

## Railfuture East Anglia response to the Cambridgeshire County Council and East Cambridgeshire District Council consultation on the Draft Transport Strategy for East Cambridgeshire

Railfuture East Anglia is a voluntary organisation funded by its members. We respond on behalf of members who live within Cambridgeshire and West Suffolk.

Railfuture East Anglia supports the strategy's six main objectives.

*Ensure that the Transport Network;*

- 1. Supports the economy and acts as a catalyst for sustainable growth*
- 2. Enhances accessibility*
- 3. Connects new and existing communities with jobs and services*
- 4. Prioritises sustainable transport alternatives and reduces impact of congestion on these modes*
- 5. Contributes to reducing transport's contribution to air quality emissions in particular NOx, PM10 and PM2.5 – the main transport related pollutants*
- 6. Encourages healthy and active travel and supports people's well-being*

We make the assumption the improvements to networks in East Cambridgeshire will have beneficial knock-on effects also within South Cambridgeshire, City of Cambridge and Forest Heath District of Suffolk.

Access to Cambridge city is imperative where improvements in East Cambridgeshire will certainly contribute to improvements in air quality; wellbeing by encouraging cycling/walking to bus stops and railway stations at both ends of the journey.

Being able to access more affordable housing from areas of high employment growth and jobs from areas of more affordable housing must be a key objective of the study, for example from Cambridge City job market to Soham for housing.

Better public transport links will improve general accessibility through the area and help keep rapid growth sustainable.

Wellbeing and quality of life will be improved right across the Cambridge region if the County Council is able fulfil the policies the document highlights. For example an issue in Girton and right across north Cambridge is disturbance from HGVs on the A14. We quote a Girton residents newsletter:

*'A serious number of lorries streaming past our village carry freight from Felixstowe docks to the Midlands and the North. Until now the rail link to the docks from the rest of the rail network has been mainly single track and only able to carry 31 trains each way per day, but a recent decision to dual most of the line will enable it to carry an extra 14 trains per day each way. This could have a real impact on road freight, but there are some other sticking points in the rail network particularly between Soham and Ely. The proposed changes to the East Cambridgeshire rail network will also benefit capacity and connectivity for passenger use.'*

**County support of plans to improve the railway through Soham to double track on to Ely are to be wholeheartedly supported as are plans to enhance the layout of Ely North Junction.** In the medium term this will lead to a reduction in noisy HGVs throughout the County.

Railfuture East Anglia further supports particular other major infrastructure schemes proposed that will improve **rail capacity and connectivity** around Ely, Soham, Newmarket and Cambridge:

- **Soham railway station** which will enable passenger train services to be developed towards Ely/Peterborough and Bury St Edmunds/Ipswich.
- **Reinstatement of the Newmarket West Curve Railway line** which will enable direct passenger services to be resumed from Ely and Soham to Newmarket and on to east Cambridge and Cambridge city. By redeveloping the lengthy station platform at Newmarket, the Ipswich to Peterborough services could call and reverse at Newmarket creating an immense improvement in connectivity for Newmarket. Please see maps below.

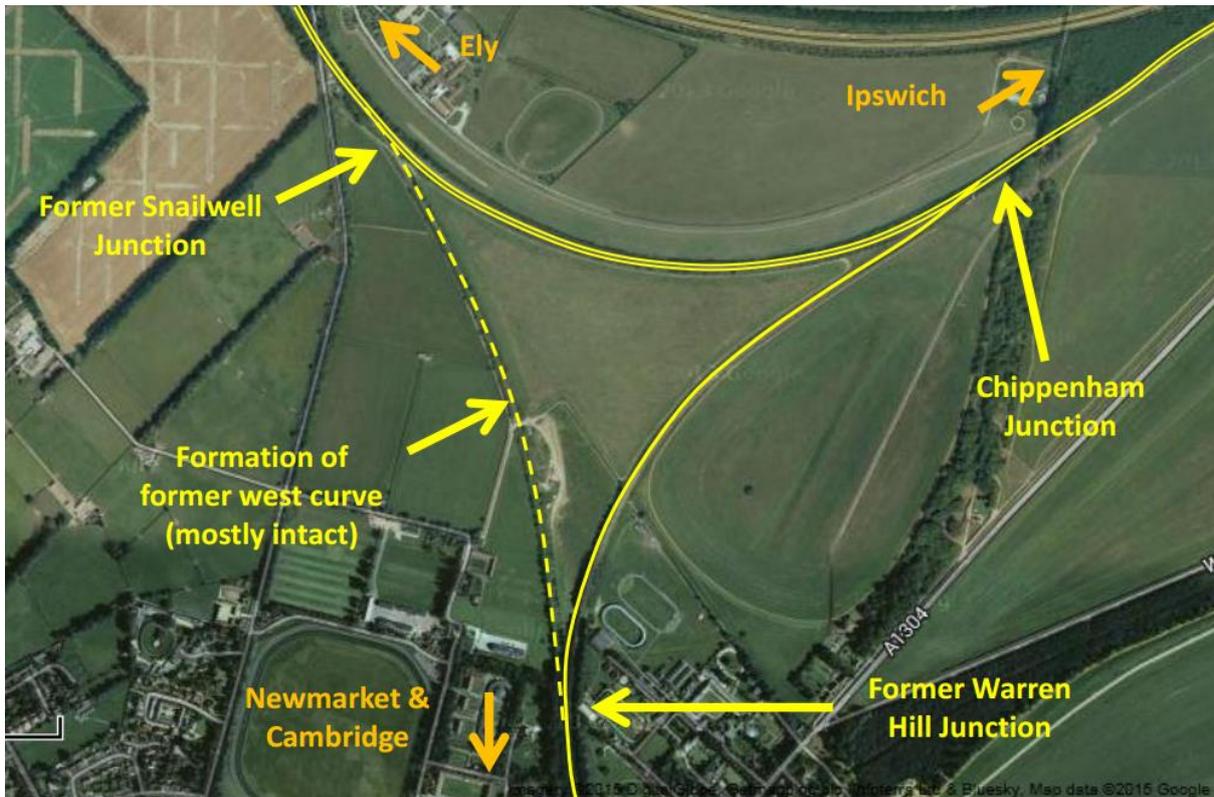
We note that Newmarket straddles the border between Cambridgeshire and Suffolk. Any improvements and additions to the rail network in East Cambridgeshire and Newmarket will have clear and positive outcomes in Cambridgeshire and Cambridge City as well as more particularly to all residents in Newmarket, Fordham, Soham and Ely.

- **Ely southern bypass** which will eliminate the level crossing at Ely station and improve the movement of both trains and buses over a wide area.

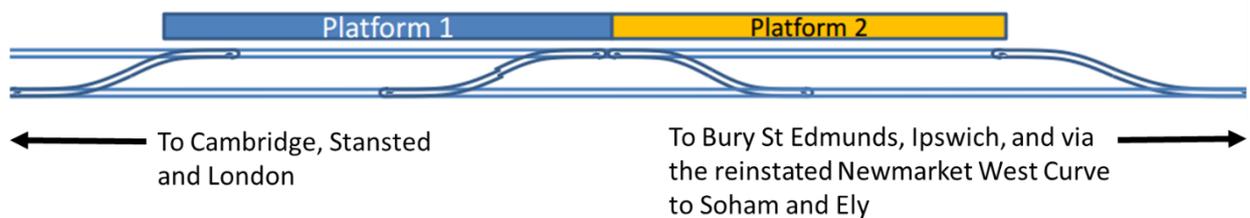
To reiterate Railfuture East Anglia strongly backs the following major scheme proposals:  
Ely Southern bypass;

- Soham area rail infrastructure improvements;
- Soham railway station;
- Ely North junction rail improvements;
- Reinstatement of the Newmarket West Curve railway line.

Please see below page 3, diagram of suggested possible improvements at Newmarket station and the Newmarket West curve, the route and earthworks of which must be protected until it is brought back into use.



**Reinstatement of Newmarket West Curve**



**Enhanced Newmarket Station**

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