



Simon Hankin
Community Rail Development
Rail Executive
Zone 4/27
Great Minster House
76 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DR

Circulation List Below
Distribution by e-mail

Direct Line: 020 7944 3280
simon.hankin@dft.gsi.gov.uk
Web site: gov.uk

Date: 25th July 2014

Dear Consultee

East Suffolk Lines: consultation on community rail designation

We propose to designate the two routes which comprise the East Suffolk Lines each as a community rail service. The routes are Ipswich to Lowestoft and Ipswich to Felixstowe. This proposal is in line with the Department's Community Rail Development Strategy.

Designation is intended to improve the financial performance, value for money and social value of the railways to help make sure of their long term future. Separate designation gives us the freedom and flexibility to try a new approach to achieve these aims. It also provides access to small scale additional funding.

We attach a route prospectus, outlining the scope for development, including locally agreed objectives. Designation will help make this possible and to build on the excellent work of the East Suffolk Lines Community Rail Partnership (CRP).

We would be pleased to get your views and comments on the proposed designation and all responses will be considered before the final decision is made.

Further copies of the documents are available from this address, and further information can also be viewed under [Community Rail](#) in the rail section of the [Department for Transport's website](#).

As the Community Rail Development Strategy was widely consulted on, this is a short consultation involving key local and rail industry stakeholders. I would be grateful if you could respond in writing by **Friday, 5th September 2014**.

If you would prefer a hard copy of this documentation, please contact me and I will send it by post. We are happy to have your response by e-mail sent to simon.hankin@dft.gsi.gov.uk

Thank you for your interest.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'SHankin', with a long horizontal stroke underneath.

Simon Hankin
Community Rail Development

List of Consultees

Abellio Greater Anglia
DB Schenker
Direct Rail Services
Freightliner Ltd
GB Railfreight Ltd
Network Rail
Office of Rail Regulation
Passenger Focus

Association of Community Rail Partnerships
East Suffolk Lines Community Rail Partnership
East Suffolk Travellers Association
Felixstowe Travel Watch
Ipswich Borough Council
New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership
Port of Felixstowe
Suffolk County Council
Suffolk Coastal District Council
Waveney District Council
Town/parish councils in the vicinity

Community Rail Designation

A Route Prospectus

The East Suffolk Lines

Introduction

This is a Route Prospectus for service designation to be applied to the two routes which comprise the East Suffolk Lines. The service operates from Ipswich in Suffolk to the coastal towns of Lowestoft and Felixstowe running through rural countryside serving a number of market towns along the route.

The East Suffolk Lines Community Rail Partnership

History

The CRP was formed in 2004 and until recently ran as an informal affiliation of interested partners. Since 2012 it has employed a part time officer to implement the plans of the CRP. Furthermore it has operated under a formal constitution since 2013 to ensure it is organised effectively to deliver improvements for both the partnership and the community.

Membership

The principle members of the CRP are

- The Train Operating Company (TOC) – Greater Anglia
- The principal local authority – Suffolk County Council
- The District Councils along the line – Ipswich Borough Council, Suffolk Coastal and Waveney District Councils
- Network Rail
- Representatives of parish and town councils along the line
- The East Suffolk Lines Travellers Association user group
- Station adopters

Membership is open to all interested organisations and individuals.

Funding

Core funding has been and continues to be provided, by the TOC and the local authorities. Additional project based funding has been obtained in partnership with others to maximize these resources.

Operation

The Partnership is concluding the formation of individual Line Groups to maximize the involvement of the community in its activities.

These Line Groups will each have a representative on the main CRP Board ensuring that the work of the CRP is driven in part by community interests. These local groups will typically bring together Station Adopters, local councilors, individuals and businesses along the routes.

Recent Developments

The CRP has been instrumental in the establishment of an hourly Sunday service to Felixstowe all year round. In 2013 the principal partners worked together to fund and promote a new passing loop at Beccles which transformed the Lowestoft service into a six day per week hourly operation. The CRP has marketed this vigorously resulting in record passenger numbers along the Ipswich to Lowestoft route. The line has witnessed an 11.5% increase in last year, and 100% increase in the last 6 years. The CRP has also worked with the TOC and Suffolk County Council to develop a Stations Investment Plan for the whole route, which has been used to stimulate investment in stations and facilities for customers. This has ensured that inward investment can be targeted to the locations where it is most needed, and has helped to underpin much of the growth in passenger numbers in the last 3 years.

The Route

Comprises two routes Ipswich to Felixstowe and Ipswich to Lowestoft.

Route: Ipswich to Felixstowe

The line from Ipswich to Felixstowe covers intermediate stations at Westerfield, Derby Road and Trimley.

Trains run hourly seven days per week. The line passes through the east suburbs of Ipswich and the line is also used by freight services to the Port of Felixstowe.

Route: Ipswich to Lowestoft

The line to Lowestoft continues north from Westerfield and serves Woodbridge, Melton, Wickham Market, Saxmundham, Darsham, Halesworth, Brampton, Beccles, Oulton Broad South.

Trains run at essentially hourly intervals six days per week, two hourly on Sundays. Westerfield and Brampton stops are partial and/or by request. There is minimal non passenger traffic north of Westerfield and the line is very rural in nature between the small market towns of Woodbridge, Saxmundham, Halesworth and Beccles. Ipswich station lies out of the scope for the proposed service designation

Aims and Aspirations

Increase usage

We aim to increase the use of rail services between Ipswich, Felixstowe and Lowestoft including the destinations in between. We encourage longer journeys by train that start and finish at the destinations within the CRP area. We want to see an increase in the number of rail users as a way of reducing car use and carbon emissions. We seek to enhance and preserve the passenger services on both the East Suffolk Lines whilst recognising the vital importance of freight to the wider transport network. The rural nature of the line means it is imperative we maintain accessibility to and from the local towns for employment, education and leisure.

Increased Community Involvement

We aim to encourage greater community involvement in the railway from volunteers, station groups and users. We aim to support those wishing to occupy redundant station buildings for the benefit of their community; a number of these projects are at an embryonic stage at present and the CRP is working with the TOC to develop a model for these 'community stations' that could have wider application to other community rail lines.

Increased business involvement

We seek closer partnership working with key local businesses involved with tourism and to help grow our market.

Better Stations

We want to see that passengers have attractive safe stations and will work to see CCTV, real time information and ticket purchasing facilities provided at all our station.

Connections

We will work to improve connections to the remote towns and villages not directly served by the railway. This has already been achieved with bus connections from Halesworth station to Southwold, adding another important Suffolk destination to the railway map.

Longer Term Aspirations

Improved Journey Times

We wish to see a reduction in the end to end travel time between Ipswich and Lowestoft currently limited by the large number of rural road and track crossings and we believe we have an important role in communicating the benefits of these improvement schemes to the communities served by the railway.

Sizewell C Nuclear Power Station Legacy and benefits

We wish to work with the authorities involved with the planning and construction of Sizewell C Nuclear Power Station to maximize legacy benefits for the local community and the possible reopening of the Leiston branch line.

Improved Connections

We wish to see an improvement in connection times at Ipswich for services to London. This will boost rail user numbers further, reduce travel time and eliminate delays. We would support electrification and doubling of the Felixstowe branch line.

More Rolling Stock

We support the TOC in seeking an increased provision of high quality medium distance diesel multiple units as fleet numbers are already severely stretched and will become critical in the years ahead with the planned increase use of the lines.

Success Criteria

We believe these objectives would drive:

- Increased patronage of the railway lines
- Reduced unit costs for the lines' operation
- A greater involvement of the community
- Generation of economic benefit for the area served by the lines
- A better and more comprehensive rail service

Conclusion

Service designation of these routes would not preclude investment in the future to support economic development, nor would it hinder the use of (principally) the Felixstowe branch for freight traffic.

Designation is intended to be a permanent arrangement subject to on going reviews.

We believe that service designation of these routes would underline the value of the East Suffolk Lines as a valued asset to the local

community. It would also help to demonstrate to potential funders of our activities that the East Suffolk Lines CRP has a key role in delivering further improvements to the quality of service to customers on these important branch line. It would therefore allow us to build further on the successes already achieved.

Designation is intended to be a permanent arrangement, but it can be reviewed periodically to assess whether designation is still appropriate.

Community Rail
Department for Transport
Rail Executive
Great Minster House
76 Marsham Street
LONDON
SW1P 4DR

July 2014