

Public consultation announced for Ely North junction capacity increase and wider level crossings proposals

October 4, 2021



From Monday 18 October, Network Rail is inviting the public to comment on proposals and options to increase rail capacity through Ely for passenger and freight services.

The aim of the Ely area capacity enhancement (EACE) programme is to allow more trains to run through Ely by improving rail capacity and reliability for passenger services between key destinations. It will also meet the demand for more rail freight between the Port of Felixstowe the west Midlands and the north to support sustainable, long-term economic growth.

This consultation is part of a wider programme of engagement with the community which began in late 2020 and will continue into 2022. The first Round 2 consultation in May 2021 sought feedback on proposals in the Ely South area. For this autumn consultation, proposals and options will be presented during a six-week period which will include:

- Proposals to remodel the track layout at Ely North junction
- Proposals and road options for level crossings at Queen Adelaide
- Proposals and options for level crossings at Stonea, Burgess Drove (Waterbeach) and Well Engine foot crossing.
- Proposals to upgrade 15 level crossings across the wider area

Increasing capacity on the Ely railway is expected to bring benefits to the national, local and regional economies, with better connectivity and reliability for passengers. Additionally, rail freight demand is growing and increasing the capacity of the rail network will help support a shift from road to rail. This is expected to provide a faster, greener, safer and more efficient way of transporting goods across the country and helping to remove lorries from the roads and further reduce pollution and congestion.

The results from this round of consultation, together with the feedback from the earlier Ely South consultation (spring 2021) will help to progress designs prior to selecting preferred options in 2022. Subject to further funding, we will present the preferred options as part of a final round of consultation in summer 2022 prior to submission of a Transport and Works Act Order, expected around winter 2022/23.

Rail Minister Chris Heaton-Harris said: “This consultation is a perfect way for passengers to help create a network that works for them.

“We remain committed to improving rail capacity through Ely and urge passengers to use this opportunity to comment on the future of your railway.

Ellie Burrows, Network Rail’s route director for Anglia said: “This could be the most important stage of consultation yet as we present options that will be essential to releasing the capacity through the Ely North junction bottleneck and seeking to resolve challenges at key level crossings.

“We are continuing to engage with the wider Ely community on this important infrastructure project for the Anglia rail network to seek feedback from local residents, businesses and stakeholders.

“Their feedback will continue to inform our designs as we progress with this important project to find the right solutions for the railway and for Ely.”

- The Round 2 (part 2) consultation will run for 6 weeks from 18 October to 28 November 2021
- The public will be able to submit feedback on the proposals and options from Monday 18 October 2021 by completing an online survey from: networkrail.co.uk/Ely
- There’ll also be an opportunity for the public to put their questions to the Network Rail Ely project team via a live webchat facility and phone line at specific times during the consultation period.
- Hardcopies of the consultation material can be requested by contacting 03457 11 41 41 or emailing: ElyAreaCapacityEnhancements@networkrail.co.uk

Photo credit: Network Rail