

## Railfuture East Anglia - Shelford station audit

### Introduction

This report details the findings of a station audit carried out by members of Railfuture East Anglia Branch at Shelford Station on Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2017. The audit provides a snapshot of the facilities provided at the station and the perception of rail travel given to passengers. Suggestions are made on ways to improve the passenger experience that can be taken forward by the train operator and local authorities.

Shelford station is located on the Cambridge to Bishops Stortford and London Liverpool Street route around 10 km south of Cambridge within South Cambridge District Council (SCDC) area.

The station is located in Great Shelford and also serves Little Shelford and Stapleford. The combined population of these villages in 2015 was 7470. The station is surrounded by housing with the majority of the three villages located within 1.5km of the station. Mill Court business park is adjacent to the station on the east side. The emerging SCDC Local Plan does not indicate major new housing in the area as the villages are surrounded by green belt space.

The station is served by Greater Anglia stopping trains between Cambridge and London Liverpool Street. A 30-minute frequency is provided in both directions during peak periods with an hourly service off-peak and at weekends. Since May 2017 many northbound services have been to the new Cambridge North station. Journey time to Cambridge is five minutes, typical journey time to London is 80 minutes.



*Picture 1: Passengers wait to board a Cambridge train*

The annual footfall for the year 2015/16 was 174,954 (entries and exits), an 9% increase over the previous year and a 27% increase from 2009/10.

The station has a ticket office which is open Monday-Friday 06.00 to 10.30. At other times passengers must buy tickets from the machines located on each platform.

Great Shelford is also connected to Cambridge by the Stagecoach Citi 7 bus which runs every 20 minutes and the national cycle route 11 which runs close to the station. Bus routes 7A and 31 which serve local villages south of Cambridge run past the station with a stop 100m to the east of the station.



*Picture 2: This shelter by the entrance provides a dry area for those waiting to be picked up by car. But is it also a bus stop? There is nothing to say.*

## Station Access

The station is located on Station Road about a 5-minute walk from the centre of Great Shelford. Access to the platforms is either side of the level crossing. The road rises sharply either side of the crossing. The barriers are closed some time before the train arrives and with the additional non-stop trains passing through the station, creates uncertainty over journey times to/from the station if needing to get to the other side of the track. There is no separate footbridge and new development has taken up land that could have been used for a footbridge.

The station is signed from the main London Road / Tunwells Road passing through Great Shelford 500m from the station. No other direction signage to the station was visible within the village.

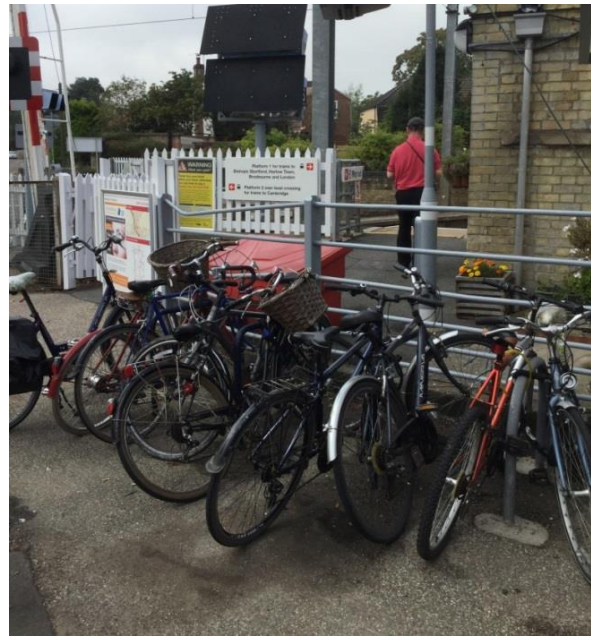
Although there is a “double arrow” railway sign on the station building, there is no signage to indicate the presence of the station for anyone approaching along the road.

The station does not have a car park, neither is there any official car drop-off point or space for taxis to wait.

Some cycle racks are located on the east side of the station close to the station building. Additional racks under cover are provided on the London bound platform (up platform in railway terminology). A total of 9 cycles were noted during the visit.



*Picture 3: The western approach to the station – the station has little presence*



*Picture 4: Cycle racks by the up platform*

## Station Facilities

The original station building remains on the up platform although part of the building has been converted to a restaurant.

Each platform is eight coaches long having been extended in the past using lightweight construction. Tactile paving and a yellow line are provided close to the platform edge. Platform height is a little way below coach height and the slight curve can make boarding and alighting difficult for some users. New LED lighting is provided.

The platforms are narrow and in some areas the width is further restricted by Driver-Controlled Operation cameras and overhead line masts.



There is a gap of around one metre between the fence at the back of the platform and the railway boundary fence. On the up side this is being used as a garden area. The down side is less tidy and contains railway cable troughs. Access to the platform is directly from the road by the level crossing. A gentle ramp is provided on the Cambridge platform (down platform in railway terminology) whilst the up platform has a much steeper (non-DDA compliant) ramp.



*Picture 5: The up platform has a large shelter at one end. Note the narrow platform*



*Picture 6: The Shelter on the down platform is more modest*

Each platform has the following facilities:

Facility	Up platform (to London)	Down platform (to Cambridge)
Ticket machine	Yes	Yes
Help point	Yes	Yes
Timetable information	Yes	Yes
Local map	Yes	Yes
CCTV	Yes to cycle shelter	No
Public address	No	No
Train information display	Yes	Yes
Seats	2	4
Shelter	Station build canopy Waiting room	Basic shelter (little protection in heavy rain)
Payphone	Yes	No

It was noted during the visit that the display screens on the platform and the monitor by the station entrance on the up platform were difficult to read due to the bright

conditions. This is important as the platform displays often have the message “stand back fast train approaching”

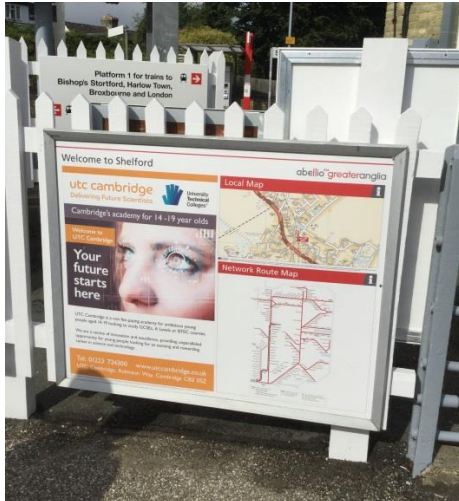
The facilities are located close to the south end of the station by the level crossing, meaning that those at the far end of the platform have no facilities and would have difficulty in seeing the customer display screens.



*Picture 7 and Picture 8: The display screens were difficult to read in the bright light*



*Picture 8: Village map at station entrance*



Picture 9: Rail travel information



Picture 10: Station timetable

## Suggested improvements

Whilst the station was clean and in a reasonable condition with basic facilities, the following improvements are suggested for consideration by the train operator and local authority.

1. Increase presence of the station by additional signage within the village and visible from the approach roads.
2. Provide additional cycle racks although no obvious space within railway owned land was identified. Space should be identified and protected from other development.
3. The platforms are likely to need further extension for the new trains due in 2019/2020.
4. Provide additional shelter / customer information screens along the platform. The gap between the back of the platform and railway fence could be used for this.
5. Due to journey time uncertainty of reaching the platforms because of the constant closure of the level crossing, consider a footbridge over the railway by the level crossing.
6. Consider separate entrance at the Cambridge end of the platforms and footbridge to reduce walking distance to the station for adjacent housing.

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