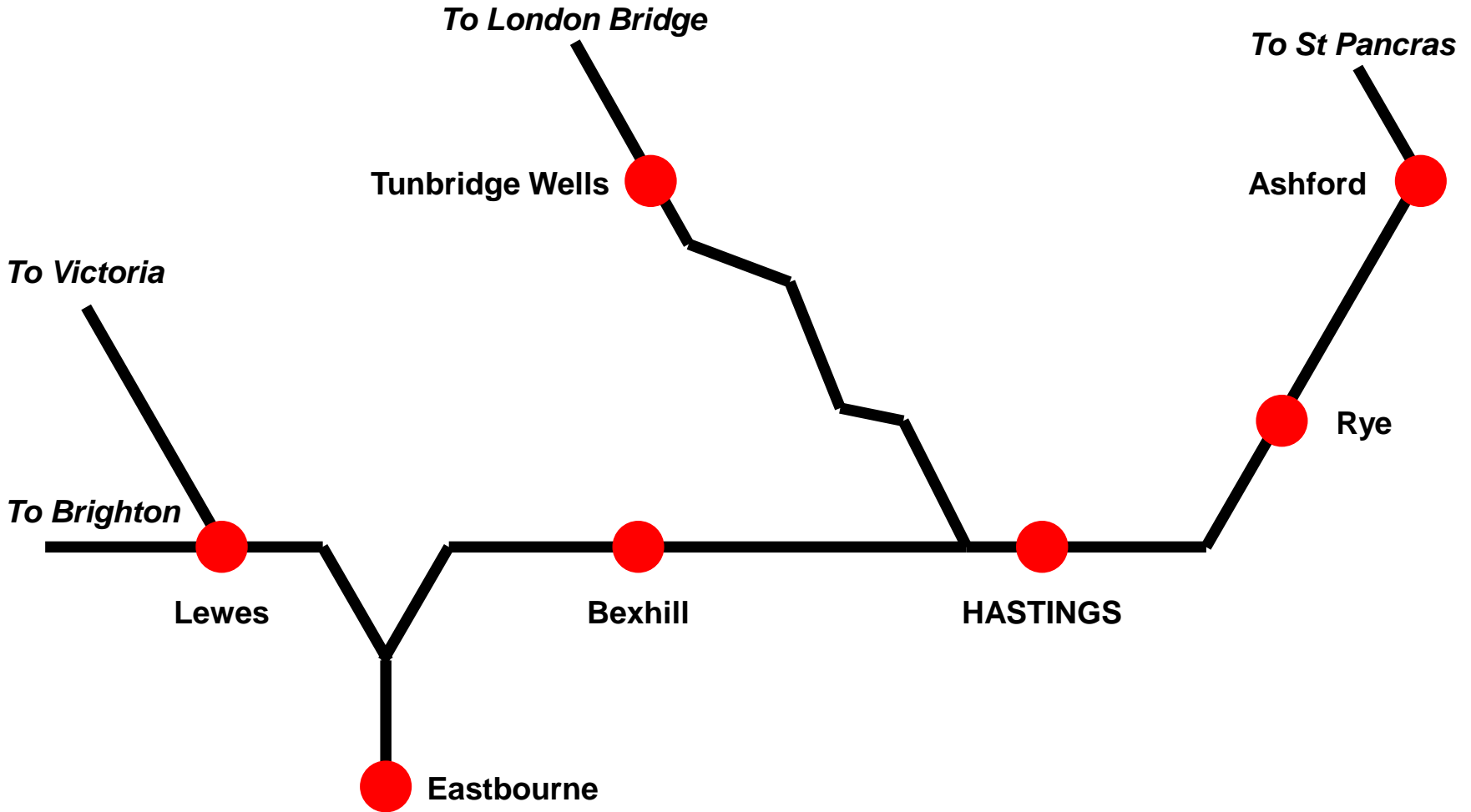
- Ashford embankment line speed improvement delivered
- East Coastway Resignalling due to be completed in Easter
- Raising line speed Ore – Doleham
 - Delays owing to funding and resource issues
 - Now scheduled for CP5 delivery, funding permitting
- Addition of Barriers to Winchelsea Level Crossing
 - Will not raise line speed
- Proposal to raise line speed in Lewes station area
- Conducting a feasibility study into raising Sevenoaks and Bo Peep Tunnels line speed

Hastings Rail Connectivity Study

- In-house review how rail service could be improved
- Focus on journey times to London, Ashford, Brighton
- Supported by Train Operators, local MP and local authorities
- Took account of existing work underway
- Will feed into forthcoming Kent Route Strategy



Main Markets to/from Hastings



Tonbridge Line ?

- Initial focus on Tonbridge line
 - Many options with high costs and minimal benefit
 - ‘Spending millions to save seconds’
 - Possible easy wins in Tunnels and where track is due to be renewed in future (re-canting)
- So, focus switched to Marshlink



Marshlink Line?

- Examined the case for:
 - electrification (third rail or Overhead Line)
 - re-doubling
 - line speed improvements
 - sending High Speed services from St Pancras via Ashford to Rye and Hastings



Marshlink - Findings

- Re-doubling Marshlink does not currently have a business case
 - It doesn't really improve journey times
 - An expensive way to increase capacity
- Electrification of the existing service represents low value for money
 - Other lines have a stronger case
- Further line speed enhancements have a poor business case for the existing service



Marshlink - Findings (continued)

However, sending HS1 services from Ashford along a faster Marshlink to Hastings and Bexhill has a strong business case

- Substantial journey time savings, all day too
 - Rye currently 72-85 mins > 55 minutes
 - Hastings currently 91-100 mins > 68 minutes
 - Bexhill currently 101-112 mins > 78 minutes
- Electric railway is cheaper to operate than a diesel one
- De-congests Tunbridge Wells line and permits longer, faster electric Ashford – Brighton service.
- Faster over singled lines, increases capacity over them
- Will attract more passengers & commuters
- Regeneration effect for Hastings & Bexhill

Only the combined package has a good business case !

Marshlink – Requirements

Delivering High Speed Trains to Hastings and Bexhill will require:

- Remodelling and wiring Ashford West Junction to permit HS1 access to platform 2
- Third Rail or OLE electric railway to Ore
- Resignalling and increase line speed between Ashford – Appledore - Rye – Doleham from 60 to 90mph
- Extended passing loop from Rye westwards
- Fully gating, re-routing or closing level crossings
- Assessments for user and pedestrian crossings (e.g. at Hamstreet)
- Potentially acquisition of more class 395 HS1 trains

Marshlink – Next Steps

- Seek political support for step change on the Marshlink
- Await NR's refreshed National Electrification Strategy (due 2015)
- Develop and substantiate costs to formalise the business case
- Consider in forthcoming Kent Route Strategy, potentially as part of a wider HS1 plan
- Seek regeneration funding to support scheme (SE LEP)
- Seek support for this scheme's inclusion in the Industry Investment Plan for delivery in CP6 (2019 – 2024)



Any Questions ?

