

**Response to Department of Transport consultation on the combined Thameslink, Southern and Great Northern franchise and on the ICEC franchise consultations**

*In view of the potential relevance of both franchises to Kings Cross-Cambridge-Kings Lynn services, our responses have been made in a co-ordinated way. This document represents the Fen Line Users Association's response to both consultations. It has been sent to the Combined Franchise Replacement Sponsor and to the ICEC Franchise Consultation Manager at the Department of Transport (DfT) and will be placed on the Association's website [www.flua.org.uk](http://www.flua.org.uk)*

**Fen Line Users Association Response to the combined Thameslink, Southern and Great Northern franchise consultation**

Prior to finalising this response, we assembled the views of members as follows:

- On-going dialogue with members about emerging rail policy through *The Fenman* newsletter and correspondence with individual members.
- Members' comments on both franchises invited via the Association's website [www.flua.org.uk](http://www.flua.org.uk)
- Summary of *draft* responses published in *The Fenman* issue 3/2012. Members invited to request full text of *draft* responses.
- Members' comments on *draft* responses invited before 31 July 2012 (to allow time for Committee discussion of members' comments before the first DfT consultation deadline).
- Matters raised by all of the above actions has been taken into consideration in formulating this response dated 3 August 2012.

**Q.1** *What improvements do stakeholders believe could be made on the combined franchise through partnership working between Network Rail and the new operator?*

We support the principle of a single franchisee/Network Rail alliance, or similar, along an entire service length. We consider unified management of train and track would be in the interests of passengers: *operationally* when things go wrong and *managerially* when planning and implementing service and infrastructure upgrades.

Currently, the Kings Cross-Cambridge-Kings Lynn service operates over:

- Network Rail **London North Eastern Route** (zone) - Kings Cross-Shepreth Branch Junction [Cambridge] (55 miles);
- Network Rail **Anglia Route** (zone) - Shepreth Branch Junction, [Cambridge] to Kings Lynn (43 miles).

[www.networkrail.co.uk/asp/4451.aspx/6651\\_RoutePlansRoutesA-Q.pdf](http://www.networkrail.co.uk/asp/4451.aspx/6651_RoutePlansRoutesA-Q.pdf)

**Q.2** *Do consultees have any other specific aspirations for the new franchise that they wish to bring to the Department's attention?*

- Half-hourly frequency, Kings Cross-Cambridge-Kings Lynn.
- Upgrade of regionally significant Ely North Junction to facilitate this half-hourly frequency.
- Proposed Cambridge Science Park station (described as 'Chesterton' station in section 6.4. of the franchise consultation).
- 125 mph Intercity Express programme (IEP) trains operating Kings Cross-Cambridge-Kings Lynn services.

All of the above aspirations are supported by regional MPs; Greater Cambridge Greater Peterborough LEP; New Anglia LEP; County Councils; and Borough and District Councils and are endorsed in *Once in a Generation – A Rail Prospectus for East Anglia*, published 2 July 2012.

In the documentation accompanying the Railways Act 2005 Statement on the High Level Output Statement for Control Period 5, made by the Secretary of State for Transport on 16 July 2012, Ely North Junction is identified as a "named scheme." The documentation states "... sufficient capacity is sought at Ely to provide for forecast freight flows across East Anglia and to enhance passenger services to Kings Lynn."

The DfT's Press Release of 25 July 2012, regarding contracts with Agility Trains to supply Intercity Express Programme trains, includes the following "There are also options for ordering further trains, which could operate on the following routes ... iii. East Coast: London-Cambridge-Kings Lynn."

[www.newanglia.co.uk/Assets/Files/Content/Rail%20prospectus%20for%20East%20Anglia.pdf](http://www.newanglia.co.uk/Assets/Files/Content/Rail%20prospectus%20for%20East%20Anglia.pdf)

[www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/transport/projects/cambridge/scienceparkrail](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/transport/projects/cambridge/scienceparkrail)

[www.dft.gov.uk/publications/hlos-2012/#sos-guidance](http://www.dft.gov.uk/publications/hlos-2012/#sos-guidance)

[www.dft.gov.uk/news/press-releases/dft-press-20120725a/](http://www.dft.gov.uk/news/press-releases/dft-press-20120725a/)

**Q.3** *Are consultees aware of any other rail or non-rail development schemes that might affect the new franchise?*

In addition to the Cambridge Science Park station and the Ely North Junction upgrade (please see answer to Q2) we wish to draw attention to the following:

- 3.4m sq. ft. office floorspace under construction, adjacent to Kings Cross station.

[www.kingscrosscentral.com](http://www.kingscrosscentral.com)

- 1.1m sq. ft. office floorspace under construction, adjacent to Cambridge station.

[www.brookgate.eu/developments/cb1](http://www.brookgate.eu/developments/cb1)

- Potential new town at 'Denny St Francis', Waterbeach.

[www.cambridge-news.co.uk/Home/Developers-line-up-new-10000-home-town.htm](http://www.cambridge-news.co.uk/Home/Developers-line-up-new-10000-home-town.htm)

- Adopted core planning strategy to 2025: Ely, 1450 new houses.
- Adopted core planning strategy to 2025: Littleport, 1200 new houses.

[www.eastcambs.gov.uk/sites/default/files/csadoptmain.pdf](http://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/sites/default/files/csadoptmain.pdf) [page 24]

- Adopted core planning strategy to 2025: Downham Market, 1250 new houses.
- Adopted core planning strategy to 2025: Kings Lynn, 6400 new houses.

[www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/pdf/Complete%20Core%20Strategy%202011.pdf](http://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/pdf/Complete%20Core%20Strategy%202011.pdf)  
[page 65]

**Q.5** *Which aspects of the specification, other than for those services operating through the Thameslink core route, would stakeholders wish to see mandated and which aspects of the specification could be left to the discretion of the operator?*

We wish to see the following mandated for Kings Cross-Cambridge-Kings Lynn to underpin passengers' long-term job and home location decisions:

- Time of first arrival at Kings Cross.
- No of arrivals at Kings Cross, 0700-0959.
- No of arrivals at Cambridge, 0700-0959.

- No of departures from Kings Cross, 1600-1859.
- No of departures from Cambridge, 1600-1859.
- Later time for last departure from Kings Cross.
- Basic half-hourly frequency.
- Maximum key journey times.

[www.flua.org.uk/documents/Supplement%20to%20The%20Fenman%20issue%202010%20No.%204.pdf](http://www.flua.org.uk/documents/Supplement%20to%20The%20Fenman%20issue%202010%20No.%204.pdf) [The Fenman issue 4/200]

and subsequent issues of *The Fenman*. [www.flua.org.uk](http://www.flua.org.uk)

**Q.7** *What changes to services would stakeholders propose, what is the rationale for them and would these provide economic benefit?*

Half-hourly frequency for Kings Cross-Cambridge-Kings Lynn service, linking jobs and homes.

An assessment of the economic benefits accruing from the Ely North Junction upgrade (please see reply to Q2) necessary to facilitate such half-hourly services has been undertaken by Mott MacDonald, July 2012 – please refer to Norfolk County Council. [www.norfolk.gov.uk](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk)

In the documentation accompanying the Railways Act 2005 Statement on the High Level Output Statement for Control Period 5, made by the Secretary of State for Transport on 16 July 2012, Ely North Junction is identified as a “named scheme.” The documentation states “... sufficient capacity is sought at Ely to provide for forecast freight flows across East Anglia and to enhance passenger services to Kings Lynn.”

[www.dft.gov.uk/publications/hlos-2012/#sos-guidance](http://www.dft.gov.uk/publications/hlos-2012/#sos-guidance)

**Q.13** *What destinations on the Great Northern route do respondents consider would be appropriate to become destinations for trains which serve the core Thameslink route?*

We do not wish to exclude Kings Lynn as a core Thameslink destination but we are cognisant of the projected superior journey times and train ambience of the proposed Intercity Express Programme (IEP) trains. Fixed formation 8- and 12-car Thameslink trains, as now proposed, are unlikely to be suitable for the service.

[www.dft.gov.uk/news/press-releases/dft-press-20120725a/](http://www.dft.gov.uk/news/press-releases/dft-press-20120725a/)

[www.dft.gov.uk/publications/thameslink](http://www.dft.gov.uk/publications/thameslink)

**Q.14** *Do respondents believe Great Northern trains which do not serve the Thameslink core route should remain as part of this franchise or be transferred to the new Inter City East Coast franchise?*

We understand that the new Inter City East Coast franchise may call for a 'multi-purpose' operator, including some or all Great Northern commuter services. We further understand that inclusion of such services would not imply the abolition of the London and South East pricing regime currently in force for Kings Cross-Cambridge-Kings Lynn. Given that the [Intercity] East Coast operator is to be tasked with the introduction of Intercity Express Programme (IEP) trains (please see reply to Q2) we consider that the transfer of the Great Northern Kings Cross-Cambridge-Kings Lynn service to a 'multi-purpose' [Intercity] East Coast franchise would be, on balance, in the best interests of passengers.

[www.dft.gov.uk/consultations/dft-2012-24](http://www.dft.gov.uk/consultations/dft-2012-24)

**Q.15** *What improvements would respondents like to see made to Great Northern services as part of the combined franchise and what is the rationale for this?*

In the event of the Kings Cross-Cambridge-Kings Lynn service remaining within the 'combined' franchise, please see answers to Q2, Q3, Q7, and Q13.

**Q.26** *What level of disaggregation of performance do you believe is reasonable?*

We suggest the publication of performance statistics at the individual service level, e.g. Kings Cross-Cambridge-Kings Lynn, to be reasonable, as we consider this level of disaggregation to be the most useful for passengers.

## Fen Line Users Association Response to the InterCity East Coast (ICEC) franchise consultation

Prior to finalising this response, we assembled the views of members as follows:

- On-going dialogue with members about emerging rail policy through *The Fenman* newsletter and correspondence with individual members.
- Members' comments on both franchises invited via the Association's website [www.flua.org.uk](http://www.flua.org.uk)
- Summary of *draft* responses published in *The Fenman* issue 3/2012. Members invited to request full text of *draft* responses.
- Members' comments on *draft* responses invited before 31 July 2012 (to allow time for Committee discussion of members' comments before the first DfT consultation deadline).
- Matters raised by all of the above actions has been taken into consideration in formulating this response dated 3 August 2012.

**Q1** *Do consultees agree that the proposed franchise objectives are an appropriate expression of the priorities that should apply to the new ICEC franchise?*

We aspire to:

- 125 mph Intercity Express programme (IEP) trains operating Kings Cross-Cambridge-Kings Lynn services.

This aspiration is supported by regional MPs; Greater Cambridge Greater Peterborough LEP; New Anglia LEP; County Councils; and Borough and District Councils and endorsed in *Once in a Generation – A Rail Prospectus for East Anglia*, published 2 July 2012.

The DfT's Press Release of 25 July 2012, regarding contracts with Agility Trains to supply Intercity Express Programme trains, includes the following "There are also options for ordering further trains, which could operate on the following routes ... iii. East Coast: London-Cambridge-Kings Lynn."

[www.newanglia.co.uk/Assets/Files/Content/Rail%20prospectus%20for%20East%20Anglia.pdf](http://www.newanglia.co.uk/Assets/Files/Content/Rail%20prospectus%20for%20East%20Anglia.pdf)

[www.dft.gov.uk/news/press-releases/dft-press-20120725a/](http://www.dft.gov.uk/news/press-releases/dft-press-20120725a/)

Given the above, we consider the franchise Objective to “secure the successful introduction of Intercity Express Programme (IEP) trains” to be an appropriate priority for the ICEC franchise.

We also consider the franchise Objective to “deliver services in the most cost-effective and efficient manner possible, including ... improving alignment and collaboration ...” to be an appropriate priority for the ICEC franchise.

In supporting the principle of a single franchisee/Network Rail alliance, or similar, along an entire service length, we consider unified management of train and track would be in the interests of passengers: *operationally* when things go wrong and *managerially* when planning and implementing service and infrastructure upgrades.

Currently, the Kings Cross-Cambridge-Kings Lynn service operates over:

- Network Rail **London North Eastern Route** (zone) - Kings Cross-Shepreth Branch Junction [Cambridge] (55 miles);
- Network Rail **Anglia Route** (zone) - Shepreth Branch Junction, [Cambridge] to Kings Lynn (43 miles).

[www.networkrail.co.uk/asp/4451.aspx/6651\\_RoutePlansRoutesA-Q.pdf](http://www.networkrail.co.uk/asp/4451.aspx/6651_RoutePlansRoutesA-Q.pdf)

**Q3** *What are consultees’ views on the principle of the new ICEC franchise becoming a multi-purpose train operator along the route of the East Coast Main Line rather than focusing only on the InterCity services provided by the current operator?*

We support the principle of the franchise becoming a ‘multi-purpose’ East Coast operator and request that it includes a dedicated business unit to focus on Great Northern commuter services (please see our answer to Q4).

***In view of our reply to Q3, our responses from this point on assume that the East Coast franchise will be for a ‘multi-purpose’ operator.***

**Q4** *Do consultees have any comments on which services might be considered for inclusion in the new ICEC franchise and how they might be specified?*

We understand that inclusion of some or all Great Northern commuter services in the new ICEC franchise would not imply the abolition of the London and South East pricing regime currently in force for Kings Cross-Cambridge-Kings Lynn. Given that the [Intercity] East Coast operator is to be tasked with the introduction of Intercity Express Programme (IEP) trains (please see reply to Q1) we consider that the transfer of the Great Northern

Kings Cross-Cambridge-Kings Lynn service to a 'multi-purpose' [Intercity] East Coast franchise would be, on balance, in the best interests of passengers.

We wish to see the following mandated in the franchise specification to underpin passengers' long-term job and home location decisions:

- Time of first arrival at Kings Cross
- No of arrivals at Kings Cross, 0700-0959.
- No of arrivals at Cambridge, 0700-0959.
- No of departures from Kings Cross, 1600-1859.
- No of departures from Cambridge, 1600-1859.
- Later time for last departure from Kings Cross.
- Basic half-hourly frequency.
- Maximum key journey times.

[www.flua.org.uk/documents/Supplement%20to%20The%20Fenman%20issue%202010%20No.%204.pdf](http://www.flua.org.uk/documents/Supplement%20to%20The%20Fenman%20issue%202010%20No.%204.pdf) [The Fenman issue 4/200]

and subsequent issues of *The Fenman*. [www.flua.org.uk](http://www.flua.org.uk)

**Q5** *Are consultees aware of any other rail or non-rail major development schemes that are likely to have a significant impact on the new ICEC franchise?*

We wish to draw attention to the following:

- Proposed Cambridge Science Park station (described as 'Chesterton' station in section 6.4. of the combined Thameslink, Southern and Great Northern franchise consultation).

[www.dft.gov.uk/consultations/dft-2012-23](http://www.dft.gov.uk/consultations/dft-2012-23)

- Upgrade of regionally significant Ely North Junction to facilitate half-hourly frequency for Kings Cross-Cambridge-Kings Lynn.

The above schemes are supported by regional MPs; Greater Cambridge, Greater Peterborough LEP; New Anglia LEP; County Councils; and Borough and District Councils and are endorsed in *Once in a Generation – A Rail Prospectus for East Anglia*, published 2 July 2012.

In the documentation accompanying the Railways Act 2005 Statement on the High Level Output Statement for Control Period 5, made by the



Secretary of State for Transport on 16 July 2012, Ely North Junction is identified as a “named scheme.” The documentation states “... sufficient capacity is sought at Ely to provide for forecast freight flows across East Anglia and to enhance passenger services to Kings Lynn.”

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[www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/transport/projects/cambridge/science/parkrail](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/transport/projects/cambridge/science/parkrail)

[www.dft.gov.uk/publications/hlos-2012/#sos-guidance](http://www.dft.gov.uk/publications/hlos-2012/#sos-guidance)

- 3.4m sq. ft. office floorspace under construction, adjacent to Kings Cross station.

[www.kingscrosscentral.com](http://www.kingscrosscentral.com)

- 1.1m sq. ft. office floorspace under construction, adjacent to Cambridge station.

[www.brookgate.eu/developments/cb1](http://www.brookgate.eu/developments/cb1)

- Potential new town at ‘Denny St Francis’, Waterbeach.

[www.cambridge-news.co.uk/Home/Developers-line-up-new-10000-home-town.htm](http://www.cambridge-news.co.uk/Home/Developers-line-up-new-10000-home-town.htm)

- Adopted core planning strategy to 2025: Ely, 1450 new houses.

- Adopted core planning strategy to 2025: Littleport, 1200 new houses.

[www.eastcambs.gov.uk/sites/default/files/csadoptmain.pdf](http://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/sites/default/files/csadoptmain.pdf) [page 24]

- Adopted core planning strategy to 2025: Downham Market, 1250 new houses.

- Adopted core planning strategy to 2025: Kings Lynn, 6400 new houses.

[www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/pdf/Complete%20Core%20Strategy%202011.pdf](http://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/pdf/Complete%20Core%20Strategy%202011.pdf)  
[page 65]

**Q6** *Are there any research findings, evidence or other publications that consultees wish to bring to the attention of the Department as part of this franchising process?*

We wish to draw attention to the following:

- *Kings Cross-Kings Lynn 100 miles of route, 20 Years of Planning.* Published by the Fen Line Users Association, March 2011.

[www.flua.org.uk/documents/KING%27S%20CROSS-KING%27S%20LYNN%20100%20miles%20of%20route,%20%20%20years%20of%20planning.pdf](http://www.flua.org.uk/documents/KING%27S%20CROSS-KING%27S%20LYNN%20100%20miles%20of%20route,%20%20%20years%20of%20planning.pdf)

- Demand Forecasting study for half-hourly frequency between Cambridge and Kings Lynn, undertaken by Atkins for Norfolk County Council, February 2012 – please refer to Norfolk County Council. [www.norfolk.gov.uk](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk)
- Economic benefit assessment of Ely North Junction upgrade, undertaken by Mott MacDonald for Norfolk County Council, July 2012 – please refer to Norfolk County Council. [www.norfolk.gov.uk](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk)
- *Once in a Generation – A Rail Prospectus for East Anglia*, Published by New Anglia LEP, 2 July 2012 in alliance with regional MPs; Greater Cambridge Greater Peterborough LEP; County Councils; and Borough and District Councils.

[www.newanglia.co.uk/Assets/Files/Content/Rail%20prospectus%20for%20East%20Anglia.pdf](http://www.newanglia.co.uk/Assets/Files/Content/Rail%20prospectus%20for%20East%20Anglia.pdf)

**Q7** *Consultees' views are invited on the train service specification, including which aspects should be mandated by the Department and which can be left to commercial discretion; and also on whether or not there should be a change in the specified minimum service level when IEP trains are introduced.*

We wish to see the following mandated for Kings Cross-Cambridge-Kings Lynn to underpin passengers' long-term job and home location decisions:

- Time of first arrival at Kings Cross.
- No of arrivals at Kings Cross, 0700-0959.
- No of arrivals at Cambridge, 0700-0959.
- No of departures from Kings Cross, 1600-1859.
- No of departures from Cambridge, 1600-1859.
- Later time for last departure from Kings Cross.
- Basic half-hourly frequency.
- Maximum key journey times.

[www.flua.org.uk/documents/Supplement%20to%20The%20Fenman%20issue%202010%20No.%204.pdf](http://www.flua.org.uk/documents/Supplement%20to%20The%20Fenman%20issue%202010%20No.%204.pdf) [The Fenman issue 4/200]

and subsequent issues of *The Fenman*. [www.flua.org.uk](http://www.flua.org.uk)

Additionally, we seek an early increase in frequency to half-hourly, prior to the introduction of Intercity Express Programme (IEP) trains and/or new Thameslink rolling stock.

[www.dft.gov.uk/topics/iep](http://www.dft.gov.uk/topics/iep)

[www.dft.gov.uk/publications/thameslink](http://www.dft.gov.uk/publications/thameslink)

**ENDS**