

CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL
Record of Executive Decision

JOINT RESPONSE TO NETWORK RAIL'S ELY AREA CAPACITY ENHANCEMENTS 2 CONSULTATION

Decision of:	Councillor Katie Thornburrow Executive Councillor for Planning Policy and Transport	
Reference:	21/URGENCY/P&T/16	
Date of decision:	26/11/21	Published on: 08/12/21
Decision Type:	Non Key Decision	
Matter for Decision:	Joint Response to Network Rail's Ely Area Capacity Enhancements 2 consultation	
Why the decision had to be made (and any alternative options):	To provide the Councils' comments to this consultation in recognition of the opportunities it provides to influence Network Rail's Ely Area capacity enhancements.	
The Executive Councillor's decision(s):	Agreed the Council's joint response with South Cambridgeshire District Council to Network Rail's Ely Area Capacity Enhancements 2 consultation	
Reasons for the decision:	To agree the Council's joint response with South Cambridgeshire District Council to Network Rail's Ely Area Capacity Enhancements 2 consultation. https://democracy.cambridge.gov.uk/ecCatDisplay.aspx?sch=doc&cat=13491	

Background

The Ely area capacity enhancement (EACE) programme proposes to upgrade the railway to allow more trains to run through Ely.

The railway through Ely is operating at full capacity. This means that Network Rail cannot increase the number of services through Ely because the existing layout of the tracks, junctions, signals and existing speed restrictions across key bridges in the Ely area acts as a bottleneck on the network.

The aim of the EACE programme is to improve connectivity for passengers by providing an uplift in services to key destinations. Demand for rail freight is also growing and increasing capacity through Ely will support a shift from road to rail thereby providing a faster, greener, safer and more efficient way of transporting goods across the country; helping to remove lorries from roads and reduce congestion.

Earlier in 2021, Network Rail consulted on the options for upgrading the railway in the Ely South area, the results of which will be presented in 2022. This round of public consultation includes the options for remodelling the track at Ely North junction, Queen Adelaide level crossings options; and options for upgrading or closing other level crossings across the wider Ely area.

Details of the consultation are available at Network Rail's Ely Area Consultation webpage: <https://phase2b.elyareacapacity.com/>

Features of the consultation relevant to Greater Cambridge

Features of the consultation relevant to Greater Cambridge comprise:

- Overall approach – enhancements at Ely North junction supporting growth in wider area
- No proposed interventions at Chesterton Level Crossing (Fen Road)
- Changes proposed to two level crossings in Waterbeach including Bottisham Road/Bannold Road but more materially Burgess Drove, where there are two options consulted on: 1 – Remove vehicle crossing rights but retain access for pedestrians and cyclists; 2 - Close Burgess Drove Level crossing

Proposed response points

The proposed key response points and reasons supporting these are as follows. The proposed full response is provided at Appendix A which can be viewed at the link below:

<https://democracy.cambridge.gov.uk/ecCatDisplay.aspx?sch=doc&cat=13491>

- The need for capacity enhancements at Ely North junction to be sufficient to cater for all planned growth, noting national and local priorities to support more sustainable travel
- Request to reconsider the consultation's proposal not to make any further intervention planned at Chesterton Level Crossing, given the significant current impact of downtime there and potential for further downtime with the additional planned growth in services.
- Burgess Drove Level Crossing: Of the two options proposed, support option 1 - Remove vehicle crossing rights but retain access for pedestrians and cyclists, to support the Councils' access to food growing and access to nature priorities, noting that the level crossing provides access for village residents to allotments and the River Cam.

Scrutiny consideration:

The Chair and Spokespersons of Planning & Transport Scrutiny Committee were consulted prior to the action being authorised.

Report:

Details of the background are set out in this Record of Decision. There are no relevant financial considerations.

Conflicts of interest:

None

Comments:

No adverse comments were made.