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Telephone: 01622 221527  
Ask for: Paul Crick  
Reference  
Date: 15 August 2013

Dear Ms Licata

**Periodic Review 2013: Draft Determination of Network Rail's Outputs and Funding for 2014-19 - Response to ORR Consultation by Kent County Council**

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Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the Office for Rail Regulation's (ORR) draft determination of Network Rail's outputs and funding for 2014-19.

Kent County Council (KCC) has also responded to Network Rail's London and South East Market Study Draft as part of their Long Term Planning Process for rail service development to 2042. We have included in that response our Council's principal aspirations for the development of the rail network in Kent as set out in our Rail Action Plan for Kent ([www.kent.gov.uk](http://www.kent.gov.uk)).

We have studied the executive summary of the ORR draft determination, and we broadly agree with the ORR's analysis of Network Rail's need to plan for expansion of rail services if the rail network is to meet the increased demand from economic growth which is forecast for the duration of Control Period 5 (CP5).

In respect of the plans for the development of the rail service in Kent, we would request that specific reference is made in the ORR's final determination to the following key outputs of our Council's Rail Action Plan for Kent:

- (1) The inclusion in Network Rail's CP5 allocation of the required £6.8m capital funding for phase 2 [Canterbury West - Ramsgate] of the Journey Time Improvement (JTI) scheme planned jointly between KCC and Network Rail [phase 1: Ashford - Canterbury West will be funded by RGF];
- (2) The provision of all day High Speed services to Deal and Sandwich as part of the new South Eastern franchise specification, building the service from its successful inception as a peak period commuter extension of the existing High Speed network;

- (3) The provision of any necessary infrastructure improvements to enable the franchisee to deliver faster journey times between Ramsgate and Victoria / Cannon Street via the North Kent route of Faversham, Sittingbourne, Medway Towns and Bromley South – this is achievable with some realignment of existing service patterns;
- (4) Infrastructure enhancements to ensure delivery of new Thameslink service from Maidstone East to Welwyn Garden City, via Otford, Swanley, Bromley South, Denmark Hill, Blackfriars and St Pancras (low level), as envisaged in the Thameslink [Key Output 2] plans of the Department for Transport (DfT);
- (5) Infrastructure improvements on route of proposed Ashford – Tonbridge – Edenbridge – Redhill – Gatwick – Three Bridges through service, for which KCC is to prepare a Business Case with a view to inclusion by DfT in new South Eastern franchise specification with effect from June 2018 – this would utilise new platform 0 at Redhill, due for delivery in CP5 – earlier than 2018/19 would facilitate operation of this new service;
- (6) Continued engagement with stakeholders at KCC, Ashford BC, HS1 Ltd and Eurostar plc to ensure delivery of either ETCS (Level 1 Supervision) or KVB signalling system in addition to existing AWS/TPWS system on Ashford Spurs which link HS1 with Ashford International – necessary to ensure future delivery of new European rolling-stock;
- (7) Provision for future increase in off-peak High Speed service between Ashford and Canterbury West and Folkestone / Dover, by increasing headway from 1 tph to 2 tph utilising unused rolling-stock between peak periods;
- (8) Request to Network Rail for £6m funding as 50% contribution to Thanet Parkway station, to be included in ORR announcement for CP5 (Oct 2013).

In addition, I would expect the ORR's final determination to identify other locations in Kent where long-term infrastructure enhancements could enable significant improvements to rail network between now and 2042. These examples and their associated benefits would demonstrate the possibility of service development in Kent during the next 30 years:

- (i) a new rail curve linking Cuxton and Rochester would avoid Strood and facilitate through running from the Medway Valley line to the Medway Towns;
- (ii) a new curve between Kemsing and Bat & Ball would enable a through service between the Maidstone East line and Sevenoaks, Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells;
- (iii) a new curve between Chartham and Canterbury East would provide an alternative route in the event of line closure due to rock collapse between Folkestone Central and Dover Priory;
- (iv) further line speed enhancement measures between Ashford and Hastings to enable future delivery of 2tph on this section of Coastway East route (to be operated by new Thameslink franchise after 2015);
- (v) enhancements to Kent rail freight network to facilitate future expansion of rail freight movement through Kent, both on Mainline and HS1;

- (vi) consideration of future delivery of eastwards expansion of Crossrail from Abbey Wood to Ebbsfleet;
- (vii) introduction of JTI schemes more generally to Kent's towns to enable and support economic growth;
- (viii) electrification of remainder of passenger network serving Kent stations (Ashford to Ore and Hurst Green to Uckfield);
- (ix) overhead power to maximise benefits of HS1, with first pilot on direct route from Ashford to Ramsgate.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to this important consultation. I hope that our comments are regarded in a positive light, and that they will contribute to the final determination of Network Rail's outputs and funding for 2014-19.

Yours sincerely

Paul Crick  
Director  
Planning and Environment

**From:** Stephen.Gasche@kent.gov.uk [mailto:Stephen.Gasche@kent.gov.uk]  
**Sent:** 22 August 2013 10:02 AM  
**To:** Consultation on draft determination (ORR)  
**Cc:** Tessa.Sweet-Escott@eastsussex.gov.uk; Paul.Crick@kent.gov.uk  
**Subject:** Kent County Council (KCC) Response to PR13 - Additional Comment - 22082013

Dear Ms Licata

### **Kent County Council response to ORR - PR13 consultation**

Further to our consultation response sent to you on 15 August (also attached again for reference), we have now received the attached proposal from Railfuture.

Kent County Council's (KCC) approach would be that, while we would prefer conversion of both the non-electrified East Sussex lines, we would certainly support Railfuture's proposal for the electrification of Hurst Green - Uckfield with the caveat that the Class 171 stock released was ring-fenced for use on the Ashford -Hastings line (up to the point of doubling all the existing workings). Electrification of Hurst Green - Uckfield would also enhance the service at the three Kent stations on this line, as well as improving access for all stations to and from East Croydon and London Bridge.

The cascading of additional Class 171 stock to the Ashford - Hastings line would provide the additional capacity so desperately required to meet the very high levels of demand for the existing 2-car trains, and would significantly improve the rail service on this line at very little additional cost.

Yours sincerely

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Ch.9 Enhancements expenditure: Sussex Route – extra capacity into London Bridge from Wealden line

A scheme consistently carried through from the Sussex and London & South East Route Utilisation Strategies, the Initial Industry Plan, the High-Level Output Specification, the Strategic Business Plan, and most recently the Draft Determination on the SBP for Control Period 5, 2014-19, is the conditional output of train lengthening on Uckfield line services to deliver the requirement for extra peak capacity into London Bridge, especially from East Croydon. Thus far the conventional approach adopted has been to plan for longer platforms to be built at eight Uckfield line stations in order to accommodate longer, diesel, trains of the type operated on the route for the past several years.

There is however considerable uncertainty about any operator's ability to source additional compatible diesel passenger trains within the forthcoming Control Period, a condition recognised in the above documents at various stages of the PR13 process. Attempting to release passenger rolling stock of the same type from the only other line on which it operates, East Coastway/Marshlink services between Ashford International and Brighton, by reconfiguring those services would almost certainly be neither sufficient nor free of public and political controversy.

That sourcing uncertainty contrasts with the continuing supply of new dual-voltage [both as supplied and conversion-capable] electric passenger rolling stock and of a type widespread across the current South Central franchise area, most recently at the end of July through a further order with a growth option. The latter part of CP5 will then witness the arrival of the new Thameslink fleet. It is clear that approaching the end of CP5, when the Uckfield line train lengthening output must have been delivered, there will have been both a significant injection of additional electric rolling stock to the new Combined Thameslink franchise area and an as yet unknown cascade of passenger rolling stock around and beyond that franchise.

An alternative approach to delivering the Uckfield line train lengthening output by 2018-19 therefore appears to merit proper consideration before the draft Delivery Plan is published this December and finalised before next April.

By way of introduction, para. 9.80 of the Draft Determination sets the context: "Electrifying the railway will bring many benefits for both passengers and freight users, most notably the ability to run more frequent trains with shorter journey times and less environmental impact, such as noise and diesel fumes." Mention should also be made of the benefits for passengers of a more reliable service with more punctual journeys, and of the operational efficiencies accruing to the operator of a more homogenous fleet of rolling stock and the lower running costs of electric units. Mention must be made too of the particular importance to local stakeholders of the environmental benefits of eliminating the noxious emissions of diesel fumes from local areas of sensitive and protected landscape such as the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty [AONB] and the Ashdown Forest. The various benefits of removing diesel trains from the new London Bridge station should also not be over-looked.

An operational limitation of the diesel units is their lack of inter-unit corridor connections which combined with their mixed 4- and 2-car formations necessitates full platform lengthening to avoid passengers being marooned in a unit stopped beyond a platform. With their inter-unit corridor connections this, together with the use of Selective Door Opening, need not be an issue for the use of electric rolling stock.

The proposition is therefore that the ORR should require Network Rail to give urgent, active and serious consideration to electrifying the 25 route miles of the Uckfield branch line within CP5 as the preferred, higher-value means to deliver the train lengthening output, re-examining the need for and extent of any associated platform lengthening. It is noted that a 'Significant interface' already identified in the Initial Industry Plan [Definition of proposed CP5 enhancements] stated "The scheme should make passive provision for future electrification of the route served by 12-car x 20m vehicles." For these purposes the particular electrification technology to be deployed is immaterial. Network Rail's apparent preference for 25kV overhead rather than third-rail power is understood and should present no operational issues in a south-east network already used to dual-voltage operations on HS1, Thameslink, the West London Line and the west end of the North London Line.

A direct consequence of electrifying the Uckfield branch line would be the release for cascade of around 30 modern diesel passenger carriages. One beneficiary must be the increasingly crowded East Coastway/Marshlink services mentioned above, to improve passengers' journey experience with more seats and accommodate rising demand.

In putting forward this proposition note is taken of the late-June announcement of funding for the infill electrification of the Gospel Oak-Barking Line, and the early-August announcement of the probable electrification of the Windermere branch line. It is a proposition which can confidently be expected to command widespread support across a range of stakeholders as supporting the delivery of their economic and environmental as well as transport policy objectives.