

Felixstowe Branch Line FAQ

How was the location of the track doubling work decided?

We undertook a study to identify how to meet the freight demand along the Felixstowe Branch Line by modelling the route. The model identified the best position to locate the track is at Trimley because it links up with the existing double track that runs through the Port. The project is designed so that it does not affect the ability to double the rest of the Felixstowe Branch Line in the future.

Where will the second track be located?

The second track will be approximately 1.4km from the end of the existing double track at Trimley Station. It will end just before Grimston Lane foot crossing.

What is the cost of the scheme?

The cost of the scheme is £58m.

Will the Port of Felixstowe be making a financial contribution towards the scheme?

The Port of Felixstowe managed by Hutchinson Ports UK is contributing significantly towards the scheme. The details and legal aspects of this contribution are currently being confirmed and once this is complete the exact amount will be publically shared.

This scheme has been under discussion for a long time. For what reason has it been decided that there will be one loop rather than three and how has the price remained the same?

We know that we need to run 47 trains a day on the line by 2019 in order to meet growth of the Port. Through detailed development of the scheme we identified a single loop at Trimley as the most efficient way of delivering the uplift in capacity.

For what duration does Network Rail anticipate trains waiting in the loop?

The double track will run from Trimley Station to just before Grimston Lane foot crossing. The loop has designed to be 'dynamic' which means trains should pass through rather than waiting. However, if the timetable gets disrupted there may be some dwelling in the loop. If the trains heading to Ipswich do have to wait in the loop, the signal they will stop at is located on the East side of Trimley footpath crossing. Most trains will run during day time hours however there will be some paths available during the evening, the train operators will determine the hours that the trains run.



What is the reason for the Level Crossing closures?

Wherever there is an increase in the number of trains using a line we need to look again at Level Crossings, the more trains the greater the risk. Many of these Level Crossings do not have adequate protection against the increase in trains. We take very seriously our responsibility to maintain safety on the railway. We have seen two fatalities on this line over the past year. Closing Level Crossings and diverting to alternatives will make the railway safer by removing the point where people can come into contact with trains.

When will Level Crossing closures take place?

The crossings will be closed at the start of the construction works to facilitate the new infrastructure. The new bridleway bridge is required to be operational and all of the earthworks completed prior to the new footpath routes being opened.

Will Network Rail be building the new track at the same time as the Level Crossings are closed?

Yes.

How will Network Rail ensure safety where pedestrians are diverted to the road at Thorpe Lane?

Footpaths will be created either side of Thorpe Lane Level Crossing to lead back to Thorpe Common Path, providing an off road route. In addition, the road Level Crossing will be upgraded to full barriers and new markings will indicate the pedestrian crossing route.

What are the benefits of building a bridleway bridge?

We have to ensure that we maintain connectivity and accessibility for all. Having looked closely at the usage in the area we believe that a bridleway bridge at Gun Lane is the best way to make sure that routes to the West remain accessible for all.

For what reason has Network Rail decided to build only one bridge?

A single bridge option has been identified to provide a central crossing point and maintain connectivity across the railway. We are only proposing to build one bridge to minimise the impact on the local environment and minimise the visual impact on the landscape.

How was the location of the bridge (Gun Lane) decided?

A key objective of the project is to reduce the length of proposed diversions as much as possible. It is therefore proposed to locate the bridleway bridge in a central point (at Gun Lane).

One of the issues encountered when designing the scheme was the severance of the existing east-west routes which utilise the Gun Lane and St. Martin's Level Crossings.



The proposed bridge has been located to mitigate this severance. New footpaths and bridleways have been proposed to link the other affected routes.

It was identified that the crossings are mainly used for leisure purposes and circular walks. To ensure circular walks remain available after the crossings are closed, new rights of way (both footpaths and bridleways) are proposed to be built. The location of the bridge at Gun Lane ensures circular walks can be maintained.

What are the size specifications of the bridge?

- The bridge structure will be approx. 7.2m high (from rail to top of parapet)
- The ramps will have 2m landings (every 333mm of vertical rise)
- There will be ramps at the Gun Lane end and a staircase at St Martin end
- The ramps will be of 1:15 gradient
- The ramps will be approx. 150m.
- The total structure length (including stair cases) will be approx. 170m
- The bridge will be wide enough to allow two equestrian users to pass, approximately 3.5m wide

Will the new bridge be suitable for all?

The bridge will be Equality Act compliant.

Will Network Rail put lights on the bridge?

We are not proposing to light the bridge, however, the bridge design will leave passive provision for lighting columns to be installed at a later date.

Will I be able to see over the sides of the bridge?

There will be solid infill panels on the track side, non- solid infill on the non- trackside of the ramps. There will not be a cage structure on the bridge.

What colour will the bridge be?

The bridge will be painted green to blend in with the surrounding environment.

Is Network Rail able to incorporate a mesh cage over the bridge?

We are not proposing to put a cage over the bridge span, however it has been designed so that if it is required at a later date it can be installed. A mesh cage is not proposed to be built on this bridge because of the potential visual impact, as it would increase the height of the bridge by approximately 3m.

How does the bridge comply with safety standards?

The bridleway bridge has been designed with British Horse Society guidance. Since the public consultation event in November, we have presented our designs to the British



Horse Society to ensure that the design is safe. Taking into account the advice of the British Horse Society, mounting blocks will be provided to give riders the option of dismounting before travelling over the bridge. The railway facing sides of the bridge will be solid infill and 1.8m high so that horses do not get startled by trains. The width of the bridge will be 3.5m to allow horses and other users to pass unimpeded.

Will the works result in an increase in trains idling close to residential dwellings?

As part of the scheme we will be looking at removing signals to ensure that if trains have to wait, they are as far as reasonably practicable from residential dwellings. There will, of course, be an increase in the number of trains, which will mean additional noise.

What are the likely timescales for the scheme?

Subject to the approval and the granting of the powers, work will start in 2018 and will be finished by 2019. Site set up works for the double track will commence in November 2017.

Will the increased freight traffic affect access to Cordy's lane?

The Level Crossing arrangement at Cordy's Lane will remain the same. However, the increased freight traffic will result in the barriers being down more frequently. The new track layout will allow up to 24 additional trains per day to pass through.

How will public rights of way be affected by the scheme and where will the new diversionary routes be located?

We know how important Level Crossings are for maintaining access to the countryside. The crossings we are proposing to close are in close proximity to each other. Where possible we have provided an onward diversionary route and a bridge at Gun Lane that will be fully accessible and can carry horse and riders. We are also proposing building new footpaths and upgrading many existing footpaths.

How long will the diversion take from Keepers Lane?

There are two alternative routes to cross the railway at Keepers Lane, via the bridge or via Cordy's Lane. We estimate that these routes will be fairly similar in length, approx. 15min walking time. However, the altered public rights of way network will provide alternative circular routes that do not exist at present and do not require the railway to be crossed.

Why can't each of the Level Crossings remain open with the provision of automatic gates and traffic lights (miniature stop lights) to ensure safety?

The safest way to reduce risk at Level Crossings is to remove them entirely. Although automatic warning lights can be installed to reduce risk, they do not remove the risk entirely.



Automatic locking gates can only be installed if the crossing is supervised and somebody was able to confirm the crossing was clear before signalling a train over the crossing. This would not be feasible at the 6 crossings proposed for closure on the Felixstowe branch line.

Will Network Rail close any road crossings as part of the scheme?

No, however there may be some temporary closures during construction. People should still be able to access their homes during this time.

Three road crossings are being upgraded as part of the project at Thorpe Lane, Morston Hall and Levington. To complete the upgrade works temporary closures and control of vehicles across the crossings are required. Access will be maintained for emergency vehicles.

Is the Felixstowe project part of a wider programme of works?

There is more to do further along the line at Haughley Junction, doubling the line between Ely and Soham and in the Ely Area and that's why we have a clear set of priorities for the future. The work at Felixstowe is the first step towards our long term plan. We know we can accommodate the extra trains across the network but there's more we can do in the future.

Why is Network Rail spending money on a scheme that doesn't significantly benefit passenger services?

We know we need to do more to transport goods on the railway and to take lorries off the road. Investing in improving the railway to carry more freight has real benefits for passengers and for the economy.

Will passenger services on the line become more frequent as part of the scheme?

The upgrades we're proposing will mean that more trains are able to run on time to carry passengers from Ipswich to Felixstowe. Trains won't be more frequent as current demand is being met by the hourly service we have today. We work closely with local councils to understand if this demand is going to grow in the future and factor that into our plans. The new Greater Anglia franchise will see new rolling stock introduced by 2020.

Will passenger services on the line become more reliable as part of the scheme?

Upgrading the line will mean that customers have a more robust timetable. The extra track means that we can better section out the passenger services from the freight and do more to make sure that trains leave on time and don't cause problems further along the network.

As part of the project, the signalling power systems will be upgraded and this will increase reliability. We've also been carrying out some work on the track in the



Felixstowe area. New track will mean that we can remove a long standing speed restriction on the line, which will help with reliability.

Will the passenger service from the branch line be removed as part of the works?

We are not suggesting that we are looking to remove the passenger service. We're concentrating on what we need to do to increase the number of trains we can run on the line by building extra track and closing Level Crossings. We recognise that the passenger service provides a vital link between Ipswich and Felixstowe.

When are we going to see an increase in the amount of freight traffic on the line?

Additional freight trains will be using the line by 2019.

Will Network Rail be compensating me as a result of the noise generated by additional trains?

In respect of the proposals subject to this application, it is not anticipated that the scheme would generate any significant noise as the worksites are at some distance from local communities e.g. the bridge is approximately 300m from the nearest residential property. Works to dual/twin track the line at Trimley will need to be completed in accordance with a Noise Management Plan which will need to be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority in advance.