

# APPENDIX

## Kent (Rail) Route Utilisation Strategy (RUS)

### Summary of Consultation Document relating to Medway area

#### 1 RUS Process

- 1.1 The Route Utilisation Strategy (RUS) is formally required from Network Rail by the Rail Regulator to inform the planning processes and the exercise of the various functions in the rail industry. The objective is to consider:-

*“the effective and efficient use and development of the capacity available on the network, consistent with the funding that is, or is likely to become, available.”*

- 1.2 Although prepared by Network Rail, it is intended to be inclusive of all the parties in the rail industry, but should also include extensive consultation with local authorities and other stakeholders.
- 1.3 The process is to understand the current demand and capability of the railway and the future pressures that are expected. Consideration is then given to viable actions which can be taken to overcome any gaps which are identified between the needs for the railway and the services that the infrastructure is able to deliver.
- 1.4 The South London RUS has already considered the South London area and the route to Rochester via Gravesend. The Kent RUS considers the remainder of Kent including the line from Bromley through Medway towards the Kent Coast. However, there is an inevitable overlap with the earlier RUS. The High Speed Line is not formally part of this study but the domestic services which run over it are included.
- 1.5 For Kent, the RUS considers the 10 years to 2019 in detail and a further 20 years to 2039 in outline. The railway industry’s investment plans to 2014 have already been set, but the plans for 2014 to 2019 will not be confirmed until 2012.
- 1.6 The full document can be downloaded from the Network Rail website at the following address:-

<http://www.networkrail.co.uk/browse%20documents/rus%20documents/ro ute%20utilisation%20strategies/kent/kent%20rus%20draft.pdf>

## 2 Background

- 2.1 Two-thirds of the travel in the RUS area involves journeys to one of the London terminal stations with over 30,000 passengers arriving in the morning peak every weekday.
- 2.2 Patronage has increased by 28% since 1998 and – notwithstanding the current economic downturn – is expected to grow by 32% by 2019 due primarily to two factors:-
- i new demand stimulated by the high speed services
  - ii planned major housing developments in Ashford and the Thames Gateway
- 2.3 The following housing forecasts have been used in predicting growth in the use of the network:-

<b>Additional housing</b>	<b>by 2016</b>	<b>by 2026</b>
Medway	7,500	15,700
Thames Gateway (Kent) overall	24,100	48,000

*Source: Thames Gateway sub-regional policy framework. Policy KTG1. 2006 base year*

## 3 Already Committed Projects

- 3.1 The RUS assumes that a number of committed projects will be completed. These include:-
- i introduction of a new timetable including high speed services from December 2009
  - ii Investment plan to 2014 including additional carriages and provision of 12 car platforms and turnback at Rochester
  - iii Enhanced Thameslink services by December 2015
  - iv Crossrail to Abbey Wood by 2017.

#### **4 Rochester and Strood Stations**

- 4.1 The RUS is aware of the review which is taking place of Rochester and Strood stations. The RUS does not support the concept of one combined station for two reasons:-
- i it does not believe that it is feasible to provide the new link from the Medway Valley Line to the Bromley line which would be needed to serve the combined station.
  - ii it does not believe that the extension to the Medway Valley Line service which would be needed to serve this station is viable.
- 4.2 The RUS does, however, recognise the potential to relocate Rochester station, and the interchange opportunities this gives. This could also help to provide the 12 car turnback which the RUS requires but is difficult to achieve at the current station site without major investment.

#### **5. Gaps**

- 5.1 The gaps identified, suggested interventions and recommendations are summarised on the following table:-

Interventions considered (where relevant to Medway)	Conclusion
<b>Gap A – between committed capacity and future forecasts of peak demand</b>	
<b>Additional high peak trains running via Bromley</b>	
From Medway to London	Not operationally practical because of capacity constraints in Medway and at Herne Hill
From Maidstone to London	Only 8 car trains possible. Capacity constraints at Herne Hill Not recommended as not shown to be viable
From Swanley to London	Not felt to be viable at present but recommended for future consideration for 2015
<b>Lengthening of high peak trains on Bromley line</b>	
All Chatham main-line trains to 12 car and all Maidstone line to 8 car	Recommended for implementation
Platform extensions to allow 9 to 12 cars on Maidstone line	High cost – not recommended
Selective Door Opening to allow 9 to 12 cars on Maidstone line	To be introduced when needed
<b>Running high peak service for a longer period</b>	
	Not recommended as would remove the opportunity to recover from delays and therefore worsen performance
<b>Lengthening shoulder peak services to maximum length allowed by infrastructure</b>	
	Would require additional trains, but recommended for partial implementation
<b>Providing further capacity on high speed services to St Pancras</b>	
This is seen as the more achievable option as the options for increasing peak capacity on the classic main lines are seen as being very limited. However, extension of the high speed service would require the provision of additional trains able to use the high speed line.	
Lengthening St Pancras to Rochester trains from 6 cars to 12.	Not recommended in isolation due to limited demand

<p>Extension of St Pancras to Rochester peak services to Faversham</p>	<p>Would allow 12 car trains to be provided and would increase the frequency through Medway. May mean that some Dartford line services would need to terminate at Rochester instead of Gillingham Recommended for further development</p>
<p>Lengthening St Pancras to Ebbsfleet peak shuttles for 6 to 12 car</p>	<p>Not recommended in isolation due to limited demand</p>
<p>Extension of St Pancras to Ebbsfleet peak shuttles to Maidstone West via Strood</p>	<p>Service would need to continue to be 6 car but nevertheless seen as having a robust case and recommended for further development</p>
<p>Increase the number of domestic high speed trains into St Pancras in the peak hour from 8 to 10</p>	<p>Not recommended as requires changes on High Speed line which are outside the influence of the RUS.</p>
<p>Maximising use of high speed line services</p>	<p>The report notes that it is very difficult to improve the capacity on the existing network and proposes enhancements to the services on the high speed line. It notes a belief that some passengers could be encouraged to use high speed line services rather than conventional routes to avoid pressure on the London Bridge area and suggests that some passengers from the Medway area could consider travelling to St Pancras instead of Cannon Street. However, this is not a formal recommendation but does ignore the fact that Cannon Street station is located a short walking distance away from many places of work in the City of London and it would be a serious inconvenience for the users of these services if they were forced to travel elsewhere. Indeed, it could be argued that this suggestion would be more relevant to the Victoria line services as a greater number of users of these trains travel on by bus or tube and could make the journey in a similar way from St Pancras or Stratford.</p>

<b>Gap B – between the planned train services within Kent – including linkages to adjacent areas – and the need to meet future levels of demand across all modes</b>	
A number of service enhancements were considered including:-	
Redhill to Tonbridge – increase to 2 trains per hour (tph) This is relevant to Medway as it forms part of a possible route to Gatwick	Not recommended due to insufficient demand – but the analysis consider this frequency improvement as a local stopping train and did not consider the faster regional service
Double frequency of off-peak Medway to London high speed trains to 4 tph	Unlikely to be required prior to 2019
Combine services to run Maidstone to Sheerness on Sea via Medway	Felt to represent poor value for money and not recommended due to capacity constraints preventing additional services operating through Medway
Extend Victoria to Gillingham services to Sheerness	Not recommended due to insufficient demand
Combine Medway Valley and Tonbridge to Redhill services	Not recommended as there is no robust service pattern which could be considered without additional services between Tonbridge and Redhill which have already been discounted
Reducing journey times The figures below show the overall maximum levels of capital expenditure that could be spent for each 1 minute improvement in journey time on the sections of line shown to achieve a benefit/cost ratio of 2.0. Victoria – Medway/Kent Coast – £15.5m St Pancras – Medway/Kent Coast - £20.6m	Benefits recognised but specific schemes not yet identified

<b>Gap C – Improving accessibility to stations</b>	
Car parking Parking is at or near capacity at several stations on the route.	Car parks will need to be considered for expansion, particularly in the Thames Gateway area
Bus Links	Encourage joint marketing with bus operators
Foot and Cycle Access	Issue to be dealt with at local level in partnership with councils
New stations	Combined station for Rochester and Strood is not supported as the extension of the Medway Valley Line service through the Medway Towns, which would be needed to achieve this, is not supported by the RUS
Ebbsfleet	<p>Councils are encouraged to support new bus links from a number of towns to Ebbsfleet where the rail connections are weak</p> <p>The provision of a pedestrian link between Northfleet and Ebbsfleet stations is recommended for future development</p> <p>New rail links from Swanscombe and Ebbsfleet are not recommended</p>
<b>Gap D – between the level of service in the evenings and weekends and the predicted levels of demand at these times</b>	
Measures which reduce the impact of engineering and maintenance work to prevent the lines being closed for repair	New arrangements are being developed to reduce the need for late night and weekend line closures

<b>Gap E – between the current capability of the network to accommodate freight and the likely future needs</b>	
Many freight issues relate to the Thames Gateway area, where the main increase is expected, including Hoo Junction and the Grain branch. Overall there is generally felt to be capacity for freight. The number of freight trains through the Channel Tunnel is substantially less at present than the available paths which are protected by legislation. However, there are places in the network where the desire to run more freight trains can conflict with the plans to run more passenger services.	
Use of High Speed Line for freight	Considered to be probable in the mid to long term future, but would attract different types of traffic to the traditional freight services No RUS intervention proposed
New link from Grain branch directly to Higham is suggested to avoid reversal at Hoo Junction	Identified as potential medium term opportunity – initial work on business case underway
<b>Gap F – between anticipated train performance on an increasingly busy network and the need for strategic level interventions to reduce major delays</b>	
The RUS identifies the Medway area as one where there is an increasing risk of congestion causing delays to services because of the increasing number of trains running from December 2009.	
Improve the capability of the infrastructure through Medway with East Kent Resignalling in 2013/2014	Potential enhancement opportunity which will be most effectively delivered if the works can be co-ordinated
Optimise infrastructure in the Hoo/Grain areas to minimise interaction between freight and passenger services	Further development required
Passing loop on Grain branch to reduce delays to passenger services caused by freight trains	Identified in South London RUS but currently unfunded – smaller scale options being considered
Track layout changes and improved turnback at Gillingham together with possible provision of 12 car capability at the depot	East Kent resignalling will allow this to be delivered effectively if agreed
Conversion of certain level-crossings to CCTV control	The crossings concerned are not named. Gillingham and Rainham have signal boxes alongside so are unlikely to be affected until resignalling of the line takes place.