

Investment allowing eight car trains between Cambridge and King's Lynn given the green light

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A significant enhancement scheme to tackle congestion between Cambridge and King's Lynn has been given the go ahead by the Department for Transport (DfT).

A funding package of approximately £27m has been approved by the DfT to allow Network Rail and its contractor Volker Fitzpatrick to upgrade the stations at Waterbeach and Littleport, extending the platforms to accommodate longer trains to stop.

Once the work is complete, eight car services can be introduced during peak times to provide more seats and a better experience for passengers by reducing overcrowding on existing services.

The work will involve:

- Extending platforms 1 and 2 at Waterbeach station to 167 metres
- Extending platform 2 at Littleport station to 167 metres and providing step free access to platform 1
- Creating new stabling at King's Lynn to support the longer train formations

Work is currently expected to start in October 2019 and completed in the summer of 2020.

It is anticipated Great Northern will look to introduce longer eight car services in December 2020.

Commenting on the scheme, **Meliha Duymaz, Network Rail's route managing director for Anglia**, said: "This funding announcement marks a significant milestone to deliver upgrades which will benefit all passengers travelling between Cambridge and Kings Lynn. These upgrades will allow longer trains to run on the line at peak times, providing more seats and space for passengers and reducing overcrowding.

"We hope this will be welcome news to everyone who has supported this investment."

Rail Minister Andrew Jones said: "This is an important and much needed upgrade, which will mean longer trains and a doubling of seats for passengers on the line between King's Lynn and Cambridge.

"This is an excellent example of the investment we are putting into the national network over the next five years – around £48 billion to modernise our railways, giving passengers the reliable and punctual services they deserve."

GTR Infrastructure Director Keith Jipps said: "King's Lynn to King's Cross services are very popular.

"Our drivers and trains are ready and we are working with our partners at Network Rail to get 8-carriage services operating on stopping services to King's Lynn as soon as the infrastructure is ready and in line with the current industry timetable process."

This is one of the first projects to progress to this stage of the new Rail Networks Enhancements Pipeline process, which the Department for Transport and Network Rail now jointly use to manage the delivery of new rail infrastructure.