

# raileast

Newsletter of East Anglia Branch of Railfuture

Issue 202 • June 2024

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**East West Rail Wisbech and Haverhill re-openings**

**Line upgrades to support faster and more frequent rail services**

**Get more lorries off the roads and onto the railway**

**Fewer cancellations, delays and rail-replacement buses**

**Railway that is focused around the passenger**

**Better station facilities and accessibility. Value-for-money fares**

**Earlier and later trains, better connections**

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- Rail replacement bus to Stansted
- Peterborough station audit
- South Cambs Ecotourism
- Bacon Factory Chord anniversary
- West Anglia Mainline timetable
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## **New blood on the Railfuture East Anglia committee – [p.22](#)**

Introducing three new members of the branch committee



In issue 203 we want to feature GTR's KeyGo with weekly capping. Have you used it? Has it saved you money?

Photos by Peter Wakefield of Cambridge South station on 28 May — Railfuture understands that problems with a signalling supplier put the May 2025 opening date at risk.



# FROM THE (NEW) CHAIR

BY IAN COUZENS, CHAIR, EAST ANGLIA BRANCH



Welcome to the June 2024 issue of RAIL EAST. This is my first report since being elected chair at our February AGM, but before giving an update on some of our current work, I must thank my predecessor, Nick Dibben, for everything he has done as chair over the past seven years.

In a rapidly changing part of the country, there has been a huge amount of input needed by our branch in responding to the challenges and opportunities for rail development in East Anglia. Nick has chaired the branch with much skill and knowledge over that time and we are extremely grateful for the very valuable service and leadership he has given. We wish him well in retirement in Lincolnshire, but hopefully will still see him back in East Anglia from time to time!

For myself, I have lived and worked in Norwich for many years. I was brought up in Bishop's Stortford and my first regular encounter with rail was doing the daily journey on the Cambridge line to secondary school at Newport. I also commuted in the other direction to London for four years, before moving to Norwich. Apart from my work as an accountant, I was also a councillor on Norwich City Council for a number of years. I have been a Railfuture member for more than thirty years and joined the branch committee as the Norwich and Norfolk rep some seven years ago. It is an honour to be elected chair and I look forward to working on behalf of members in this role.

In this issue of RAIL EAST, I would like to focus on three major campaigning themes, all considered in greater depth in relevant articles below.

## General Election

When writing this, I expected (like many of you) that the general election would be held this autumn, but it has been sprung upon us. Fortunately Railfuture East Anglia already had plans in place, and we will be emailing parliamentary candidates to get their support to improve and develop the East Anglian rail network during the next parliament and beyond. We will seek commitment for existing projects, especially East West Rail and the Ely North/Haughley infrastructure enhancement. We will also send our own 'New Geography for East Anglia' report and will be looking for support for our proposals for future improvements to the network both across the region and specifically in the areas which candidates seek to represent. Our priorities are listed in our manifesto on pages 5-8 where we also mention what Railfuture is doing at a national level.

## East West Rail

The East West Rail Company will be applying for a Development Consent Order (DCO) for the new Bedford to Cambridge section and an upgrade to the Bletchley to Bedford line. The DCO is the equivalent of gaining planning permission where a major infrastructure project is involved. There will be an opportunity for members of the public to give their views in a statutory consultation, originally scheduled for June but now delayed until after the 4 July general election. For more information, see the article on page 15. Members and supporters of Railfuture across Great Britain have already received a briefing on the proposals and once the consultation is open they will receive a direct request to give their support. This is so important and I urge you to do just that to help get the project over the line. There are still those who would seek to stop East West Rail and who will be sure to object. We need to ensure there are as many messages of support as possible. For further information, read our article and see <https://eastwestrail.co.uk>

## Cambridge Delivery Group

The Cambridge Delivery Group (CDG) is a new body set up by the government to coordinate the phenomenal growth of Cambridge and ensure there is sufficient housing and infrastructure put in place to support the city's economic expansion.



According to a government response to a Freedom of Information request, the Cambridge Delivery Group is an informal advisory group made up of a team of experienced Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) and Homes England staff across all grades. The Delivery Group is underpinned by specialist working groups, consisting of national and local stakeholders with relevant experience and interests. Its chair is Peter Freeman (pictured left), the head of Homes England.

Railfuture East Anglia will seek to engage with the CDG at an early stage and make the case for rail and the major role it can play as part of the city's transport solution. The potential for more rail is strongly backed up by a demand study we have recently commissioned into the potential for a reopened tram/train link to Haverhill – see the article on page 13. The study concludes that large numbers of people would use the line and that it could form a valuable part of the transport infrastructure in future years. So, the findings here are really positive and this can only help us with our campaigning work and in getting our message heard.

I hope you enjoy reading this issue of RAIL EAST and look forward to seeing you at our next branch meeting in Ipswich on Saturday 22 June – see below.

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## RAILFUTURE EAST ANGLIA MEETING — SAT 22 JUNE 2024

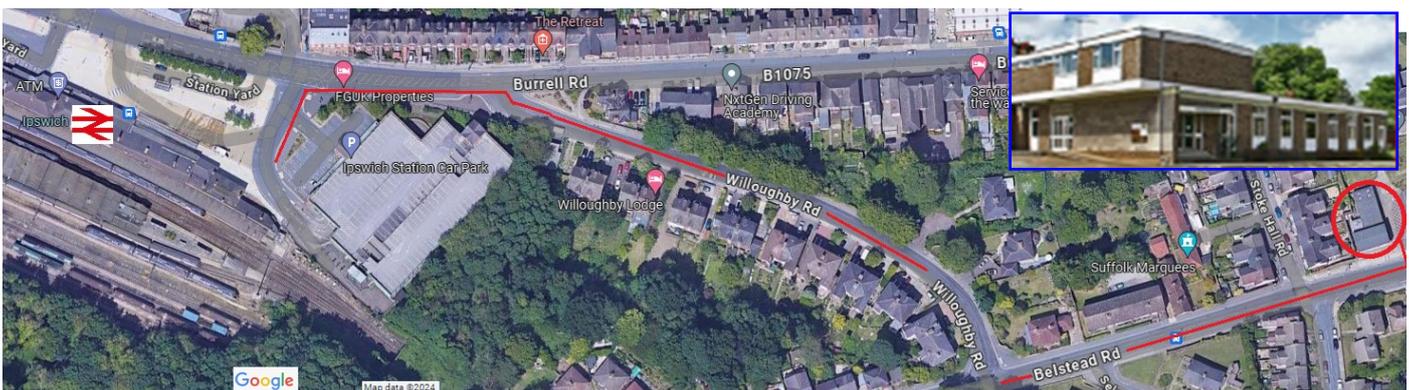
### St Mary's at Stoke, Stoke Street, IPSWICH IP2 8BX

We hope you will be able to join our free-to-attend public meeting in Ipswich, at our usual venue, starting at 14:00 where we will give a presentation on the **Haverhill Railway Restoration** titled "A Big Role for a Haverhill Railway". Doors will open at 13.30.

Members and RAIL EAST readers will know that in 2023 Railfuture East Anglia had commissioned Jonathan Roberts Consulting (JRC) to produce a paper on whether or not the restoration of the railway is feasible between Haverhill and Cambridge. JRC's report is most encouraging, with exciting findings not only for Haverhill but Cambridge too. Read more about the proposals on page 13.

After a break for refreshments (free, but donation appreciated), there will be an update on the latest rail news and Railfuture's campaigns. We all hope that following the general election, approval will be given to progress vital infrastructure upgrades such as Ely Area Capacity Enhancement and Haughley Junction.

The Google map below shows the walking route from Ipswich station to St Mary's hall via Burrell Road (for a short distance), turning into Willoughby Road and then Belstead Road.



# RAILFUTURE EAST ANGLIA – A RAIL MANIFESTO FOR THE NEXT PARLIAMENT

COVER STORY

BY IAN COUZENS

As the political parties publish their manifestos in advance of the general election, Railfuture East Anglia presents its own manifesto for rail improvements we would like to see in our region over the course of the next parliament. Of course, we know that rail projects take a lot longer than that to come to fruition and indeed our 'New Geography for East Anglia' proposals cover the period all the way to 2050. Still, there is much that could and should be done over the next five years if we are going to reach the desired outcomes in 'New Geography'. If we are to meet the challenges from a rapidly growing region, and at the same time achieve our decarbonisation goals dictated by climate change, then there is no time to lose. We cannot afford to go slow now and hope to catch up later.

So, do we have the capacity to deliver the proposals set out in the manifesto? The answer must be yes. Much of the early work involves feasibility and planning, which are tasks that can be shared between the rail industry and local government. What we look for above all however is leadership from a government which will be fully committed to rail, will encourage and expect proposals to be brought forward and that can make finance available for new projects so they can be delivered.

Our manifesto is organised under five key headings.

## 1. Delivery of critical projects: East West Rail and Ely/Haughley junction upgrades

The importance of these two projects can hardly be overstated.

- Continuing support for East West Rail has to be maintained by the new incoming government. The Development Consent Order for the Bletchley to Cambridge section needs to be granted and construction work got under way early in the next parliament. We look forward to seeing commitments for the running of through trains from Oxford to Norwich and Ipswich.
- Government funding needs to be secured as a priority with an early date set for carrying out improvement works. It is totally unacceptable that capacity constraints at Ely North should limit the number of paths available. Development of both freight and passenger services is constrained until these works are completed. The image (right) is from a campaign leaflet to ask the government to get Ely moving.



## 2. Greater Cambridge area rail improvements needed in response to the city's rapid growth

As one of the UK's most successful cities, a newly formed Cambridge Delivery Group is going to oversee further housing and infrastructure development within the Greater Cambridge area. If rail is to play the role it should in the city's transport infrastructure, it needs to be incorporated into the Group's vision early on, due to the time it takes to implement rail projects. Large numbers using the Cambridge stations and predicted use for Cambridge South show how successful rail already is. However, this success is concentrated along the Ely/London bound routes. Action needs to be taken to replicate this achievement from other directions too and our proposals below will help to make this happen.

- Wisbech urgently needs to be linked back into the rail network. There is no reason to delay an early reopening of Wisbech to March, since this can be done

on a shuttle basis to start with. Through running to Cambridge can be implemented later on when Ely improvements have been carried out.

- An additional station on East West Rail at St Neots should be approved to provide this rapidly growing town with direct rail access to Cambridge.

The full business case must be prepared for the following proposed schemes:

- ◆ A Haverhill to Shelford/Cambridge tram train, building on the encouraging demand study prepared by Jonathan Roberts Consulting. This line could potentially form part of a Greater Cambridge light rail system.
- ◆ Redoubling of the line to Newmarket and installation of a Newmarket west curve to allow for more frequent services from Newmarket and Bury St Edmunds, and for direct services from Soham to Cambridge.
- ◆ A new station at Cambridge East.
- ◆ A new east side entrance at Cambridge station to aid passenger flows.

### **3. Actions to encourage greater rail use across the wider East Anglian network**

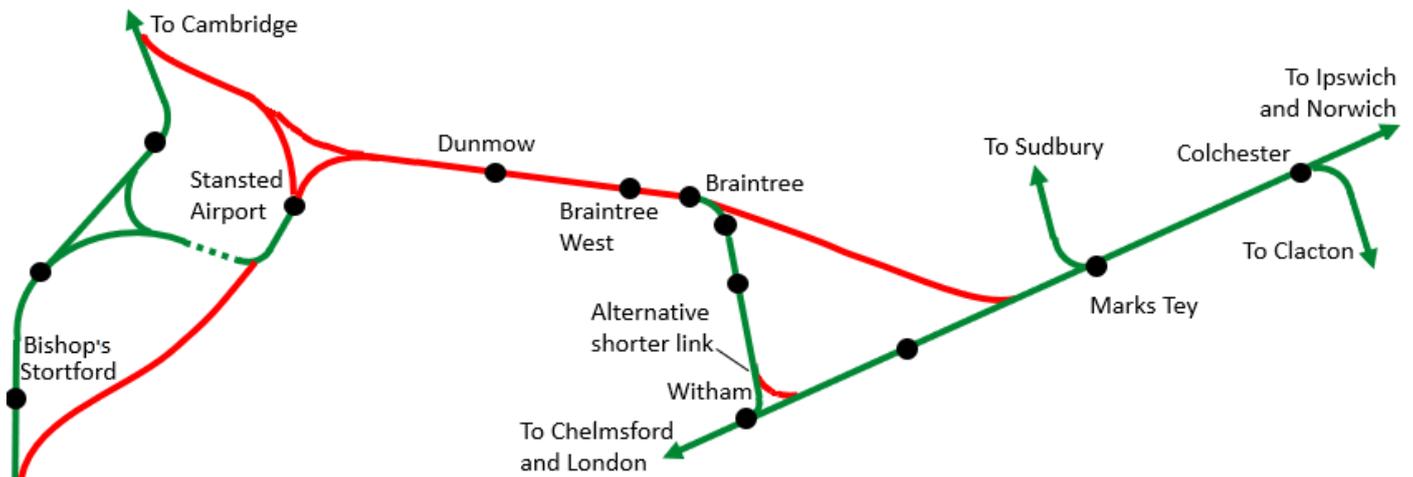
We set out priorities for a number of other schemes across the East Anglian rail network. These would improve connectivity between our major towns and cities and would allow end to end journey times by rail to compete more effectively with road. They would develop and improve local networks, especially in the Greater Norwich area, and also provide stronger links with the region's coastal communities.



- Introduce faster journey times made possible by new trains and in combination with a review of existing speed restrictions. Deliver "Norwich in 90" targets on the Great Eastern Mainline and begin to make time savings on Norwich - Cambridge services.
- Start implementing half hourly services throughout day in place of hourly on selected lines. The aim should be for all hourly services to be eventually half hourly.
- Implement hourly service Ipswich to Ely.
- Around Norwich, complete feasibility work for Broadland Business Park and set a start date for construction. Carry out improvement works to Salhouse station to cater for new North Rackheath development.
- Take first steps to create Norwich Metro and in addition to Bittern Line improvements, approve feasibility work for new stations at Hethersett and Long Stratton and also the reopening of the Dereham line for network services. There should also be seamless bus transfer at Norwich and Great Yarmouth stations to their respective city/town centres. These links could in future be considered for conversion into tram train links.
- Prepare a feasibility study for a station at South Lynn and set a date for construction.
- Advance plans for the replacement of Trowse swing bridge with a double track bridge and/or carry out capacity improvements at Trowse junction.
- Improve links with coastal communities, with Stansted Airport to Norwich or East Midland Railway services running on to Yarmouth or Lowestoft.

### **4. Future new 'R120' rail link Colchester/Chelmsford - Stansted Airport**

Work carried out by Jonathan Roberts Consulting showed there could potentially be a strong case for building a new line along the A120 corridor between Braintree and Stansted Airport, which we called 'R120' (see map at top of next page). The benefits of this link would be to create a fast new route connecting Colchester and Chelmsford with Stansted Airport and then on to Cambridge. Existing rail links from Colchester and Chelmsford to Stansted Airport and Cambridge are of course very



circuitous, so a new link connecting these major population centres and competing strongly with road would create a major new benefit for rail users and draw many new users to rail from the congested road system.

We call for further studies to be carried out to quantify the potential benefits from constructing this new rail link.

## 5. Freight improvements

We cannot allow the growth of rail freight to be limited by infrastructure constraints when moving freight by rail can contribute so much to decarbonisation targets and to the easing of traffic congestion. Added to this, most freight trains are diesel hauled and a programme of electrification is much needed to reduce carbon emissions even further. We therefore call for the following actions to be taken to improve capacity across our region and to help meet decarbonisation targets:

- Secure funding for junction improvements at Ely North and Haughley (see above), and ensure works are carried out as early as possible.
- Plan for redoubling of line from Soham to Ely.
- Electrify the Felixstowe branch as a short 'infill' section as soon as possible.
- Plan for further electrification from Haughley to Ely and Peterborough as a part of a national programme of freight electrification. According to The Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport, electrifying only 800 miles nationally over a 20-year time frame would permit 95% of trains to be hauled by electric locomotives, compared to only 10% at present.

## RAILFUTURE'S NATIONAL MANIFESTO

The above lists the priorities for Railfuture's East Anglia branch, which focuses on schemes and services. Nationally, Railfuture takes a strategic approach, to promote a bigger and better railway across Britain, presenting its views (with supporting documents) to both government and shadow ministers. Our 10-point Action Plan (from February 2024) can be viewed at [www.railfuture.org.uk/article1911](http://www.railfuture.org.uk/article1911).

During the election campaign period, Railfuture will be asking questions to candidates via social media, one per week:

- Q1. How will your government ensure that both passenger and freight rail users are put first in future?
- Q2. How will your government attract more passengers to use rail?
- Q3. How will your government use rail to help meet UK carbon reduction targets?
- Q4. How will your government simplify the rail industry to improve accountability and reduce costs?
- Q5. How will your government ensure that rail provides value for money to taxpayers while improving the quality of rail services?
- Q6. How will your government maximise the opportunities for rail to support economic growth, provide access to employment and education, and improve health and social inclusion?

# RAIL REPLACEMENT BUSES: GREATER ANGLIA'S SCENIC ROUTE FROM CAMBRIDGE TO STANSTED...

BY PAUL HOLLINGHURST

One fact we all know about passengers is that the more times they have to change vehicle the less likely they are to use public transport. Convenience matters. It's one thing to know in advance that you'll have multiple connections but to discover this when you arrive at a station, and that you'll be arriving later than planned, can be quite distressing — especially if you have a flight to catch.

Greater Anglia's rail replacement bus service to Stansted Airport currently pushes a direct half-hour journey to over two hours with three changes. This is unacceptable.

The railway south of Cambridge is often closed at present due to work on the future Cambridge South station and Cambridge Area resignalling. Passengers appreciate that this work is necessary but expect the rail companies to do their best to minimise the inconvenience to their journeys. However, for the important link from Cambridge to Stansted Airport, Greater Anglia (GA) would struggle to come up with a worse offering.

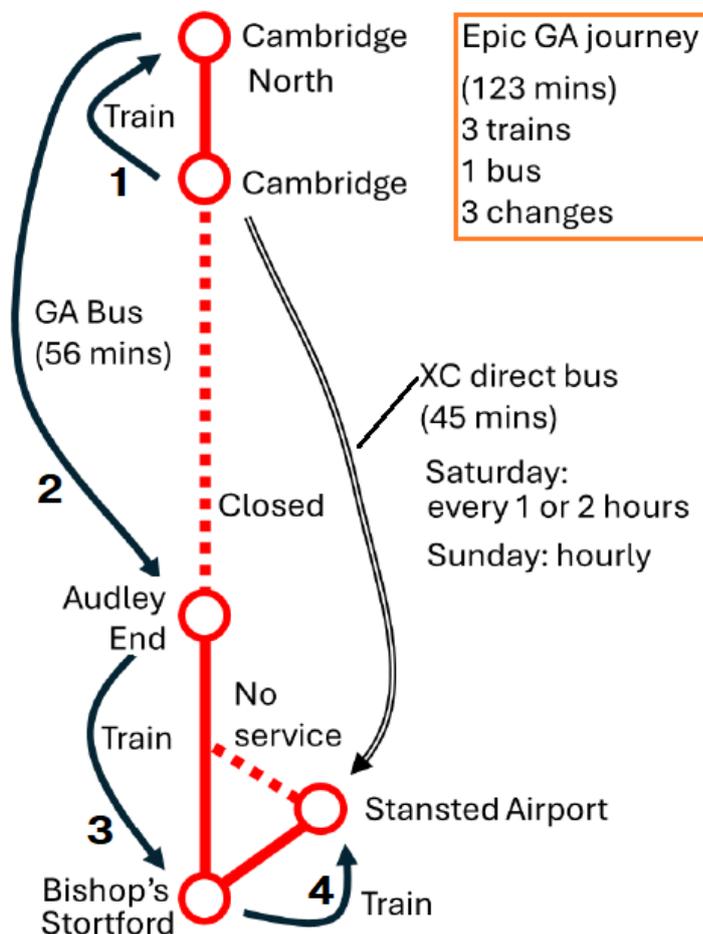
On a normal day Cambridge and Stansted Airport are linked by direct trains provided by GA and Cross Country (XC) — neither runs an hourly service from early to late on Saturdays, but the combined service throughout the day is one or two direct trains an hour with a journey time of around 30 minutes, with Greater Anglia running an hourly service for the bulk of the day.

XC replaces this with a direct rail replacement coach taking 45 minutes — so only 15 minutes extra. The GA offering, however, is in a different world, an epic four-stage trip of over two hours with three changes best viewed on the map — a train to Cambridge North for a rail replacement bus to Audley End, train to Bishop's Stortford then another train to Stansted Airport.

So why the difference? GA explains that this is due to Department for Transport (DfT) rules only allowing it to run a bus over the section of line that is closed, so it has to put passengers back onto the train at Audley End. XC doesn't have a base south of the closure, so cannot operate a train and as a result is exempt from the rule and can operate the bus straight to the airport.

On Sundays there is no problem as there is an hourly XC rail service, so an hourly 45-minute bus substitution service is provided; even better, in 2025 XC will restore its rail service to hourly seven days a week, so the problem will go away. But there are many line closures between now and then, and how many other instances like this are there across the country?

It is quite clear that the outcome of GA's interpretation of the rules has come up with an extremely non-passenger friendly outcome, and a number of aspects don't really make any sense — or at least not common sense.



Railfuture asks why is it alright to run a rail replacement bus taking 56 mins from Cambridge North to Audley End, but not alright to run a direct bus from Cambridge to Stansted Airport taking only 45 minutes? Why is it alright to run buses beyond the line closure in the north (sending them to Cambridge North) but not alright to run them beyond the line closure to the south? Why is it alright to effectively close the north curve at Stansted and still say buses cannot be used to help passengers round this? But above all – why is it in any way acceptable to transform a direct half hour rail journey into an epic two-hour journey with three changes, and isn't there any mechanism to bring back some sense of reason to the rules between train operators and the DfT?

Under the current rail structure, the DfT decides almost everything, so we've written to them, but their replies have been frustrating.

Railfuture simply wants the two train operators to be allowed to get together and between them to make sure there is one direct rail replacement bus an hour from Cambridge to Stansted. Not too much to ask, surely?

Cambridge to Stansted Airport		
Sat 08 Jun at 08:40		
09:20 Cambridge	10:05 Stansted Airport	£13.40 Anytime 0h 45m 0 chg
09:54 Cambridge Plat. 8	11:57 Stansted Airport Plat. 1	£13.40 Anytime 2h 03m 3 chg
11:20 Cambridge	12:05 Stansted Airport	£13.40 Anytime 0h 45m 0 chg
12:20 Cambridge	13:05 Stansted Airport	£13.40 Anytime 0h 45m 0 chg

The timetable planner for Saturday 8 June 2024 shows one of several two-hour gaps in the direct 45-minute rail replacement bus from Cambridge to Stansted Airport.

## PETERBOROUGH STATION AUDIT SHOWS PASSENGERS NEED SHELTER AND BETTER INFORMATION

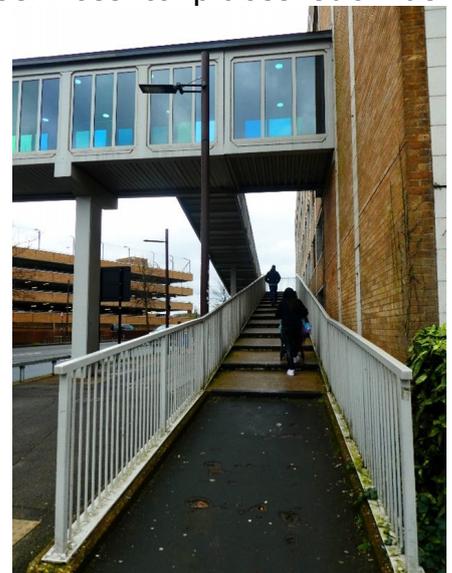
BY NICK DIBBEN & PETER WAKEFIELD

According to figures from the Office of Rail and Road, nearly three quarters of a million passengers changed trains at Peterborough Station last year. However, a recent Railfuture East Anglia audit of the station identified that many passengers would have had problems in finding out which platform their connecting train departs from, and they would have to stand outside whilst waiting.

The Hereward Community Rail Partnership (CRP) that covers the line between Peterborough and Ely asked Railfuture to carry out the audit to help them identify possible improvements to the station. Acting as infrequent rail passengers, the audit looked at access to the station, station facilities and information systems. The station is operated by LNER, but other train operator services to places such as Huntingdon, Cambridge, March, Spalding and Nottingham are included in the top 10 passenger flows.

Although the station is close to the city centre and bus station, the stepped ramp footbridge over Bourges Boulevard (see photo, right) can make access difficult for some users. The alternative step free route is via a heavily graffitied subway which is hardly attractive. The high cost of car parking at the station should provide an incentive to cycle or take the bus, but we found one of the cycle racks virtually empty and there was no local bus information in the station concourse. There are plans to create a new station square outside the entrance when some of these issues can be addressed.

The audit found that there were toilets and covered shelter on each platform and that there were plenty of



staff around to help passengers. We also liked the 'bee friendly' planting on platforms 2/3.

The main concern from the audit was the lack of information for passengers needing to change trains. Although there are general departure screens in the waiting rooms, these are difficult to see and additional screens are required along each platform to enable passengers to quickly find their connecting train. It was also noted that platforms 2/3 and 6/7 had very little shelter as the roofing over the platform buildings did not extend very far along the platforms, as shown below.



## CONNECTING TOURIST ATTRACTIONS: AN ECO-FRIENDLY PROPOSAL FOR SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE

### BY SARAH GROVE

Tourism plays a pivotal role in the local economy of South Cambridgeshire, drawing visitors to its picturesque landscapes, historical sites and cultural gems. To further enhance this vital sector, our proposal aims to bridge the "last mile" gap between tourist attractions and local railway stations. By introducing an eco-friendly tourism bus service, we can create a seamless and sustainable travel experience for both visitors and the environment.

#### **Eco-Friendly Tourism Bus Service**

At the heart of this proposal lies the establishment of a dedicated eco-friendly bus service, which would connect three prominent Cambridgeshire tourist attractions:

- **Wimpole Hall:** A grand country estate with sprawling gardens, historical architecture, and captivating exhibitions.
- **Shepreth Wildlife Park:** Home to diverse wildlife, educational programmes, and conservation efforts.
- **IWM Duxford:** The Imperial War Museum's aviation hub, showcasing vintage aircraft and wartime history.

These attractions will be linked to the railway stations at **Shepreth** and **Whittlesford Parkway**. The timing is strategic: during peak summer visiting hours, when tourists flock to explore the region.

## Objectives

- **Enhance Tourism Connectivity:** Imagine a seamless journey for tourists – hopping off the train and stepping directly onto an awaiting eco-friendly bus. By connecting attractions to railway stations, we create an integrated tourism experience that encourages exploration.
- **Promote Sustainable Transportation:** The proposed bus fleet will consist of electric or hybrid vehicles, minimising carbon emissions, reducing air pollution, and maintaining a quieter ambiance.
- **Boost Local Economies:** Vibrant local businesses around railway stations and attractions will benefit from increased footfall. As visitor numbers rise, so do opportunities for economic growth. Local cafés, pubs and restaurants will thrive.

## Key Features

- **Eco-Friendly Fleet:** Picture sleek electric buses gliding silently through the countryside. These vehicles will not only transport tourists but also contribute to a cleaner, healthier environment.
- **Efficient Route Planning:** Routes will be designed to optimise travel time but can also be designed to support local residents.
- **Integration with Train Schedules:** Timings matter. The tourism bus schedule should seamlessly align with local train timetables to ensure a smooth transition between modes of transportation.
- **Information Services:** Step aboard, and you'll find more than just seats. Our buses could feature information displays, brochures, and knowledgeable guides. Tourists will learn about local history, hidden gems, and nearby businesses.
- **Branding/Marketing:** Our buses won't blend into the landscape. Externally, they'll showcase large photos of the very attractions they serve. Bold branding will pique curiosity and beckon travellers to explore.

The next step is to explore grant funding opportunities to support a feasibility study into the proposal, collaborating with the attractions, the train operating companies and local businesses. A subsequent trial run awaits to assess popularity and fine-tune our approach. Lessons learned will guide a full-scale operation.

In summary, as people are becoming more conscious of their impact on the environment, they are seeking out more sustainable travel options. This proposal isn't just about trains or buses – it's about weaving together the fabric of South Cambridgeshire's tourism tapestry, where every ride contributes to a greener, more connected future.

Email comments or suggestions on the project to [sarahgrove.msfcrcp@gmail.com](mailto:sarahgrove.msfcrcp@gmail.com)

*The author is Project Officer, Meldreth, Shepreth and Foxton Community Rail Partnership*

*Images from the National Trust, Imperial War Museum and Shrepreth Wildlife Park websites.*



# REVISION OF THE WEST ANGLIA MAINLINE TIMETABLE – SOME KEY SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS

BY PETER WAKEFIELD

In previous issues we have mentioned the opportunities that arise from the need to revise the WAML timetable, necessitated by the East Coast Mainline (ECML) timetable revision. But, just to reiterate, we have formally requested that:

- the Sunday Ely-Cambridge timetable be modified so that the current three trains per hour (tph) that operate within 10 minutes of each other, be spread more evenly around each hour, ideally at 20-minute intervals
- the 1tph Norwich-Cambridge-Stansted Airport service operates on Monday-Friday (M-F) as it does on Saturdays, every hour early until late throughout. Currently on M-F, no train operates south of Cambridge during peak hours owing to historical timetabling constraints
- the off-peak Cambridge North-London Liverpool Street service M-F be revised to operate 2tph all stations all day north of Bishop's Stortford, plus an off-peak 1tph semi-fast via Stratford to Liverpool Street – the former to service the rapid population and economic growth around all local stations that are in the Cambridge travel to work zone, and the latter in recognition of the cultural developments around Stratford station and, of course, the need to compete with the parallel M11
- connections at Cambridge from Great Northern services to Greater Anglia services on the Mid-Anglia route to Newmarket, Bury St Edmunds etc be carefully considered as a result of timetable changes brought about as a result of the ECML revisions.

Regarding the second bullet point above, Network Rail (NR) kindly investigated this problem for us as a response to our query about the mysterious "level crossing problem" we were constantly informed of that meant the Norwich-Stansted service could not operate south of Cambridge. NR explained there is indeed a foot crossing at Littlebury that is a (temporary) problem but that wasn't the cause of the train not running. (*Temporary* as NR hopes to resolve the issue with a technical solution shortly). The reason the Norwich services cannot progress south of Cambridge in the morning peak and north of Stansted in the evening peak, is that the current timetable has 2tph fast to Liverpool Street, each immediately followed by a stopping service to Liverpool Street and vice versa in the late afternoon. The Norwich-Stansted service's path is occupied by one of the Liverpool Street services. Whilst recognising that an additional problem is the single line tunnel into the Airport station that severely limits any off-pattern path through it, we have asked if the path of the 'offending' Liverpool Street service can be investigated to see whether it can be slightly altered to accommodate the missing and very important Norwich-Stansted service.

Occasionally the historical patterns have to change to accommodate new and emerging patterns of travel.

The opening of Cambridge South station (pictured) means that the timetable needs to be tweaked, although the four tracks and increased speeds at Shepreth Branch Junction help mitigate its effects.



Photo by Anthony Stanton in md-May.

# “A BIG ROLE FOR A HAVERHILL RAILWAY” – RESTORING THE RAILWAY BETWEEN HAVERHILL AND CAMBRIDGE

BY PETER WAKEFIELD

Railfuture has never campaigned to build a new railway or restore a disused railway out of nostalgia for the past or just because the route still exists. We have always campaigned on sound economic and social grounds, using evidence gathered from elsewhere that the railway is the enabler of sustainable development of the local, regional and national economy, at the same time as providing mobility for all. The modern railway is able to provide mobility for all in safety, in volume, at speed – as well, crucially, as providing **capacity**.

## Gathering the evidence

We are excited because in the case of the Haverhill to Cambridge transit corridor we have been able to gather the detailed evidence to back up the claims we’ve made before, that restoring the railway would transform travel along the A1307 corridor. Since the railway was closed in 1967, Haverhill has become a large town with a population approaching 30,000, with the A1307 corridor to Cambridge now linking major employment areas including the Cambridge Biomedical Campus (pictured) with its hospitals and research, science parks at Babraham and Granta Park, housing in Linton and Haverhill and the large surrounding catchment area. This detailed evidence has been obtained by commissioning a study of the corridor by Jonathan Roberts Consulting (JRC). JRC’s study concluded that there is a strong case for the restoration of the railway, truly living up to the title of the work, “**A big role for a Haverhill Railway**”.



The size of the Cambridge Biomedical Campus and its employment needs is apparent from this cropped photo of just some of the key buildings.

## The broad conclusions of the study

are that the railway will serve large populations and support the local economy, linking Cambridge with Haverhill and serving principal stops at Cambridge South (Biomedical Campus), Granta Park, Linton, Haverhill Parkway and Haverhill Town Centre. The modelling shows that in addition to these places, the railway’s catchment area would cover 100 parishes, as far as Thaxted, Braintree, Halstead, Sudbury and towards Bury St. Edmunds – a significant swathe of southeast Cambridgeshire, north Essex and west Suffolk. The total catchment area population would be between 90,000 and 165,000, i.e. three to six times more than Haverhill on its own. Add to that, a further 12% population growth is estimated in the area up to 2041.

Table 2 – Revised railhead catchment zone populations based on 5 min slower journey on Haverhill Line

Railheads	2021	2041
Haverhill area urban wards	27,005	28,551
External parishes, via Haverhill Parkway	53,198	61,221
Linton	10,901	10,921
Bury St. Edmunds (local catchment only)	41,291	41,649
Dullingham	35,991	40,392
Stansted Airport	116,659	134,324
Audley End	30,376	35,077
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>315,420</b>	<b>352,135</b>

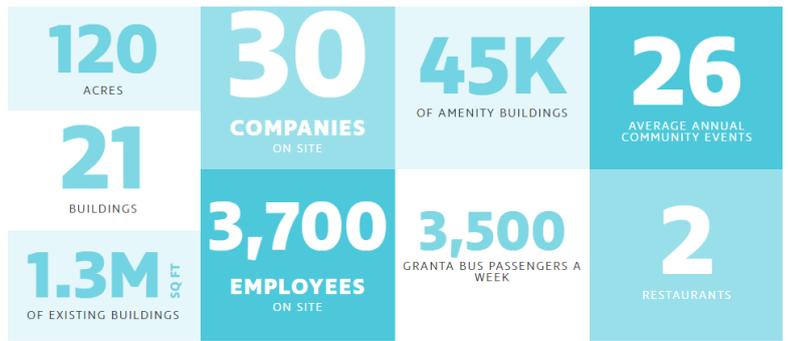
**Total Haverhill Line catchment population** 91,104 100,693  
 % of total population 29% 29%  
 Haverhill urban as % of Line population 30% 28%  
 Some parish populations have been shared between 2 or 3 railheads.  
 2041 parish population growth is based on past 10-20 year growth history

The above shows just one of several tables using the analysis commissioned from JRC, which has been included in the Railfuture 35-page report.

## 2,000 passengers an hour transfer onto a railway service

The study shows that the railway would attract very big passenger numbers, reflecting the already large passenger flows travelling by road along the A1307

corridor. Potential rail passenger numbers are considerable, 2,000 and more per hour during the peak period. These are very significant numbers (a total of 36 carriages of passengers during the peak) and will strongly underpin a business case. Over time, such commuting could double, with Cambridge city car restraint policies, the stimulus of Cambridge North, Central and South stations, and increasing dormitory area populations.



The above metrics show the size of the Granta Park (<https://grantapark.co.uk/> home page).

### The key... frequency, speed and capacity

To best serve the transport needs of the A1307 corridor, demand modelling shows that if the railway offers a quick journey and good frequency, then it will compete with off-peak car and be much faster than road at peak times. A 21-minute journey time from Haverhill to Cambridge South could be achieved with a fast limited stop service serving Haverhill Parkway, Linton and Granta Park. For places further into Cambridge an additional interleaved inner service could serve places between Granta Park and Cambridge such as Babraham, Sawston and Stapleford.

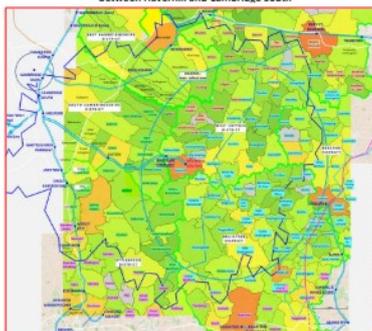
### Tram-train technology

Tram-train technology could be the best initial operational standard as this would allow services to operate not only onto the main rail network to directly reach places such as Cambridge North, Waterbeach and a future station at Cambridge East, but could also link into a light rail system for Cambridge being promoted locally by Cambridge Connect.

### Cambridge Delivery Group

The government has created the Cambridge Delivery Group, and amongst its key remits is the development of a comprehensive transport network to serve a growing Cambridge. Its document "The Case for Cambridge" published in March 2024 (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-case-for-cambridge/the-case-for-cambridge>) states "To deliver the step-change in capacity and connectivity this ambition requires, the government envisages a transport system made up of several elements, which may range from improved walking and cycling routes to mass transit system options, such as trams and light rail."

Restoring the railway to Haverhill directly matches this vision, unlike the Greater Cambridge Partnership's proposed Cambridge South-East Transport (CSET) bus road linking the Biomedical Campus to a huge Park and Ride on the A11 — a plan which would increase car dependence, provide little help to Haverhill, slice right through green belt countryside, and have no place in a world moving towards sustainable travel. Only a rail-based solution can provide the capacity to shift the numbers of people that this report demonstrates will need moving into the city with its future growth.



including policy actions for Railfuture East Anglia  
Jonathan Roberts, JRC, February 2024

### What we have done so far

Since receiving the data from JRC, and producing our report from it (front cover, left), we have briefed all the councillors in West Suffolk, many Suffolk and Cambridgeshire County councillors and their officers, as well as the Cambridge Delivery Group and the Greater Cambridge Partnership, Network Rail and Greater Anglia. The feedback has been very positive.

View report at <https://www.railfuture.org.uk/display3658>.

# A LONG & WINDING ROAD – EAST WEST RAIL AND ITS APPLICATION FOR A DEVELOPMENT CONSENT ORDER

## BY PETER WAKEFIELD

The East West Rail Company team has been working out the best route for the eagerly anticipated new railway between Cambridge and Bedford for what seems, well, for ever. But now it is ready to present the world with its detailed route for public comment. At various 'meet the public events' along the route in May 2024 the team has been explaining the process that it must legally follow before it is granted its Development Consent Order (DCO) to start the construction of the line.

In effect, the DCO is a legal authorisation giving permission to build and operate the railway that "combines multiple approvals into one document." It is a very long-winded process. If only we could put the shovels into the ground with the application of the never-ending hammering of the keys of thousands of laptops!

First there have to be TWO statutory consultations. Yes, two. The timing of the first is now affected by the July general election, but we assume sometime in the second half of 2024, and the second during early summer 2025. The Company has provided this timeline:

- 1 - Summer 2024. Part 1 of the Statutory Consultation is issued. We will contact Railfuture members when this happens. **It is vital that, via the consultation process, as many people as possible register their support as individuals for this vital 'Central Section' of the East West project.**
- 2 - Summer 2025 Part 2 of the Statutory Consultation is issued. Again, we will contact you when it is. So far, time taken, about 12 months — mid-2025, when things get a bit of a move on.
- 3 - The DCO application will be submitted "sometime after the closing date" of the second Consultation. Vague timing, but the Planning Inspectorate then has 28 days to decide whether (after all this time) enough accurate paperwork has been provided to go onto the next stage. Assuming it has been accepted as adequate, the application goes to ...
- 4 - 'Pre-examination', when over the following three months the project's 'plan' has to be publicised and time allowed for all those affected by it, to register as "Interested Parties". By the end of this time the Examining Authority will have decided via a 'Preliminary Meeting', how and when the Application will be examined.
- 5 - 'Examination'. Over the next six months the Examining Authority "gathers and reviews evidence and views, including supporting evidence put forward by EWR, statutory consultees, and representatives of 'Interested Parties.'"
- 6 - Within three months of the end of the end of the Examination, the Planning Inspectorate makes its recommendation to the Secretary of State.
- 7 - Within three months the Secretary of State is expected to make a DECISION.... but wait! ... ..
- 8 - "Post Decision" – a six-week period is allowed for any legal challenge, known as a Judicial Review.

So how long is a piece of string...? The whole process could conceivably take up to three years from now until the laptops shut, and the spades start digging – some point during 2027-2028!

During all those coming months, Railfuture East Anglia will be making its branch contributions as well as reminding you when you should be making yours. Fingers ready...!

As you will see when you read Tom Watt's piece about the omission of a St Neots station from the plans (p. 16), we have a lot to say about aspects of what is known so far, although, to emphasise, we do support the general route plan for EWR.

Please send us any observations you may have as we go through this process.

# EAST WEST RAIL: CASE FOR A STATION AT ST NEOTS

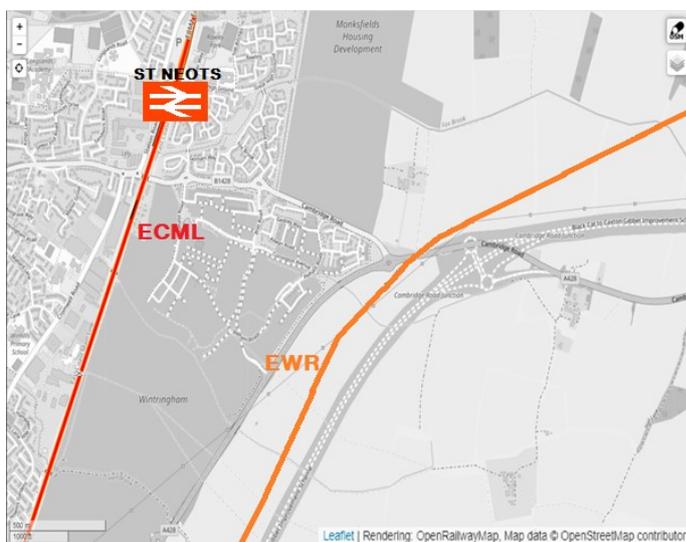
BY TOM WATTS



As a new member of Railfuture, it has been great for me to see the level of support for East West Rail, particularly for what is arguably the most important part of the project: the new line between Bedford and Cambridge. This link will provide much-needed connectivity between East Anglia and the rest of the country, unlocking new journeys for passengers, encouraging more people onto the railways, and furthering the decarbonisation of freight traffic. However, as well as the current uncertainty over electrification (an absolute necessity for a new-build railway of this scope), a significant oversight in the plans currently is the lack of an appropriate station for St Neots — a town which will be located directly on the new line, but which planners have seemingly given no consideration towards serving.

Including the adjacent village of Little Paxton, the population of St Neots is over 37,000 — more than Winslow, Tempsford and Cambourne combined (all planned stations on the line) — and this will only increase with major expansion currently underway on the eastern side of the town, with the first phase of 3,800 new houses under construction just a few hundred metres from the projected EWR route. There is plenty of space for a station to be built on this section of the line to serve the growing population, with pedestrian links to nearby residential areas and access for local bus services, yet up to this point no thought has been given to such a station despite the clear benefits of adding a further 40,000 or more people to the railway's catchment and providing the town with fast and direct rail links to Cambridge, Bedford and beyond. As a personal example, I am currently facing the prospect of a 90-minute commute across two bus services from St Neots to my future workplace; with an EWR station at St Neots, this would be reduced to a single train journey direct to the Biomedical Campus via the new Cambridge South.

There has been some suggestion that the planned station at Tempsford will provide adequate access to EWR for St Neots, but in practice it will simply not be convenient for most people to use, given the distance from the town and lack of car-free options for getting to the station. Very few people will want to travel the approximately 6km south to Tempsford just to then take a train heading back past their starting point on its way to Cambridge. While the ECML interchange at Tempsford is undoubtedly invaluable for EWR, the potential future development in this area should not be prioritised at the expense of serving existing communities. Crucially, one does not preclude the other; an additional station at 'St Neots East' could coexist with Tempsford, since shorter distances between stations already exist on the future EWR route (such as between Cambridge and Cambridge South).



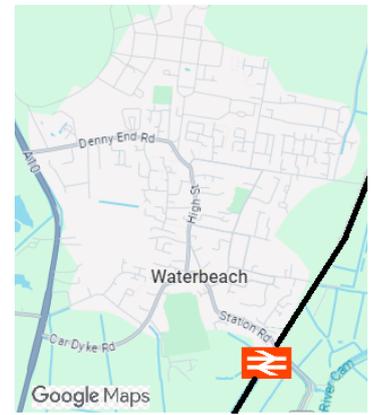
On top of positive responses from local councillors, both Cambridgeshire County Council and the Combined Authority have indicated support for a station closer to St Neots — the latter as part of its Local Transport & Connectivity Plan approved in November 2023 — showing that there is very much an interest in providing the town with better access to EWR. With the statutory consultation due to be published in July 2024 (after the general election) it may be somewhat late to include an additional station in the plans, but I am confident that with significant local support — and that of Railfuture — the EWR company will recognise the need for this station.

(Note image above is ©OpenStreetMap contributors CC-BY-SA 2.0 OpenRailwayMap)

# WATERBEACH NEW STATION – IS IT TIME TO RETHINK ARRANGEMENTS?

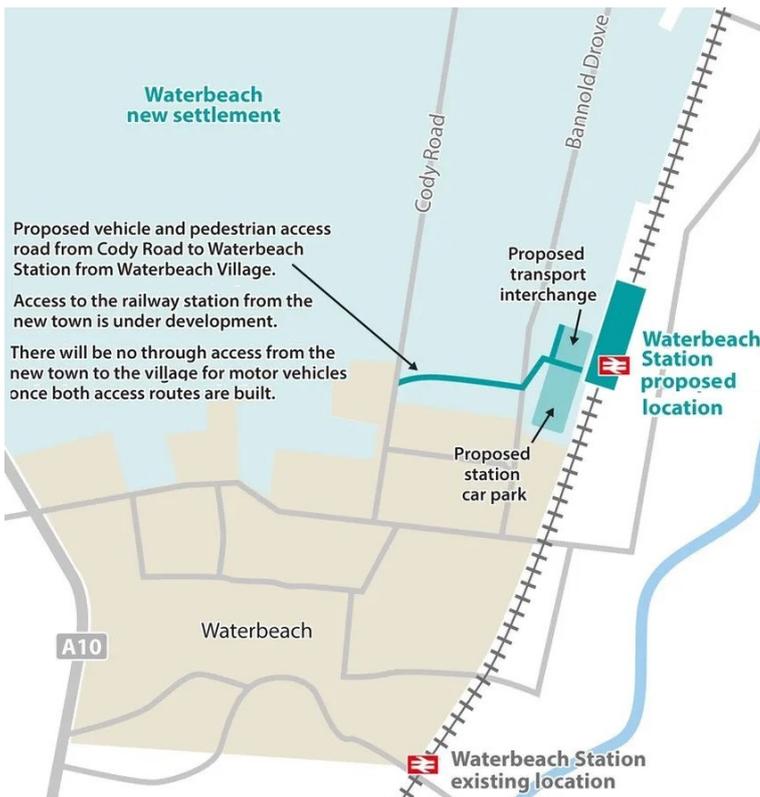
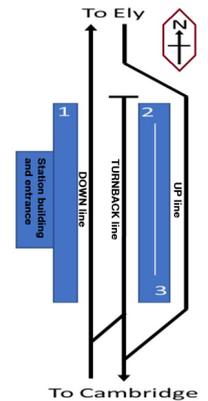
BY PETER WAKEFIELD

Waterbeach is a vibrant community of about 5,000 people situated some 10km north of Cambridge. It is served by a very well used railway station (see map, right) on the Cambridge to Ely line, with Cambridge North station about five minutes away and Cambridge station about 10 minutes (Cambridge South will be four minutes more.) Annual footfall at the existing station is now in excess of 300,000 journeys, rising as elsewhere after the huge dip caused by COVID-19.



Just to the north of the village is a large area of “brownfield” lands owned by the Ministry of Defence that is being developed into a new town also called Waterbeach. Between 8,000 and 10,000 homes are being built in two phases. The second phase is predicated on the provision of a new station, about 2.4 km to the north of the existing station, to serve it. In late 2017, Railfuture met with the developers of the second phase; we were impressed with their plans showing the new Waterbeach station as its centre piece, with good active travel connections to Waterbeach village prioritised by way of Bannolds Drove. There was to be no direct road for cars between the new town and the village. The funding for this station was to be through the developer, but as ever in way of these things, subsequently the developer couldn’t manage it all in one go, so the local authority has taken over its funding and planning.

Recently Cambridgeshire County Council announced it had progressed the plan for the new station, allocating £35m to its construction (it is now seeking a contractor). It will be located, as expected, 2.4km north of the existing station but only with an up and down platform, not the third turnback platform Railfuture advocated (image, right) that would have allowed the Royston-Cambridge stopping service to provide a cross city link across Cambridge every 30 minutes. Together with the 2tph Ely-Cambridge-King’s Cross service, this would have provided a 15-minute interval service between Cambridge and Waterbeach, as long planned by the developer of the Waterbeach New Town.



The map on the left from the Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP) shows how the new station will be accessed. Rather than using Bannolds Drove, it seems the initial way into the station will be via Cody Road. We assume that is a temporary arrangement and not a reneging on the promise made to the current residents of Waterbeach that there would be no car access between the two settlements (i.e. rat-running through the village). It seems from this map that the Cody Road link is temporary. In the meantime, Railfuture members resident in that area have pointed out that even on a short-term basis, Cody Road will not be able to cope with the multiple uses being thrust upon it. We will investigate the issues that this link to the station will create.

Railfuture supported the building of the new station in the original planning application. We still do. But change is now happening so fast in the Cambridge area that its population may triple over the next few years. Noting that some of the £35m allocated to the new station is for demolishing the current station, should we now see the latter as a valuable asset that is worth millions — up to £35m — a valuable portal that allows better access for several thousand people to the railway rather than being an operational nuisance?

It is a well-maintained station with two modernised eight-car platforms. Should it be mothballed rather than demolished? Should the funding allocated for its demolition be used instead for the creation of the third platform (“turnback”) at Waterbeach New, allowing the Thameslink service alluded to above, to start and finish at the new station on its journeys to / from all stations to Potters Bar – calling at Waterbeach Village station at the start and end of its journey? This would free up platforms at Cambridge station and provide an invaluable cross-Cambridge city link out to Royston. (All other longer distance services from King’s Lynn should call only at the new station.)



**View of the up platform showing the four-carriage extension opened in December 2020 as part of a £30 million project for eight-car trains. Photo: Jerry Alderson.**

There is much unhappiness amongst Waterbeach village residents about their perceived loss of mobility created by, from their point of view, this unwanted closure. Time for a rethink?

## UNRELIABLE STATION LIFTS

BY JERRY ALDERSON

The Office of Rail and Road (ORR) is concerned about the rate of lift faults at railway stations. In March 2024 it published a report which stated that in the year from October 2022 there were over 8,600 faults across the 1,331 passenger lifts managed by Network Rail at 491 stations. Each fault takes an average of over 20 hours to repair. In the same year passengers got trapped in a lift 601 times — see <https://www.orr.gov.uk/search-news/passengers-need-improved-reliability-and-real-time-information-station-lifts-says>.

Some good news: according to the ORR “86% of lifts are now able to automatically report their status”, which means that engineers could be called more promptly and perhaps automatically. They have also made this live information available to third-party developers, so that the information can be built into bespoke apps and integrated into existing website platforms. This remote detection is an example of the ‘internet of things’ (IoT). It has to be said that the railway in Britain is way ahead of many of its counterparts elsewhere in Europe on providing open data.

Lifts were very unreliable when Cambridge North opened in 2017 and Cambridge station suffered protracted problems in 2023. Fortunately Network Rail has accepted Railfuture’s call to provide two lifts on every platform at Cambridge South. In other European countries multiple lifts are often the norm not the exception.

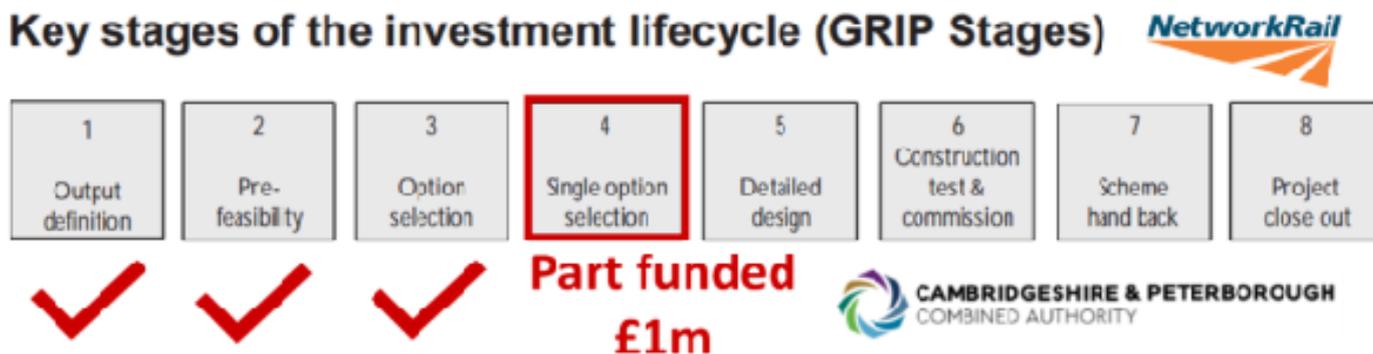
At Royston station the new footbridge opened in late 2023 but the lifts were still firmly hidden behind wooden panels in April 2024, when they were tested, for a week, to see how reliable they were. Station users might wonder why the old footbridge is still in place. The attempt to remove it failed because the train tipped over (into the car park fortunately, not onto the OLE) when trying to lift it out. So, they are waiting for another opportunity.

# WISBECH LINE—IS THERE A WAY TO GET IT MOVING?

BY JERRY ALDERSON

Railfuture is frustrated at how long it is taking to get the Wisbech railway line reopened, but surely not as much as the people who live there and desperately want to be connected with Cambridge, Peterborough and the wider rail network.

This is how things stood in 2020 according to our [www.wisbechrail.org.uk](http://www.wisbechrail.org.uk) website.



Since then 'GRIP' has been abolished and yet more studies have been undertaken.

In recent years we've seen major upgrades at Cambridge and Peterborough stations, with Soham and Cambridge North being opened in the region. There has been the Hitchin flyover and (as mentioned on page 20) the Bacon Factory Curve.

Yet, Network Rail still cannot decide what type of rail-based service should operate and as a result nothing has happened at all. Perhaps the reopening is seen as too large a task, with nothing happening until everything is decided.

As the saying goes, the best way of eating an elephant is one bite at a time.

The one thing that everyone can agree upon, surely, is that a railway station will be needed in Wisbech, and its location is pretty certain. Everyone also agrees what facilities are needed for a station. So here's a radical thought: why not build the station now? A station without any trains — how utterly stupid! But is it?

The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) found £18.6m for Soham station on an operational railway line. The cheapest way to build it is when the line is not operational. But none of us want an unused station (like the international areas at Ashford and Ebbsfleet stations that Eurostar has abandoned).

In the interim, the station would be used to run a dedicated GBR-branded bus service to March and even Peterborough. It would be slower than by rail but it would prove to everyone in Wisbech that the railway was going to happen.

People don't put their trust in buses because the service could be cancelled with just 56 days' notice, and who really wants to stand at a bus stop, even one of the few with a shelter? But with a shiny new station, it would be much more attractive.

Provide a proper enclosed station building, with heating for the winter, air conditioning for the summer, plenty of seats and also toilets. Include a kiosk selling refreshments, and ticket vending machines that sell not just the bus trip to March but onward rail journeys to everywhere in Britain. Build a car park, taxi rank and obviously a bus turning circle, plus CCTV and help points as well, of course. The one thing you don't need initially is a platform, but make sure that it can be accessed from the station building when it is built, with a wide doorway onto it.

The bus service will need subsidy, but so too would the train. Wisbech is growing so patronage will be sufficient to fill trains, when they eventually arrive. In the meantime, prove to the mandarins that there is a strong desire for a service. With the station construction cost removed, the BCR for the line reopening will increase.

*This article is the personal view of the author, not actual Railfuture policy.*

# BRINGING HOME THE BACON – COMMEMORATING A PROJECT “ON TIME & ON BUDGET”

BY PHIL SMART

As members of the railway community, we all like an anniversary and on 24 March 2024 we were able to look back, not on a centenary but on a mere decade. For on that day in 2014, the first train ran over the new chord line linking the East Suffolk line with the Ipswich to Norwich main line and completing the ‘triangle’ that enables freight trains from Felixstowe bound for the Midlands and the North to do so without having to run round in Ipswich upper yard or use the route via North London.



Phil Smart

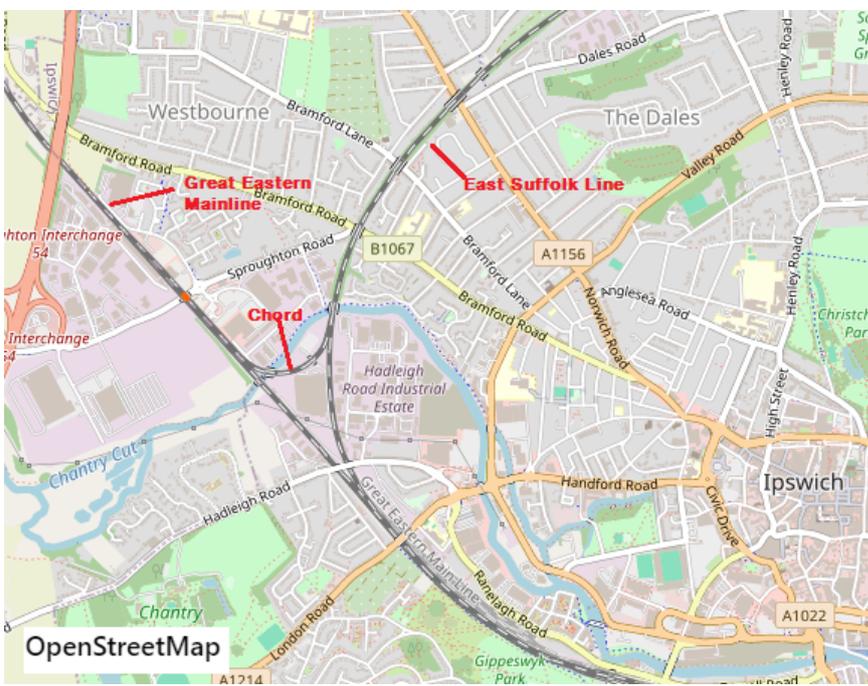
The origin of this project can be traced back to around the year 2000. Towards the end of the 1990s, the Harris Meat factory on Hadleigh Road in Ipswich had been closed and the majority of buildings demolished. The factory occupied the land between the two railway lines, and this seemed to me at the time to present an opportunity to enhance the capacity of the junction and improve the operational convenience for freight from Felixstowe to access the strategic rail freight depots in Leeds, Wakefield, Doncaster and Tees Yard. Until 2014 there were comparatively few freight services, about one per day to each, that used the route via Ely. Trains for Hams Hall and Lawley Street, both in Birmingham, Trafford Park in Manchester, Garston in Liverpool and Ditton near Widnes all accessed these destinations via the North London Line and the West Coast Main Line. About 15 trains per day were thus routed and remain so today. To take the Ely Route involved uncoupling the locomotive, running around the train, coupling up again and performing a brake test before proceeding.

The challenge at the time was to persuade the planning team at Ipswich Borough Council to include the route in its local plan with a view to safeguarding the land against ‘blocking’ development. Discussions with what was then Railtrack were not very promising. Its remit was not to engage in ‘speculative’ development for which it had no demand from customers who were content with existing arrangements,

including a crew change at Willesden. It also argued that the land available simply wasn't big enough to accommodate a new line that allowed trains to be regulated without fouling either the East Suffolk or Main Lines. Its approach was to declare the project as 'undeliverable'.

The route was, however, shown in the 2001 local plan, when we were able to obtain supporting letters from the Rail Freight Group and from the then Strategic Rail Authority. The East of England Development Agency even acquired the site in order to provide additional protection but later sold it on with a covenant to safeguard the route. Network Rail (who had in the meantime taken over from Railtrack following its insolvency) was still not supportive of the project and advised the Borough Council to drop it from the local plan. What it hadn't appreciated was that the proposal included extending the line parallel to the Norwich line, using spare land behind a local supermarket in order to achieve a compliant length of double track between the two junctions. When this was proved to the Head of Planning, he in turn was able to persuade Network Rail to take another look. To help matters further, the EU had been persuaded to contribute to the cost as part of the Trans European Network (TEN) programme.

And so it was that Network Rail included the project in its plans for Control Period 4 (CP4, 2009-2014). The 2010 general election delayed the consultation processes but when the Planning Inspector held the Examination in Public, less than a day was needed. There was only one objector, plenty of supporting petitioners from Railfuture and supportive policies in the local plan. To this day, it remains the fastest ever Development Consent Order to be granted and the Secretary of State's signature was duly obtained in September 2012. Just 18 months remained before the end of CP4 but Network Rail was ahead of the game. Wildlife surveys, newt relocations and other preliminary measures had been done in advance and contractors were on site in no time. The first train ran with a week to spare!



It is a perfect example of how a railway project can be delivered on time and on budget with a willing local authority and local political support.

Since 2014, many more trains have been able to exploit the additional capacity and flexibility offered by the north facing junction. This has encouraged other investments along the Felixstowe to Midlands and North line at Nuneaton, Werrington and at Trimley where additional passing loops have been added. From around 18 trains a day prior to opening we are now up to 38. The extra 20 trains worth of avoided lorry movements have offset the operational carbon of the port itself – as well as taking hundreds of HGVs off trunk roads such as the A14 every working day.

Of course, many more trains could use the route, but we have run out of capacity at Ely and Haughley junctions. What the Bacon Factory Chord has proved, is that investment in the freight railway pays handsomely – yet still we await the Ely funding decision after the general election.

Further reading: [www.railengineer.co.uk/ipswich-chord-freight/](http://www.railengineer.co.uk/ipswich-chord-freight/).

## NEW BLOOD ON THE BRANCH COMMITTEE

Railfuture East Anglia has a committee of up to 14 members who run the branch, deciding what activities it performs and the local policies (consulting with other branches where appropriate).

Three new members have joined the committee in recent months, filling vacancies. They each bring expertise and energy from their varied professional backgrounds, and it is a pleasure to welcome them; as Railfuture East Anglia continues to engage with regional and national decision makers, working hard to make the case for rail, our new arrivals will undoubtedly enhance our overall goal of working for a “bigger and better railway”.

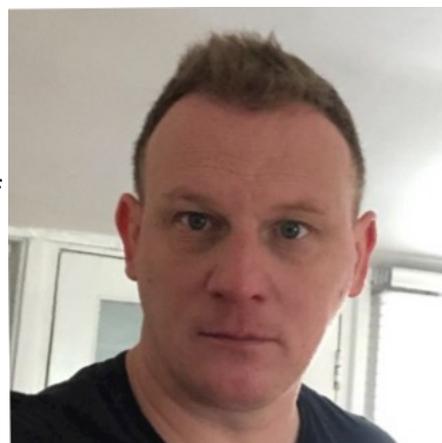
### **Sarah Grove**

Sarah has been Project Officer at the Meldreth, Shepreth and Foxton Community Rail Partnership since February 2018, where her role is hosted by South Cambs District Council and funded by Govia Thameslink Railway and the Parish Councils of Melbourn, Meldreth, Shepreth and Foxton. Her role at the CRP is very varied, replying to consultations and attending working groups on rail projects such as Cambridge South Station. The role also involves organising and helping with the gardening at each of the stations, enhancing the environment, reducing anti-social behaviour and making people feel safe. In addition, she develops promotional materials for destinations, encouraging visitors and boosting the local economy – see her article on page 10 for a current example of her role in encouraging sustainable travel. In joining the branch committee, she hopes to enhance the Cambridge perspective, but also to bring in the viewpoints of the communities served by the stations in the CRP.



### **Will Nichols**

Railfuture East Anglia is delighted that Will has agreed to join the branch committee as a co-opted member. Will joined Railfuture because as a regular rail user he cares very much about the rail service and its ability to provide accessibility across the region and beyond. As a chartered town planner with over 20 years' experience of working in the public and private sectors, he is keen to bring his professional understanding of the planning system to the organisation and to provide advice as appropriate.



Will has been a long-time supporter of East West Rail; he believes it is really important that the voices of those in favour of the proposals are heard. While there have been some notable re-openings in recent years, his view is that governments need to be much bolder about reopening railway lines and building new ones.

### **Rob Sanderson**

Rob's professional background is in local government, having worked in London Boroughs for 22 years (Waltham Forest and Hackney) and more recently, for Cambridgeshire County Council. His involvement with rail pressure groups only started in 2021, when, due to an interest in seeing a rail link restored to Haverhill (his hometown for the last 27 years), he was invited to attend the Haverhill Rail Group. Starting as an observer, he soon became more involved, helping with the editing of the meeting minutes and advising on meeting protocol and then later, researching and contributing some of the information used in the Haverhill Rail Campaign leaflet. When it was agreed to wind up the group (as it was felt it



was better to amalgamate resources with Railfuture), as a thank you for his contribution to the latter-day work of the group, he was gifted a year's funded membership to Railfuture. The restoration of a rail link to Haverhill remains dear to his heart; Rob has recently been involved in helping distribute leaflets door to door in Sawston opposing the proposed bus route across the Gog Magog Hills that, if implemented, would damage the chances of restoring a rail link to Haverhill.

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## PHOTO COMPETITION

### WHAT ARE THEY PROTECTING?

The photo (right) shows a hatch in the waiting room on the up platform at Royston station. What is being stored with such a high value that four industrial-strength padlocks are needed to prevent anyone opening the hatch and climbing in?



Fares can be high, but isn't jumping over the ticket gates a lot easier?

Perhaps if the cycle parking facilities provided by the railway were as robust then fewer cycles would get stolen.

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## CONTRIBUTIONS FOR RAIL EAST

Please send articles for possible inclusion in RAIL EAST to Peter Feeney, who collates all submissions and prepares them for the newsletter. Good quality photos are appreciated, and really are essential in order to make RAIL EAST visually attractive. Email: [raileast@railfuture.org.uk](mailto:raileast@railfuture.org.uk) — you can also use this for feedback.

All submissions by **24 August 2024**, please, but articles covering late news will be considered just before sending to the printer two weeks later.

RAIL EAST is formatted by Jerry Alderson.

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### RECEIVING RAIL EAST BY POST OR ELECTRONICALLY?

Thank you to Railfuture members who have agreed to receive RAIL EAST by email. This helps to keep Railfuture's costs down and so spend funds on rail campaigning.

You can be emailed a copy of RAIL EAST on the same day that it goes to the printer, so you will receive it more than a week before other people. To switch to receiving it by email, please contact Lloyd Butler, who manages our database, at [renewals@railfuture.org.uk](mailto:renewals@railfuture.org.uk). Your co-operation will be appreciated.

The latest RAIL EAST is always at <https://www.railfuture.org.uk/east/rail-east/>.

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## JOIN RAILFUTURE — FOR A BIGGER, BETTER RAILWAY

Railfuture is funded entirely by the public, who use the railway. This means that it can stand up for their interests; hopefully RAIL EAST proves this, with its justifiable criticism (plus much-deserved praise — Railfuture *promotes* rail travel, after all).

Railfuture works *constructively* with the rail industry, government (national and local), businesses and stakeholders to improve and expand the railway.

Annual membership fee is **£20** (£22 for joint membership); under 26 years can join for just £14. Join online at <https://www.railfuture.org.uk/join/> using a credit/debit card or PayPal.

# **railfuture** East Anglia

## **MEDIA CONTACTS**

**Chair: Ian Couzens**

28 Le Strange Close, Norwich NR2 3PW  
Tel: 01603 457518

[ian.couzens@railfuture.org.uk](mailto:ian.couzens@railfuture.org.uk)

**Vice-Chair: Chris Burton**

Tel: 01223 352327 / 07780 856212

[chris.burton@railfuture.org.uk](mailto:chris.burton@railfuture.org.uk)

**Vice-Chair: Peter Wakefield**

Tel: 01223 352364 / 07738 085307

[peter.wakefield@railfuture.org.uk](mailto:peter.wakefield@railfuture.org.uk)

## **OTHER CONTACTS**

**Secretary: Paul Hollinghurst**

110 Catharine Street, Cambridge CB1 3AR

[paul.hollinghurst@railfuture.org.uk](mailto:paul.hollinghurst@railfuture.org.uk)

**Contributions for RAIL EAST: Peter Feeney**

[raileast@railfuture.org.uk](mailto:raileast@railfuture.org.uk)

**East Anglia Membership Secretary: Peter Bayless**

3 Queens St, Spooner Row, Wymondham NR18 9JU

[petlinbay@btinternet.com](mailto:petlinbay@btinternet.com)

Also see <https://www.railfuture.org.uk/East+Anglia+Contacts>

## **MEETING DATES AND VENUES**

**SATURDAY 22 JUNE 2024**

St Mary's at Stoke  
Stoke Street  
**IPSWICH**  
IP2 8BX

**SATURDAY 28 SEPT 2024**

Friends Meeting House,  
5 Upper Goat Lane  
**NORWICH**  
NR2 1EW

**SATURDAY 7 DEC 2024**

Signal Box Comm. Centre  
Glenalmond Avenue  
**CAMBRIDGE**  
CB2 8DB

A flyer for our meetings is always at: [www.railfuture.org.uk/east/meetings](http://www.railfuture.org.uk/east/meetings).  
This includes a map of the venue and directions from the station.

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All other (non-branch) correspondence to 14 Ghent Field Circle, Thurston, Suffolk IP31 3UP