

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority Local Transport Plan Consultation

cambridgeshirepeterborough-ca.gov.uk/about-us/programmes/transport/ltp

Railfuture East Anglia welcomes the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority Local Transport Plan Consultation which contains a significant number of rail schemes. **We have the following comments on the policy objectives that affect rail, the rail schemes identified in the LTP, and schemes which are currently missing and should be added to the LTP, and record the organisations supporting these missing schemes.**

1. Rail Policy Objectives

Policy Objective 1 – Support Housing and Development

Railfuture welcomes this policy objective to strengthen the links between new development and transport. This is an issue that has often been given little importance in the past especially with respect to improved public transport provision. There are many new developments of several hundred houses approved but without regular public transport.

We would urge the CA to develop specific policies relating to the level of public transport required to serve new development to meet the requirements of the other LTP objectives.

Transport projects such as the Wisbech Line reopening, new stations at Soham, Alconbury, Hampton and Cambridge South can help support sustainable new development.

Although most journeys made are local, people do make longer journeys. Railfuture would want to see all significant future development either centred around a railway station, or linked by a dedicated feeder public transport service timed to connect with trains, and high quality cycle routes.

Within the requirement to seek developer contributions towards improved transport infrastructure (policy 1.1.3), Railfuture would like to see improved cycle spaces at stations, with the storage being frequently reviewed and upgraded to keep significantly ahead of demand.

Policy Objective 2 – Improve access to jobs

The existing rail network in Cambridgeshire provides links between many centres, improving access to higher education and work. The recent Department for Transport Report on railway overcrowding www.gov.uk/government/statistics/rail-passenger-numbers-and-crowding-on-weekdays-in-major-cities-in-england-and-wales-2018 highlights that some of the most overcrowded trains in the country include services into Cambridge from Norwich and Ipswich. Whilst new trains currently being delivered will help overcome this overcrowding, additional services should be added to provide the full set of services listed in the rail aspiration table below, listing the number of trains per hour (TPH) for the service, and also the number of trains per hour at Cambridge, Peterborough and Ely. These services should run 7 days a week from early until late.

Table of service aspirations for East Anglia (TPH = Trains per Hour)

Trains per Hour (TPH)	Service	TPH Cambridge	TPH Peterborough	TPH Ely
2	All stations Cambridge to Bishops Stortford and London Liverpool Street	2		
1	Semi-Fast Cambridge to Bishops Stortford and London Liverpool Street	1		
1	Semi-Fast Stansted to Peterborough and Birmingham	1	1	1
1	Semi-Fast Stansted to Norwich	1		1
2	All stations Kings Lynn to Cambridge South then fast to London Kings Cross	2		2
2	Semi-Fast Cambridge North to London Thameslink	2		
2	All stations Cambridge to Potters Bar then semi-Fast to London Thameslink	2		
2	All stations Wisbech to Cambridge	2		2
1	Semi-fast Stamford to Cambridge	1	1	1
1	Semi-fast Ipswich to Peterborough		1	1
1	Semi-fast Norwich to Ely and Nottingham		1	1
1	All stations Wisbech to Peterborough	1	1	

Notes about the service aspirations table:

Liverpool Street stopping service increased to 2 trains per hour to support Cambridge catchment area stretching south of Harlow.

All trains passing through Cambridge North and Cambridge South should stop there.

The Wisbech to Cambridge service significantly improves the service from intermediate stations such as March and Manea to Cambridge.

Whittlesea, a major settlement of about 18,000 people, is currently poorly served but should receive a half hourly service. An hourly Wisbech to Peterborough service is supported locally so this in conjunction with an hourly Peterborough to Ipswich and Colchester service would give Whittlesea its half hourly service. In the absence of a Wisbech to Peterborough service, the extra hourly train could instead be provided by extending the Doncaster-Spalding-Peterborough service to March for connections into East-Anglia.

Newmarket is very poorly served in contrast to similarly sized Ely; the future service through Newmarket should be significantly enhanced following doubling tracking of the line to Cambridge and reinstatement of the Newmarket West Curve.

Policy Objective 3 – Ensure all our region’s business and tourist attractions are connected sustainably to our main transport hubs, ports and airports

Railfuture welcomes the Combined Authority’s support for improvements to the Felixstowe to Nuneaton freight corridor including improvements at Ely (policies 3.1.1 and 3.4.1).

Railfuture notes that international traffic from the ports at London Gateway and Tilbury also pass through the county, some by rail, and therefore additional rail infrastructure may be required to support further modal shift.

Railfuture welcomes the Combined Authority’s intent to identify suitable road /rail interchange sites. (policy 3.1.4). The existing Potter Group site at Ely performs this role, although currently only used for aggregates, this site has been used in the past to transfer agricultural products and finished goods. A reopened railway to Wisbech gives an opportunity for a new road rail freight interchange site close to the A47. Consideration should also be given to consolidation interchanges for local delivery services for Cambridge and Peterborough.

Railfuture urges the Combined Authority to include a policy of protecting existing railway land that could be used for road/rail interchange against other development.

The Combined Authority should encourage tourist information websites and literature to include public transport information. Tourist attractions should also be encouraged to follow the example of Shepreth Wildlife Park in giving a discount to those arriving by public transport.

At major venues, the Combined Authority look at what can be done to make arriving by rail and other modes of public transport attractive.

We note the recent introduction of direct services to Gatwick Airport, the forthcoming better access to Heathrow Airport via Crossrail, and improved service to Stansted Airport, along with existing good connections with Eurostar. The Combined Authority should ensure that these services continue to be developed, along with better services to the Port of Harwich.

Objective 4: Build a transport network that is resilient to human and environmental disruption, improving journey time reliability

Rail reliability can be improved by the network capacity schemes in the table of rail schemes (following the policy objectives).

Objective 5: Embed a safe systems approach into all planning and transport operations to achieve Vision Zero – zero fatalities or serious injuries

Railfuture welcomes the policies (5.2.1 and 5.2.2) to make public transport safer for users. Lighting and signage on the approaches to railway stations and adjacent bus stops are key elements to achieve this.

Level crossing safety is a major risk element on the railways. Railfuture urges the Combined Authority to work with Network Rail to improve level crossing safety and to eliminate road and footpath crossings where practical. Proposals to remove level crossings on the East Coast Main Line appear to be on hold but need to progress as soon as possible both from a safety and journey reliability aspect.

Objective 6: Promote social inclusion through the provision of a sustainable transport network that is affordable and accessible to all

Railfuture is currently doing a study on the accessibility of the region's railway stations which will be published here:

www.railfuture.org.uk/East+Anglia+Easy+Stations

Signage between stations and local key sites needs to be improved.

At stations where step free access is provided to each platform but not between them, road signage directing mobility impaired passengers to the correct platform should be provided.

The provision of lifts at Whittlesford Parkway station is an important element in developing this site as a local transport hub. Meldreth requires step free access between the platforms.

Railfuture supports the existing arrangement outside Cambridge Station where pedestrians have priority for accessing Station Road. However we note that the pavement does not provide clear wayfinding and the different paving colours are confusing to partially sighted people.

Additional entrances are needed at Cambridge (on the east side) and Peterborough (on the west side) to provide significantly improved connectivity to the local communities.

www.railfuture.org.uk/east/docs/Railfuture-East-Anglia-2018-08-13-Cambridge-Station-Eastern-Entrance-proposal.pdf

Policy Theme 17: Travelling by train

These policies are supported – refer to comments above and the rail scheme table in section 2.

2. Rail Schemes in the LTP

We endorse all of the rail schemes, with the following provisos, some of which are described in more detail in section 4 of this report (where indicated).

Table of rail schemes in the Local Transport Plan

Scheme	Comments	Additional info in section 4
Peterborough Rail Station Western Access		
Werrington Dive Under		
Huntingdon to Peterborough Four Tracking		
CAM	We support network proposed for CAM including the link to Haverhill, but CAM must be implemented as Light Rail.	
Cambridge South Station	Must include track quadrupling	
Ely Area Capacity Enhancements		
East West Rail Central Section	This must be electrified at the time of construction	
A10 Foxton Level Crossing and Travel Hub (in conjunction with Greater Cambridge Partnership)	This must be designed so pedestrians do not need to cross the A10 carriageway	
Newmarket to Cambridge Track Doubling	With a major enhancement to Newmarket station for 2 way running	4.1
Electrification of Rural Rail Routes (including Felixstowe to Nuneaton, Cambridge to Newmarket and Ely to Norwich)		
Waterbeach Station Relocation		
Cambridgeshire Rail Capacity Study	We noted that this report suggested an unacceptably slow timescale	
Soham station		
Ely to Soham track doubling		
Newmarket West Chord		
Improved parking and interchange facilities at Ely station		
Improved parking and access facilities at Littleport station		
Wisbech Rail	Main station must be in the town centre served by through services to Cambridge. See also “additional information” section.	4.2
Regeneration of Fenland railway stations – March, Manea and Whittlesea	Require through services to Wisbech and Cambridge	
Wisbech Garden Town feasibility studies		
Adapt existing rail and bus stations into rural travel hubs		

3. Rail Schemes to be added to the LTP

However, there are a number of additional schemes which should be added to the Local Transport Plan, summarised in the table below. Some are described in more detail in section 4 of this report (where indicated).

Table of rail schemes which should be added to the Local Transport Plan

Scheme	Supported by	Additional info in section 4
New station at Alconbury	Huntingdonshire Local Plan.	4.3
New station at Hampton		4.3
Cambridge Central Station Eastern Entrance	Railfuture East Anglia report	4.4
Cambridge North station track enhancements	Railfuture East Anglia proposal	4.5
Accessibility work at Shelford	Railfuture East Anglia station audit	4.6
Accessibility work at Whittlesford Parkway	Greater Cambridge Partnership Whittlesford Parkway Transport Masterplan. Railfuture East Anglia station audit.	4.7
Accessibility work at Shepreth	Meldreth, Shepreth and Foxton Community Rail Partnership. Railfuture East Anglia station audit.	4.8
Accessibility work at Meldreth	Meldreth, Shepreth and Foxton Community Rail Partnership. Railfuture East Anglia station audit	4.9
Capacity enhancements between Ely, March and Peterborough	Needed to achieve the CPCA LTP plans for faster and more frequent rural services on this line	4.10
Cycle and railway initiatives	Cycle route infrastructure and safe routes from railway stations, and safe storage at stations	

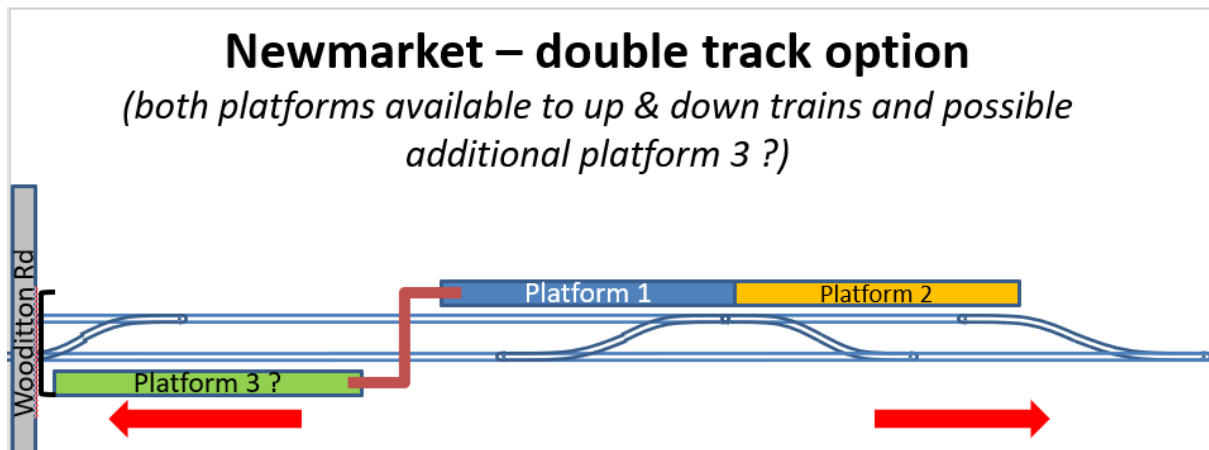
4. Additional Information about Rail Schemes

4.1 Newmarket doubling

The Local Transport Plan includes doubling of the line from Cambridge to Newmarket.

The tunnel beyond Newmarket makes it unlikely there will be double track from there to the reinstated Newmarket West Curve, but it is important that Newmarket station itself is rebuilt so two trains can stop there at the same time, otherwise capacity and reliability will be sacrificed.

The station is now located on a restricted site and it is unclear whether a conventional layout with a pair of platforms could be used, but if not an unconventional layout could be used to achieve this as shown in the plan below, similar to how platforms 1 and 4 are used at Cambridge.



4.2 Wisbech reopening

Railfuture has been working with a number of stakeholders to promote the reopening of the railway to Wisbech. Our vision for the line is contained in the following prospectus. An additional key benefit of a Wisbech to Cambridge service is that it will provide a local service serving Fenland stations, allowing the speeding up of longer distance services between the main centres for more attractive journey times.

Railfuture East Anglia and the Wisbech Rail Consultative Group

Paper setting out the background to restoring a train service from Wisbech to Cambridge and how it could be done.

wisbechrail.org.uk/post/restoring-a-train-service-from-wisbech-to-cambridge/

Other organisations which support the reopening are:

Cambridge and Peterborough Combined Authority

Cambridgeshire County Council Local Transport Plan

www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/travel-roads-and-parking/transport-plans-and-policies/local-transport-plan

Wisbech2020 and Fenland District Council

www.wisbech2020vision.co.uk

www.fenland.gov.uk

www.wisbech2020vision.co.uk/gardentown

“It is anticipated that the reopening of the rail link would significantly improve connectivity and would unlock other economic benefits.”

Campaign for Better Transport

bettertransport.org.uk

bettertransport.org.uk/media/05-february-2019-rail-reopenings-report

“Examples of lines identified as a priority include:

March to Wisbech, Cambridgeshire - reopening this line would link the large, relatively deprived, town of Wisbech to employment, education and training and also serve the proposed Wisbech Garden Town of some 12,000 new houses”

4.3 New Stations at Alconbury and Hampton

New stations in the Peterborough built-up area have long been proposed at Hampton in South Peterborough and Alconbury where a new town of some 10,000 is being constructed. These stations are vital to the sustainability of travel throughout Peterborough and district. To enable their building, plans to quadruple the ECML should be pursued. They would be served by the trains every half hour to Huntingdon.

In general, all significant new housing developments should be built in locations with access to a new or existing railway station, and the stations developed as transport hubs serving the new communities.

The station at Alconbury is part of “Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036: Proposed Submission 2017”

www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/planning/new-local-plan-to-2036/local-plan-document-library/

"Urban and Civic are also working with partners to bring forward a railway station at Alconbury Weald as part of a much wider investment programme in the East coast Mainline, Crossrail and Thameslink."

"Strategic Expansion Location: Alconbury Weald...transport infrastructure improvements proportionate to the scale of development including linkages to the Cambridgeshire Busway and the identified opportunity for provision of a railway station on the East Coast mainline"

4.4 Cambridge Central Station Eastern Entrance

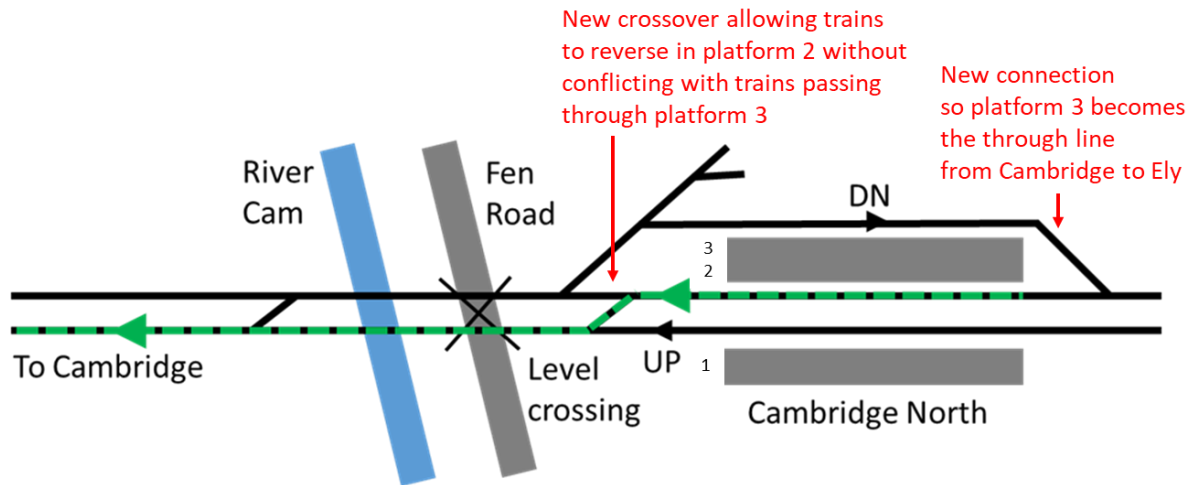
This station will remain the main station for Cambridge as far into the future as can be envisaged. The current footfall is over 12m per annum with some 7000 people entering the city via the station in the morning peak hour. This will continue to rise. The station and its surrounds both on the rail side and public side is struggling to cope, especially as its only entrance is on its western side. To mitigate the effects of this continued growth and to make it more accessible, we have proposed an Eastern Entrance.

This is described in detail in Railfuture East Anglia’s report “Cambridge Station, Time for an Eastern Entrance?”

www.railfuture.org.uk/east/docs/Railfuture-East-Anglia-2018-08-13-Cambridge-Station-Eastern-Entrance-proposal.pdf

4.5 Cambridge North station track enhancements

The track layout at this station is designed sub optimally. To improve capacity towards Ely the current bay platform 3 line should be extended and become the main line to Ely with the current 'down' main middle platform 2 used as a turn back platform. This will avoid pathing conflicts and provide more capacity to turn trains back, freeing capacity at Central Station.



Cambridge North track layout that would provide greatest capacity

4.6 Accessibility work at Shelford Railway Station

Fully accessible footbridge as the current access via the level crossing is closed for lengthy periods when the barriers are down.

Railfuture East Anglia audit of Shelford Railway Station

www.railfuture.org.uk/east/docs/Railfuture-East-Anglia-2017-09-02-Shelford-Station-Audit-Report.pdf

4.7 Accessibility work at Whittlesford Railway Station

Fully accessible footbridge and substantial station enhancements to form a travel hub.

The Greater Cambridge Partnership is developing a “Whittlesford Parkway Transport Masterplan” to substantially improve the station and associated facilities

www.greatercambridge.org.uk/transport/transport-projects/rural-travel-hubs/whittlesford-transport-master-planning-exercise/

"Whittlesford was initially identified as a potential site for a pilot Rural Travel Hub in the Feasibility Study report, published in January 2018.

Due to the number of planned developments in the area, the Greater Cambridge Partnership Executive Board recommended a master planning exercise be undertaken for the village. The Greater Cambridge Partnership Executive Board also agreed to fund 200 additional cycle parking spaces at Whittlesford Parkway station."

Railfuture East Anglia station audit

www.railfuture.org.uk/east/docs/Railfuture-East-Anglia-2017-01-16-Whittlesford-Parkway-Station-Audit-Report.pdf

4.8 Accessibility work at Shepreth Railway Station

The station is increasingly hampered by long level crossing barrier downtimes, adding significantly to overall journey times and for some, and is dissuading prospective rail users. An accessible bridge connecting the two platforms is needed. The station would also benefit from a package of enhancements improving access, similar to those planned in the LTP for the Fenland Stations of Manea, March and Whittlesey.

Substantial improvements to Shepreth Railway Station are supported by the Meldreth, Shepreth and Foxton Community Rail Partnership

meldrethsheprethfoxtonrail.org.uk

Some initial work on accessibility is being done with funding from the GTR Passenger Benefit Fund.

Railfuture East Anglia Station Audit

www.railfuture.org.uk/east/docs/Railfuture-East-Anglia-2016-03-25-Station-Accessibility-Audit-Meldreth-Shepreth-Foxton.pdf

4.9 Accessibility work at Meldreth station

The station is profoundly inaccessible for those with mobility challenges and to overcome this requires lift access between platforms and a ramp connecting the Melbourn side to the London bound platform. The station would also benefit from a package of enhancements improving access, similar to those planned in the LTP for the Fenland Stations of Manea, March and Whittlesey.

Substantial improvements to Meldreth Railway Station are supported by the Meldreth, Shepreth and Foxton Community Rail Partnership

meldrethsheprethfoxtonrail.org.uk

Some initial work on accessibility is being done with S106 funding and funding from the GTR Passenger Benefit Fund.

Railfuture East Anglia Station Audit

www.railfuture.org.uk/east/docs/Railfuture-East-Anglia-2016-03-25-Station-Accessibility-Audit-Meldreth-Shepreth-Foxton.pdf

4.10 Capacity enhancements between Ely, March and Peterborough

The LTP mentions faster and more frequent rural services on this line (see panel below).

The railway line between Ely-March-Whittlesea-Peterborough is one of the most important railways in East Anglia. Currently it is its only East-West railway and the only route that enables access to the East and West Midlands, all of the north of England and Scotland. It is a true mixed traffic railway handling local and long distance passenger trains as well as a large number of long and heavy freight trains which makes it one of vital national significance. These freight trains include 18 daily (each way) trains to and from the Port of Felixstowe that represent nearly half the daily services associated with the port. More are planned until about 30 each way will daily travel via March. Over 200 trains a day currently use the route.

Hutchison Ports want to double the amount of freight they send by rail. This could take thousands of lorries per day off the A14 (to the benefit of other road users as well as the local environment). There are significant carbon reductions to be achieved as a result. 70% of the containers landed at Felixstowe are for onward transit to the midlands and north and therefore suitable for rail.

Capacity is held back by the antiquated signalling system in use. From the Welney Washes near Manea to Whittlesea the line is controlled by no less than 7 mechanical signal boxes controlling Victorian age technology. These are very safe but limit the capacity. In future, additional freight trains, long distance passenger trains and the new services from Wisbech will run.

The CPCA must work with Network Rail to ensure that modern signalling is introduced as a priority in the short term. This should be in conjunction with higher speeds and more track to enable passenger trains to overtake freight trains.

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority Local Transport Plan

“Although Peterborough is well-served by the rail network, with frequent, direct services to London, Cambridge and Norwich, together with the West Midlands and North of England, there are a number of opportunities for improvement, including faster services to London, Cambridge and Stansted Airport, more frequent services on rural routes to Cambridgeshire, Suffolk and Norfolk, and more capacity.”

Railfuture East Anglia www.railfuture.org.uk/East+Anglia

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