

Route Prospectus

For local passenger services on the Wherry Lines consisting train services between Norwich and Great Yarmouth/Lowestoft

The Wherry Lines were identified in the DfT Community Rail Development Strategy as having potential for designation as Community Rail Lines.

Initial discussions with stakeholders have show potential issues with line designation due to freight and longer distance services. This, added to the complication that of part of the line is already designated as a part of the Trans European Network, has led to this proposal to designate the local passenger services as Community Rail services with the possibility of returning at a later date to designate parts of the route.

Community rail projects have started to demonstrate how the Community Rail Development approach can increase revenue, manage down costs and encourage greater community involvement in the local railway.

The key measures to success of designation will be

- The contribution of Community Rail Development in achieving locally set objectives such as reducing road congestion and increasing accessibility in its widest sense.
- Reducing the call on taxpayers' funds for the service;
- Establishing the effectiveness of different methods for reducing the net financial loss of Community Rail lines by increasing revenue and reducing costs where practicable.

This prospectus has been discussed with the Community Rail Partnership

Designation as a '**Community Rail Service**' will help to progress the following:

- Identifying the cost of operating the Wherry Lines and identification of revenue attributable to the line.
- Establish the real profit and loss costs of current operating, maintaining and renewing of the Island Line Showing how Train Operating Company costs might be reduced on the line by changes to franchise management.
- Exploration of opportunities for an alternative fares structures to ensure the line is allocated a fair contribution of all through rail fares and that fares are appropriate to the local market.
- Evaluation of options for increasing the frequency of the service to hourly with additional later evening services.
- Further develop the railhead policy on the line, with provision of improved car parking at the railhead stations of Reedham, Acle and Great Yarmouth.

- In conjunction with the Bus Operator and Unitary Council provide and demonstrate the impact of quality bus links at all locations on the line to connect with other parts of the Island. Improving links to the bus network for enhanced accessibility to the area, particularly to provide better links between the rail network, the East Norfolk Coast and the Norfolk Broads.
- Exploration of innovative ticketing and marketing schemes with the aim of making it easier to buy tickets away from staffed stations and in rural areas
- Enhanced co-operation with local business and others with the aim of further tapping into the tourism market.
- To development of off peak tourism initiatives by offering added value to rail ticket holders.
- With Network Rail and the train operator, seeking a practical use for redundant station buildings.
- Assisting Suffolk and Waveney Council's in their aspiration to revitalise Lowestoft Rail Station.

In taking all of this forward, designation is intended to build on the work already in hand on the Wherry Lines including also to enable the project to proceed, and therefore support the achievement of these objectives from the remit. The Community Rail Partnership promotion for the line is to raise its profile and increase patronage. The CRP seeks to support small business along the route by procuring goods and services from local suppliers along the route. It also aims to assist promotion of local businesses, especially in the rural areas through joint promotions and encouraging visitors and residents to use local firms particularly in the quiet off season periods.

Without designation the project will not be able to deliver its aims and objectives. The project is expected to last up to 5 years. Designation is intended to be a permanent arrangement. In due course parts of the infrastructure may be designated as Community Rail line, following further local consultations. The presence of freight and long distance services makes this complicated at this stage.

Stations covered by this designation:

Acle
 Berney Arms
 Brundall
 Brundall Gardens
 Buckenham
 Cantley
 Great Yarmouth
 Haddiscoe
 Lingwood
 Lowestoft
 Oulton Broad North
 Reedham
 Somerleyton

2nd October 2007