

DEVELOPMENT POLICY COMMITTEE

11 July 2007

AGENDA ITEM 13

Subject:	CONSULTATION ON NETWORK RAIL – GREATER ANGLIA ROUTE UTILISATION STRATEGY
Report by:	DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND BUILDING CONTROL SERVICES

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Purpose

The Borough Council has been formally consulted by Network Rail on their Greater Anglia Route Utilisation Strategy.

Recommendation(s)

1. That the Council welcomes the Greater Anglia Route Utilisation Strategy, which discusses a number of key issues relating to the rail network in the Chelmsford area, subject to the issues raised in the discussion section of this report. In particular the vision on capacity issues in the optioneering section of the Strategy is not as great as that in the London to Ipswich Multi Modal Study published in 2002.
2. That a copy of this report be sent to Network Rail as the Council's response to the consultation, drawing attention to sections 25, 26 and 27, discussion and conclusions.

Corporate Implications

Legal:	None
Financial:	None
Personnel:	None
Risk Management:	None
Equalities and Diversity:	None
Health and Safety:	None
IT:	None
Other:	The issues raised in the Route Utilisation Strategy, particularly capacity on the Great Eastern main line through Chelmsford and developing alternative routes for freight traffic are pertinent to the proposals within the

	Council's Local Development Framework.
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Consultees:	Planning and Building Control Services
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Policies and Strategies Chelmsford Borough Local Plan, Local Development Framework Core Strategy and Development Control Policies.
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Corporate Priorities The report relates to the following corporate priority/priorities [tick the relevant box]	
Social Inclusion	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Excellent Customer Services	<input type="checkbox"/>
Regeneration	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Value for Money	<input type="checkbox"/>
Environment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Introduction

1. Following the Rail Review in 2004 and the Railways Act 2005, the Office of Rail Regulation modified Network Rail's network licence to require the establishment of Route Utilisation Strategies (RUS's) across the network. The route utilisation objective is defined as:

“the effective and efficient use and development of the capacity available, consistent with funding that is, or is reasonably likely to become, available during the period of the route utilisation strategy and with the licence holder's performance of the duty”.

2. The Greater Anglia RUS covers the whole of East Anglia and includes the Thameside route, the Great Eastern and the West Anglia Main Lines, as well as the rural branches. The RUS primarily examines a time period of ten years commencing from the RUS Establishment date (expected to be December 2007). However, in order to tie in with the Government's planning years and to be able to assess the effects of longer term growth in line with the draft East of England Plan, the RUS provides forecasts for 2016 and, where appropriate 2021.
3. One of the prime objectives of the RUS is to give the Government via Department for Transport (DfT) the opportunity to consider the options recommended for meeting growth on (and developing) these routes. Whilst the DfT has set no specific objectives for the route, the underlying assumption is that demand should be met at lowest cost/best value without, where possible, detriment to performance. The RUS outcome will help to inform the Government's High Level Output Specification (which is expected to be published in Summer 2007), as well as future franchise specifications.
4. The RUS covers three important radial routes from London, which link the capital to different parts of East Anglia, as well as containing a number of rural and cross country lines. The RUS is therefore related to a number of other strategies and policies. These include the Freight RUS, which Network Rail has recently published and which contains industry agreed forecasts for future freight growth (these have been fed into this RUS). The Freight RUS also identified a number of capacity gaps (gaps D-H) for the Greater Anglia RUS to address.
5. The DfT has published the Regional Planning Assessment for the East of England and this document includes a review of the radial routes out of London serving East Anglia and the East of England. The review considers several proposals, which have now been developed within the RUS. In October 2006 HM Treasury published the Stern Review on the Economics of Climate Change which estimated that the dangers of unabated climate change could be equivalent to 20 percent of GDP or more per year. Thus there is an increasing focus on the environmental benefits of modes of transport with lower emissions, especially the movement of people and freight by rail. The Eddington Transport Study highlighted the pivotal role that transport plays in the UK's economic productivity, growth and stability, within the Government's broader commitment to sustainable development. The report also emphasised the importance of maximising the use of existing transport corridors, which is a central objective of the RUS programme. In addition, recent announcements by the Department for Transport support the enhancement of infrastructure to international gateways, such as Felixstowe, in order to generate greater volumes of freight moved by rail.

Great Eastern Main Line issues

6. The Great Eastern Main Line (GEML) carries around 55,000 passengers a day into London during the morning peak. This makes up more than half of peak journeys into London from the RUS area. Passenger count data from the last ten years suggests that passenger numbers - along with capacity – have increased year on year on this route. The standing allowances (which with the number of seats make up the total capacity) on the GEML are lower than on the other main lines into London in the Greater Anglia RUS area. This is because all of the inter-city services from Norwich and some of the outer services have no standing allowance.
7. Table 1 shows the number of passengers counted and the load factor against total capacity (seats plus standing allowances) for each of the four GEML service groups in 2005: inter-city services from Norwich; outer suburban services from Ipswich, Colchester, Clacton, and Chelmsford; Southend and Southminster services; and inner suburban services from Shenfield and Gidea Park. This data is recorded at the maximum load point which is Stratford for trains that call there and Liverpool Street for those that do not.

GEML	08:00 - 08:59		07:00 - 09:59	
	Passengers	Load Factor	Passengers	Load Factor
Inter City	2,072	110%	3,913	91%
Outer	7725	109%	14596	89%
Southend	7422	95%	12480	82%
Inner	11779	98%	24710	84%

8. The load factors are not directly comparable between the service groups or against the other routes serving London in the Greater Anglia RUS area because the allowances for standing vary. Particularly, there is no standing allowance for the inter-city service group. Twenty-nine trains (35 percent) on the GEML in the 2005 morning peak had no standing allowance for the calculation of load factors. (A key element of crowding targets is that no passenger should stand for a journey of 20 minutes or more. All trains which make a call less than 20 minutes away from the maximum loading point have a standing allowance added.)
9. Infrastructure characteristics on the routes are varied, reflecting historic service demands and development. This has resulted in different levels of current route capability. On the Great Eastern Main Line, the main line and all branches south of Ipswich (except the Sudbury line) are electrified with 25 KV AC overhead equipment. Most of the equipment between Liverpool Street and Colchester/Southend dates from the late 1940s/50s.
10. Due to several recent de-wirements and the fact that much of the older equipment is fixed tensioned, a programme of extensive renewal is being undertaken on the Liverpool Street – Chelmsford/Southend section, with a view to completing stage 1 (Liverpool Street – Forest Gate) by 2012. The route between Liverpool Street and Marks Tey was resigalled in the Mid 1990s, the section between Colchester and Norwich having been resigalled in the 1980s.

- 11 Resignalling of the route between Marks Tey and Colchester is currently being carried out, including the branch to Clacton, under the Colchester – Clacton resignalling scheme. This scheme includes installation of bi-directional signaling between Colchester and Marks Tey. Due to the age and condition of the track, especially the number of wet spots on the main line, caused by the clay substrata, track renewals are concentrated on the GEML. There is also a considerable number of S&C renewals coming up over the next few years, including works at Shenfield, Clacton and Colchester.
12. The capacity analysis for the RUS in respect of the GEML was undertaken by DfT this shows that:
- (i) The GEML is almost at full capacity in the peaks and is about 75 percent utilised in the off-peak. The most heavily utilised section is between Shenfield and Colchester which reaches 90 percent in the peaks and 55-65 percent off peak.
 - (ii) The difference between the route section usage and Rules of the Plan usage shows that the timetable pattern and difference in speed of trains is utilising, at some points, nearly 20 percent of the capacity. This utilisation could be reduced by standardising speeds and calling patterns of services.
 - (iii) The analysis of the timetable shows that the evening peak timetable is very well constructed to utilise capacity with the mix of calling patterns in different services. This forms a more robust timetable than the morning peak which shows greater route section usage.
 - (iv) East of Colchester the capacity used is much lower, typically between 10 and 30 percent. This analysis revealed that the current Rules of the Plan values between Ipswich and Norwich needed to be revised. This value has been reviewed by the Train Planning Centre (TPC) and amended in the 2008 version of Rules of the Plan.
 - (v) The amending of calling patterns on the GEML is very difficult as the peak services are driven by demand at different stations. In the RUS options, the timetable pattern has been amended where necessary to allow for more capacity to be realised. Where stops have been removed from services, a different service has been called at the stop to ensure there is still the same level of service available at the station.
 - (vi) Standardising the speed of services can realise further capacity but caution should be taken as this will require slowing down non-stop services, resulting in longer journey times for passengers.

Identified gaps

- 13 Analysis of the current position and expected changes has revealed gaps between what the railway system delivers and what is required. These are:

	Nature of Gap	Key Issues
1	Between existing/forecast peak capacity and train service and/or infrastructure capacity	Need to increase peak capacity across all routes by train lengthening, frequency and infrastructure improvements

2	Between existing/forecast rural/inter-urban train service capacity/frequency and required capacity/frequency	Need to increase train service capacity/frequency on rural/inter-urban routes
3	Between existing access to Stratford/Docklands and that required to meet market needs	Lack of services that call at Stratford on the West Anglia and Great Eastern outer services and at West Ham on the Thameside route
4	Between existing service frequencies and the Mayor's objective of 4 tph all day on suburban routes	Lack of service frequency on certain routes
5	Between existing freight capacity and forecast demand (especially for intermodal and aggregate traffic)	Lack of paths to meet growth also identified as gaps D-H in the Freight RUS
6	Between existing freight gauge, train length and route availability and desired gauge and capability	RA, loading gauge and train length
7	Between current and desired performance	Level crossings, Rules of the Route Compliance failures, turnrounds on rural lines, scope for performance improvements
8	Between existing engineering access and desired access regimes especially on the Stansted, suburban and cross country routes	Need for extended operating hours on certain routes. Clash between engineering access/isolations and use of berthing
9	Between current power supply and that required for future services/rolling stock	Limited capacity in existing supply for passenger and freight services
10	Between current passenger access to train services and that required to meet future needs	Car parking, DDA compliance, crowding, interchange and provision of new stations
11	Between current berthing capacity and future requirements	Berthing capacity required for additional trains

Strategic options

- 14 A total of twenty three initial options were developed and it will be noted that some are related to performance improvement or enhancement schemes, which are currently being developed. These are:

- 1: Lengthen peak services on the Thameside Main Line
- 2: Lengthen peak services on the Tilbury Loop and Ockendon Branch
- 3: Replace inter-city rolling stock on Anglia inter-city services
- 4: Run two additional Great Eastern outer services in the high peak hour
- 5: Call all Great Eastern outer services at Stratford
- 6: Run additional peak services on the Great Eastern from Gidea Park
- 7: Lengthen peak services on the Chingford route
- 8: Lengthen West Anglia services between Cambridge/Stansted Airport and London to 12 cars
- 9: Lengthen Hertford East – London services to 12 cars
- 10: Operate 9-car trains from Enfield Town
- 11: Operate shuttle services between Cheshunt and Seven Sisters
- 12: Increase capacity on the West Anglia Main Line
- 13: Increase frequency of Ipswich – Peterborough services to hourly
- 14: Increase frequency of East Suffolk Line services to hourly
- 15: Provide an hourly service between Ipswich and Saxmundham
- 16: Increase capacity on rural/inter-urban services to meet peak demand
- 17: Increase freight gauge, train length and capacity on the Felixstowe – Nuneaton route
- 18: Improve the Route Availability for freight traffic on the Ipswich – Peterborough route
- 19: Improve performance through a range of measures
- 19: Improve performance through a range of measures
- 20: Improve the efficiency of Engineering Access
- 21: Improve the power supply to match future requirements
- 22: Improve passenger access to the network
- 23: Improve berthing capacity

Great Eastern Main Line options

- 15 Of these options, six are pertinent for Chelmsford. These are discussed below.

Option 3: Replace inter-city rolling stock on Anglia inter-city services

- 16 Replacing inter-city sets with more up to date rolling stock - assumed to be similar to class 444 currently used on SWT's long distance services – on the Anglia inter-city route. Class 444s operate as 5 x 23m units and are configured as low seating density units (2 + 2) to retain standards of passenger comfort. This would increase seated capacity on the services by almost 50 percent. An alternative would be to deploy Intercity Express trains when they enter service, or other similar long distance multiple units. In testing this option the costs of class 444 rolling stock has been considered.

Option 4: Run two additional Great Eastern outer services in the high peak hour

- 17 Running two additional trains in the high peak hour, one starting from Colchester Town and the other starting from Chelmsford. This is intended to alleviate crowding for passengers and to handle predicted demand growth.

Option 5: Call all Great Eastern outer services at Stratford

- 18 We tested changing calling patterns so that all services on the GEML will stop at Stratford. This is intended to provide a direct link between Norwich, Ipswich and Stratford and improve connectivity between the Eastern region and London Docklands/other transport links at Stratford including JLE/CTRL. It is expected that the proposal would even-out passenger loadings between Great Eastern outer services. Stratford Platform 10a would need to be extended to handle 12-car trains in order to implement this option.

Option 17: Increase freight gauge, train length and capacity on the Felixstowe – Nuneaton route

- 19 This option describes the two phases of work required to meet freight growth to both 2014/15 and 2023 by enhancement of the cross country route.

Option 18: Improve the Route Availability for freight traffic on the Ipswich – Peterborough route

- 20 Heavier freight trains are subject to speed restrictions on the cross country route and this option proposes works to remove these restrictions.

Option 22: Improve passenger access to the network

- 21 Analysis carried out for the RUS, including the car park study by Passenger Focus, has shown that improving station facilities may be beneficial in a number of areas. These are:
- car park capacity,
 - DDA compliance,
 - interchange at LUL stations,
 - crowding relief at key stations,
 - provide new stations to improve access to the network, and
 - develop an overall station access strategy.

Issues pertinent to Chelmsford are in respect of crowding relief at key stations and provision of new stations to improve access to the network.

- 22 Chelmsford was identified as a rail station with crowding issues, in particular congestion on stairs leading up to platforms (especially London bound platform) and circulation around ticket barriers and ticket office. The proposed mitigation is to provide additional access to the London bound platform to relieve circulation on stairs and through ticket hall/barriers. It is anticipated that improvements will be carried out under an Network Rail Development Fund (NRDF)/property/local authority scheme.
- 23 A number of proposals for development of new rail stations are currently at the planning stage (generally under Section 106 agreements). These will improve access to the network. A list of current proposals in the consultation document includes a station north-east of Chelmsford, these individual stations have been (or will be) subject to an assessment of their impact on capacity.

Consultation responses

- 24 Network Rail welcome contributions to assist them in developing this RUS. Specific consultation questions have not been set as they would appreciate comments on the content of the document as a whole. Particular reference should, however, be made in response to the options that have been developed as solutions for the identified gaps. The RUS has a formal consultation period of twelve weeks, and the deadline for receiving responses is 13 July 2007.

Discussion

- 25 The Greater Anglia Route Utilisation Strategy examines a wider range of issues and has established a valuable evidence base. It is welcomed as a consultation draft. The seven Great Eastern Main Line (GEML) options are all supported by the Council. In particular the need to improve freight capacity on the Felixstowe – Ipswich – Peterborough – Nuneaton is paramount in order to reduce the number of freight paths on the GEML. Addressing capacity issues at the existing Chelmsford rail station is most welcome, particularly the identification of Network Rail Development Fund monies for the project. Also welcome is the inclusion of a station north east of Chelmsford as a measure to improve access to the rail network.
- 26 The vision in the optioneering section of the Strategy, particularly on capacity issues, is not as great as that in the London to Ipswich Multi Modal Study published in 2002. Whilst a rail station at north east Chelmsford is included as a measure to improve access to the network an integral part of the scheme is the provision of passing loops to address capacity issues. The proposed station enjoys very strong support within the rail industry and is included on the DfT Rail 'Single List of Enhancements'. The contribution the station will make to addressing the identified gap between existing/forecast peak capacity and train service and/or infrastructure capacity needs to be included in the Strategy.

Conclusion

- 27 The Greater Anglia Route Utilisation Strategy is welcomed but the vision in the optioneering section of the Strategy, particularly on capacity issues, is not as great as that in the London to Ipswich Multi Modal Study published in 2002.

List of Appendices

Nil

Background Papers

Network Rail – Greater Anglia Route Utilisation Strategy, Draft for Consultation.