railfuture
EAST ANGLIA

Notes about the GCP Cambridge South East Transport - Better Public Transport Project Public Consultation 2019

February 2020

About Railfuture

Railfuture is the UK's leading independent organisation campaigning for better rail services for passengers and freight. **Railfuture** is a voluntary group representing rail users, with 20,000 affiliated and individual members.
Railfuture Ltd is a not-for-profit Company Limited by Guarantee.
This response is being given behalf of our large membership throughout Cambridgeshire.

Link to Cambridge Biomedical Campus and Granta Park

Railfuture East Anglia supports the concept of a fixed link between Cambridge Biomedical Campus and Granta Park Research Park.

- **We do not support** the proposed preferred route that avoids the major centres of settlement.
- **We do not support** the proposed method of operation rubber tyred vehicles on tarmac. Initially buses but eventually by the so far untried, untested bespoke CAM system.
- **We do support** the Cambridge Connect proposed of Light Rail Transit (LRT), it being environmentally efficient in energy and a well tried and tested easily implemented 'off the shelf' system.
- **We do support a route** from Cambridge South Station and Cambridge Biomedical Campus (CBMC) via Shelford Railway Station to Granta Park (and eventually to Linton and Haverhill).
- **We support the a route that:**
    - is LRT and parallels an existing busy transport corridor, the Network Rail Mainline Railway south of Cambridge railway station, the busiest in East Anglia.
    - The existing movement along this route will easily 'absorb' additional movements and noise etc from LRT i.e. there will not be additional movements "in the landscape" as there will be in the GCP proposal. Relatively very little new land take is required compared to GCP proposal.
    - It leads into a former and still extant transport corridor - the former railway line to Haverhill and Sudbury. This is "frozen" into the landscape already. Hardly any additional land take needed although in monetary terms this right of way will have to be purchased.

LRT will serve the considerable population of the Shelfords/Stapleford and Sawston directly. Walking and cycling paths can be constructed to the LRT giving active health benefits. Connections are available at the adjacent Shelford station to a range of local destinations. Bus interchange is possible at Shelford Station for further destinations.

railfuture
EAST ANGLIA

Level Crossings

We do recognise that work will be needed to get the LRT through Shelford as

- it is assumed the LRT will parallel the NR Mainline.
- it is assumed there will be an LRT stop at Shelford Station.

it is assumed that there will be an interchange between the two and that the level crossings at Granham Road and Hinton Way/Station Road will have to dealt with.

However this should be viewed as an opportunity to improve the transport efficiency of the wider Cambridge region as level current crossings in Shelford are a real concern to NR. It is assumed it would like to get rid of them for safety and operational reasons.

The near future arrival of East West rail will make them more of a safety and operational problem wherever it enters the local geography.
Currently both level crossings limit the development the train service to cope with increasing rail user demands. (The Granham's level crossing is close to the junction with the route via Shepreth)

Both level crossings are linked into the signalling of both mainlines and thus long barrier down time is the norm to give as many trains a clear run under green signals rather than being slowed by a succession of yellow caution signal indications.

The Granham's Level Crossing **is a hold-up to road users**. Their cars can back-up to the road junction on the west side with Cambridge Road.

Shelford Station Level Crossing **is a real problem for potential rail users** as the barriers are down across the road unpredictably, leaving users trapped on the "wrong side" of the crossing as their train arrives and departs. Public transit must have certainty.

Shelford Level Crossing has long down-times leading to road user vehicles queuing back along Hinton Way, again sometimes, on the west side, to Cambridge Road. This is in an urban environment and the visual effects of the queue ,air quality, noise and movement are real problems to the local residents.

So if these are the current problems that will have to fixed, could the fixing them be brought forward to be a win-win for MOST people who live very locally and the wider community?

1. Closing Shelford Level Crossing would lead to no more queuing along Hinton Way. No more through traffic. Less visual nuisance, less air pollution, less noise, more safety. The railway will be operated more efficiently and more safely. But Hinton Road and neighbouring streets would have to use new routes to get over the railway.
2. Closing Shelford Level Crossing will entail a new road to take the through traffic (some land take). Hinton Way can be diverted from a point just east of the last built up area of Shelford more or less westwards to join Granham's Road.
3. Granham's Level Crossing should be closed and be bridged. There is room for a road bridge which should be used by the joint Hinton Way and Granham's Road traffic streams. Road traffic congestion will be eased on these two corridors. Rail traffic can safely be increased and it's regulation will be eased. The LRT line will go under the Granham's Bridge, parallel with the NR Mainline.

4. **Closing Shelford Level Crossing will impede access across the railway for pedestrians and cyclists. This will be mitigated by building a wide ramped fully accessible subway under the railway and LRT with fully accessible ramps up from it to the Cambridge bound platform of NR Mainline Station. Building a subway will be visually positive compared to ramped footbridges with expensive lifts and their towers (such a wide, shallow and fully accessible underpass for pedestrians was recently constructed at Royston).**

At Shelford the railway and LRT will block-up Hinton Way to vehicles as a through route. But pedestrians and cyclists will have continued access across them to both sides of a Hinton Way.

Rail and LRT users will have unimpeded access to the respective stations with no possibility of being trapped on the "wrong side" of the level crossing by barriers as now.

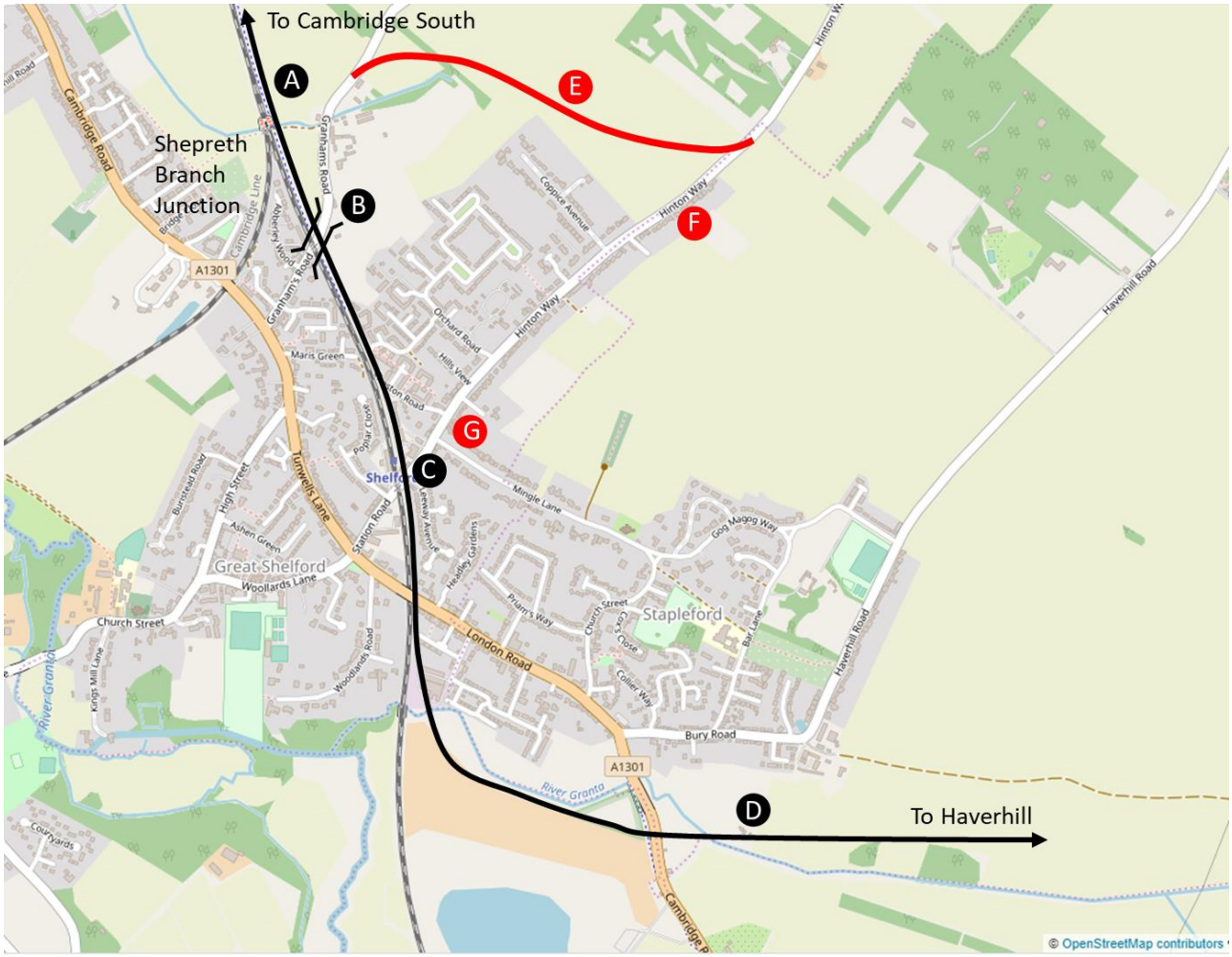
Residents who live east of the level crossing wishing to use their vehicles will be inconvenienced though they do already have alternative routes they no doubt currently use for some journeys by way of Mingle Lane to London Road then the existing railway over-bridge to the south of Shelford Station (Mainline rail and LRT will go under this London Road bridge which has enough arches for both railways).
Other routes will be available by way of the proposed link road to Granham's Road and the proposed Granham's Bridge.

Between Granham's Level Crossing and Shelford Stations the LRT will parallel the NR Mainline. There will have to be necessary alterations including, probably, limited building demolitions and alterations to the Chaston Road estate road and the adjacent Mill Court office complex. The latter should be remodelled to create a more attractive urban realm remembering the LRT will enable a massive uplift in property value both domestic and commercial. Property owners will not be out of pocket. Commercial property owners adjacent to the LRT will want to change/modernise the current premises especially if near to the stations.

The GCP Route way to the east of Shelford will have little benefit to local residents.
It will have a much bigger (and pristine) land take than the via Shelford railway corridors.
Connectivity will be poor.

It will introduce movement and continual disruption across a "highland" landscape where currently there is none.

It will not enable necessary improvements to the Shelford area road network and urban realm, where this network intersects the railway corridor. These necessary improvements will have to be carried out eventually without the benefits indicated above.



LRT/CAM Route via Shelford Station showing interventions that alleviate rail and road flows

A. LRT/CAM parallel to railway corridor
B. Granham's Road overbridge over railway
C. Level crossing closed. Pedestrian/cycle underpass
D. Old railway formation (could divert via a Sawston Loop)
E. Indicative route of link road from Hinton Way to Granham's Road
F. to G. Closed as a waymarked through route

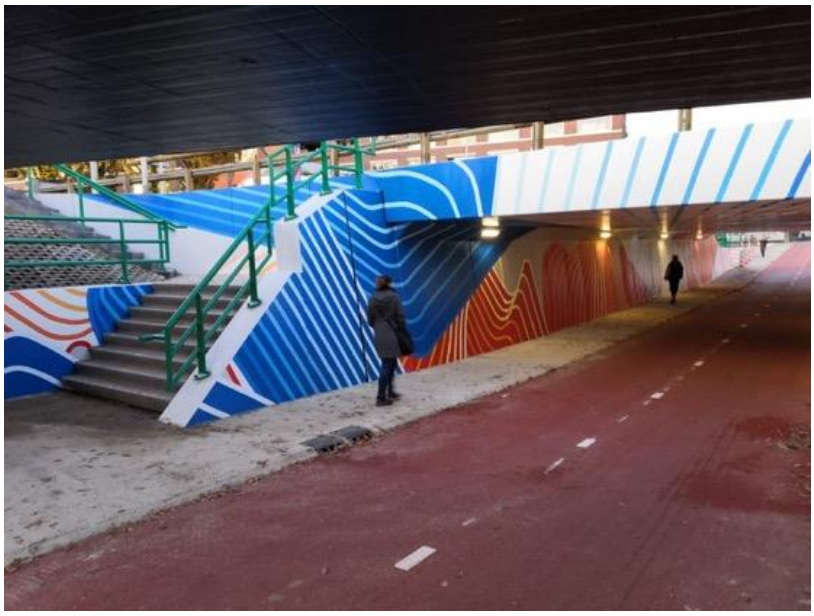
The Way Ahead

The GCP, NR, the CPCA and the East West Rail Company should work together to get a scheme that benefits all parties but above all the local residents and the people of Cambridgeshire.

We recommend that the GCP preferred route be realigned to operate via the railway route.

- it should be operated as an LRT system
- it should part of a larger and more thoughtful plan to create wider benefits than those indicated in the prospectus

Two photos showing an example of pedestrian and cycleway subway from the Netherlands:



Suggested for something similar as the continuation of Hinton Way under the railway into Station Road.

Closing Shelford Level Crossing will impede access across the railway for pedestrians and cyclists. This will be mitigated by building a wide ramped fully accessible subway under the railway and LRT with fully accessible ramps up from it to the Cambridge bound platform of NR Mainline Station. Building a subway will be visually positive compared to ramped footbridges with expensive lifts and their towers.

railfuture
EAST ANGLIA

Heavy Rail reopening option

In 2016 the Greater Cambridge City Deal (now the Greater Cambridge Partnership) published a Cambridge to Haverhill Corridor Study to assess the benefits of a number of different transport options including reopening the railway from Cambridge to Haverhill as a heavy rail line.

https://citydeal-live.storage.googleapis.com/upload/www.greatercambridge.org.uk/transport/transport-projects/A1307_Rail_Viability_Technical_note_27.11.2015.pdf

This report gave an initial Benefit to Cost Ratio (BCR) assessment of 0.99 for this option, which is strong when compared with other schemes at this part of the process, as the BCR can expect to grow significantly when wider economic benefits are taken into account reaching the DfT's target figure of at least 2.0.

The scheme which was assessed was:

- Predominantly single track
- Half hourly service frequency to Cambridge
- Intermediate stations at Sawston and Babraham, Granta Park and Linton

The Greater Cambridge City Deal only had a £39m budget for this corridor, so considered heavy rail unviable in the context of a scheme they were prepared to take forward.

Railfuture East Anglia published "Rail Haverhill Viability Study" which puts this reports conclusion into a more general context and explains why the BCR can be expected to substantially increase.

https://www.railfuture.org.uk/East+Anglia+Haverhill

https://www.railfuture.org.uk/east/docs/Railfuture-East-Anglia-2016-04-24-Rail-Haverhill-Viability-Study.pdf

Text by Peter Wakefield, Vice Chair Railfuture East Anglia peter.wakefield@railfuture.org.uk

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

Paul Hollinghurst, Secretary Railfuture East Anglia paul.hollinghurst@railfuture.org.uk