



OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM No: 7
23 November 2020	PUBLIC REPORT

ELY AREA CAPACITY ENHANCEMENTS (EACE)

1.0 PURPOSE

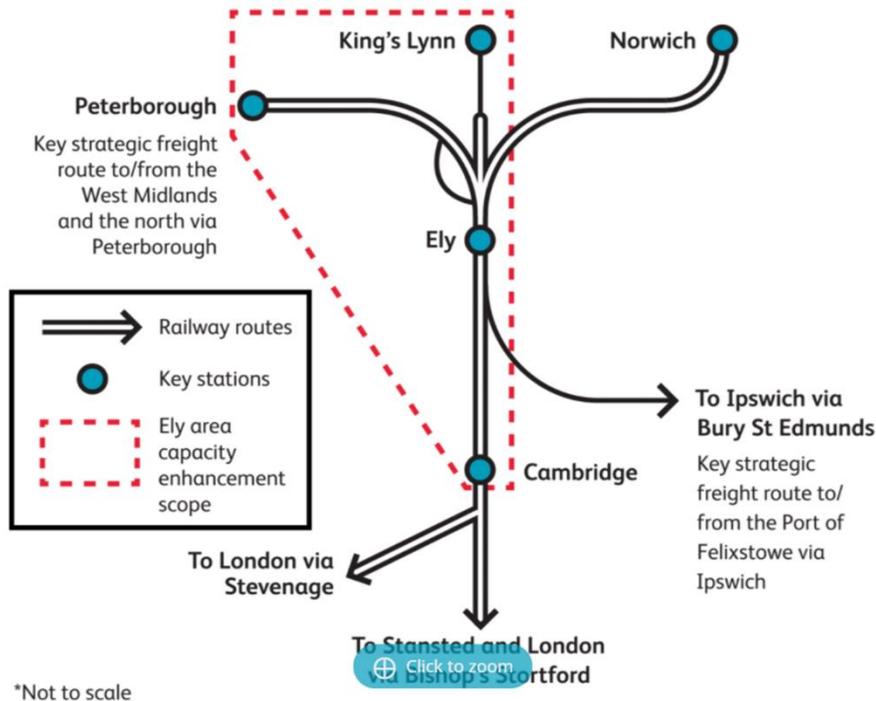
- 1.1 To provide the Overview and Scrutiny Committee with an update on progress in the development of the Outline Business Case (OBC) by the Department for Transport (DfT) and Network Rail (NR).

<u>DECISION REQUIRED</u>	
FROM:	
Lead Officer:	Paul Raynes, Director of Delivery and Strategy
Author:	Rowland Potter Head of Transport
The Committee is recommended to: a) Note developments on the EACE project	

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The rail network within the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority region is considerably constrained due to the complex issues at Ely north and Ely Station.
- 2.2 Network Rail (NR) on behalf of Department for Transport (DfT) have produced a Strategic Outline Business Case considering options for improvements to the network at Ely to enable between 11 train paths per Hour in each direction and 14 Train paths per hour in each direction compared with the current maximum of 8 train paths per hour in each direction.
- 2.3 The diagram below shows the Ely Area Capacity Enhancements Study Area as per the Network Rail consultation pages conducted between 21 September 2020 and 1 November 2020. (<https://elyareacapacity.com/>)

Source NR EACE Consultation pages



*Not to scale

A letter of support for the consultation proposals is being sent to Network Rail, expressing our support for extending the study to maximise the capacity through Ely to enable the growth agenda and Combined Authority objectives for additional stopping services at the Fen stations, the introduction of a Wisbech to Cambridge service, connectivity to Cambridge South Station plus the aspirations of freight and our Suffolk and Norfolk neighbours.

2.4 Further consultation is proposed in early 2021, to consider the challenges in what is termed the Ely South area which include the Ely station layout, structures and Kiln Lane crossing.

Source NR EACE Consultation pages



- 2.4 Governance of the delivery of this project is undertaken in the form of:
- A Task Force comprising funding members including Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority, New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership and Strategic Freight Management (DfT representing the freight industry) plus non

- funding partners to include Norfolk and Cambridgeshire County Councils, West Suffolk Council, and representatives from the passenger and freight rail companies;
- A Programme Board comprising the funding partners, the programme Board instructs the DfT as Sponsor on the funders wishes in relation to the production of the business case.
- 2.5 There have been numerous historical studies in relation to the corridors that include Ely Junction, with many Ministers stating their support but to date none have developed into physical improvement delivery.
- 2.6 The Combined Authority's objectives are:
- a. To ensure access is maintained for residents at Queen Adelaide in any resulting solutions.
 - b. To support solutions that enable increased track speed
 - c. To support the upgrading of structures, track and signalling to modern standard.
 - d. To enable additional freight and passenger services between Peterborough/Cambridge and Felixstowe plus Kings Lynn services
 - e. To enable additional stopping services at Whittlesea, March and Manea
 - f. To increase the number of passenger services at all stations throughout the 24-hour period
 - g. To lobby for train path allocation to enable the delivery of the line between Wisbech and March with proposed Wisbech to Cambridge services.
- 2.7 Network Rail under instruction from a programme board composed of the funding partners including Combined Authority, Greater Anglia LEP, SFM (DfT representing Freight), have been undertaking a Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) to:
- a. Identify and understand the challenges
 - b. To identify opportunities and consider options to resolve
 - c. Economic review to establish the potential benefits
 - d. Understand the technical challenges and establish cost estimates
 - e. Produce an SOBC with options for improvement and economic case to support this.
- The Combined Authority's financial contribution to this work is set at £3.3m.
- 2.8 In addition, the Combined Authority produced an SOBC for the Queen Adelaide area to consider the current road and rail crossings to the Peterborough, Kings Lynn and Norwich Lines. This work has been incorporated into the NR SOBC study.
- 2.9 There is current capacity through the Ely Area in each direction for:
- (a) 8 Train Paths Per Hour peak period
 - (b) 6 Train Paths Per Hour off peak period.
- 2.10 The current study proposed enhancements that will:
- a. increase to 11 Train Paths Per Hour (all day) of which 8 are passenger and 3 are freight
 - b. with further potential for 14 Train Paths Per Hour (all day) 11 are passenger and 3 freight
- 2.11 Within the 14 train paths per hour (all day), the Peterborough to Cambridge route is likely to benefit from:
- (a) An additional 0.5 train paths per hour Peterborough to Ipswich service, serving Peterborough, March.
 - (b) An additional 1 train path per hour on the Peterborough to Cambridge service serving

Peterborough, March, Ely, Cambridge.

(c) An additional 1tph Norwich to Nottingham service, serving Ely, March, Peterborough

(d) An additional 1 tph Norwich to Cambridge service, serving Ely, Cambridge.

(e) An additional 1 tph Kings Cross to Kings Lynn service, serving Ely, Cambridge.

(f) Potential for up to 2 train paths per hour on the March (Wisbech) to Cambridge service.

3.0 **Next Steps**

- 3.1 DfT have confirmed funding of £13.1m in addition to the historic £9.3m from the Combined Authority, New Anglia LEP and Strategic Freight Network, this funding progresses the study into the Outline Business Case Stage (OBC), for the development of the 11 Train paths per hour. Network rail also refer to this as 10 Trains per hour and to clarify this is because the current Liverpool to Norwich (East Midlands Trains) service utilises two train paths, one as it goes through Ely North junction into Ely station and one more as it exits Ely Station and travels back through Ely North Junction to Norwich.
- 3.2 We continue to lobby DfT and the rail Minister Chris Heaton – Harris MP, whom the Mayor met with to discuss both Ely and Wisbech and the need to progress both for the economic and housing growth of the northern part of our region.
- 3.3 It was agreed that a further meeting between Mayor Palmer and the rail minister will take place and dates are currently being negotiated.
- 3.4 Mr Chris Heaton – Harris MP acting in his capacity as Rail Minister recently attended the Railway Industry Association (RIA) Annual Conference in early November where he reportedly expressed his commitment to this project. The minister has also expressed his desire for acceleration of projects such as this through the government's new project speed agenda.
- 3.5 Officers remain members of the Project Board and Task Force committee and will continue to lobby for the maximum capacity as the study develops. Supporting accelerated delivery at every opportunity.
- 3.6 Future updates will be made to the Combined Authority Transport and Infrastructure Committee where relevant and appropriate.

4.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 There are no financial implications other than those referred to in the main body of the paper

5.0 **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There are no legal implications.

Supporting Documents

Link to EACE webpage for recent NR Consultation

Location

<https://elyareacapacity.com/>