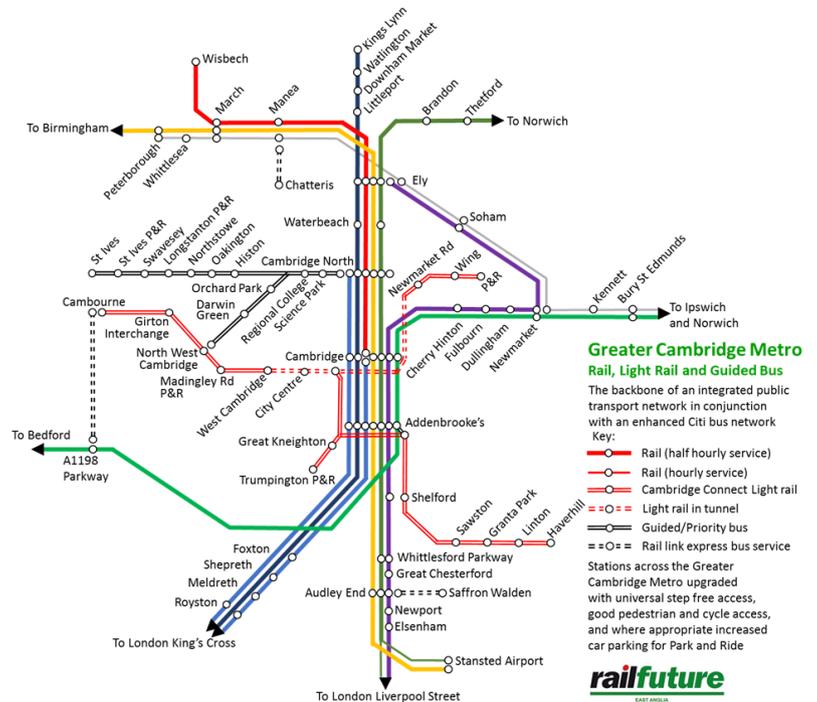


Combined Authority Mayoral Election 2017 A rail strategy for Cambridgeshire

The combined authority election for a directly elected Mayor for Cambridgeshire this May provides an opportunity for key decisions about our future to be taken locally and implemented quickly using additional funding provided by Government.

Transport is an area that the new combined authority will have responsibilities including the production of a county transport strategy that is linked to new development. Within Cambridgeshire there are a number of rail projects that are essential if improved services that provide a real alternative to increased car use and congestion are to be provided.



Extra capacity - Ely North Junction

The issue: Ely is the key node on the region's rail network where routes from Peterborough, Kings Lynn, Norwich, Ipswich, Felixstowe Docks and Cambridge meet. Ely North Junction is congested and further capacity is needed to enable additional passenger and freight trains to operate including those listed below.

Current status: Network Rail are developing proposals to be implemented during 2019-2024, the next rail funding period. The Local Enterprise Partnerships have recently announced funding to help these studies.

Action required: The new Mayor will need to keep the pressure on Network Rail to develop a scheme that will meet the region's needs and work with Government and other authorities to provide suitable funding.

New connections - Wisbech Line Reopening

The issue: The restoration of passenger services linking Wisbech to March and Cambridge is needed to support major new development of 10,000 to 12,000 homes in Wisbech. A recent survey by Fenland Council showed that 94% considered the new railway essential to any new development. Over 4000 people have signed a Railfuture petition calling for the rail link. A through service to Cambridge has the best business case but will require work at Ely North Junction.

Current Status: The County Council has commissioned feasibility studies on the rail re-opening. Fenland Council has submitted a £2m funding bid to develop the new garden village plans including new transport links.

Action required: The new Mayor will need to keep development of the rail scheme moving and project costs under control.

New services - Cambridge Metro

The issue: The Cambridge area is forecast to see significant growth in both housing and jobs. However, the high cost of housing in the city results in many people having to live in the surrounding towns and commute in each day. Existing rail routes link towns including March, Ely, Newmarket, Royston and Whittlesford to Cambridge. The new station at Cambridge North will provide further rail opportunities, though the level of service on each route varies and a minimum 2 or 3 trains per hour on all lines is required. The Cambridge Metro concept was voted the most popular proposal in a survey for the Cambridge Evening News.

Current Status: Train operators have plans to enhance some services such as additional trains between Cambridge, Royston and London. Other enhancements will require new infrastructure such as double track along the Newmarket line.

Action required: The new Mayor will need to work with the rail industry, local authorities and developers to secure funding to enhance services and facilities at stations such as improved parking, bus connections and step free access.

www.railfuture.org.uk/East+Anglia+Cambridge+City+Deal

Into the City – Cambridge Connect

The issue: Passengers arriving at Cambridge Station will need to complete their journey to various parts of the City. It is increasingly recognised that trying to run several hundred buses per hour through Cambridge's narrow streets will not work so an alternative is needed. Cambridge Connect is a light rail system with tunnels through the centre of the city. Light Rail is known technology, available for many suppliers and is easy to expand to meet future needs.

Current Status: Preliminary studies have identified a multi-stage scheme and possible costings.

Action required: The new Mayor will need to consider funding further studies for a scheme that is practical and serves the current and future needs of the city.

www.cambridge-connect.uk/connect-light-rail/cambridge-light-rail/isaac-newton-line

Regional links – East West Rail

The issue: East Anglia has poor transport links with other parts of the country. Rail travel to other regions currently requires travel by London or by slow cross-country trains. Faster links are needed.

Current Status: The interim Infrastructure Commission report in 2016, supported the creation of new road and rail links between Cambridge and Oxford. A final report is due towards the end of 2017.

Action required: The new Mayor will need to get involved with the Infrastructure Commission to agree the route for the new railway route and press for Government and developer funding to advance the scheme. Progress on the proposed stations to serve developments at Alconbury Weald and Hampton are also required.

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