



# Improving rail access to the Port of Felixstowe

November 2005

**This update leaflet has been produced to provide further information on the Port of Felixstowe's plans to improve rail access. Copies of the leaflet have been posted directly to over 900 residents within the area of the proposed works to Felixstowe branch line and Ipswich marshalling yard.**

## **APPLICATION NEWS**

An Application for a Transport and Works Act Order ("TWA Order") is now likely to be made at the end of 2005. From the date that the Application is made, there is a statutory period of six weeks during which anyone may make representations to the Department for Transport. However, to take into account the Christmas holidays, this period will be extended. The final date for making representations will be advised to all interested parties when the Application is made. It will also appear in the 'Public Notices' section in local newspapers. Parish/Town, District/Borough and County Council will be aware of the Application and the timetable for making representations, and will have copies of all Application documents for public inspection. These documents will also be available in Ipswich County and Felixstowe Public Libraries.

Most Application information will be reproduced on the Port's website, together with useful links and other relevant documents, at:

<http://www.portoffelixstowe.co.uk/fsr/branchline/introduction.htm>



## **PUBLIC CONSULTATION RESPONSES**

Many local residents provided responses on the comment slips that were sent out in May this year, and a total of 151 were received. In addition, those attending the Public Consultation evenings held in June completed an additional 42 comment cards. These responses have given the Port a better understanding of local opinion, and have assisted with the development of a scheme that takes into consideration the concerns of those who responded, as far as is reasonably possible.

Of those that responded, 64% are in favour of the scheme, with 26% opposed. The remainder did not express an opinion either way. The main reason given for support of the scheme was the opportunity it affords to minimise lorry movements on Suffolk's roads.

## **ISSUES RAISED FROM PUBLIC CONSULTATION**

### ***Works at Nacton***

The Port of Felixstowe has received confirmation from Network Rail that the dualling of a 4<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>-mile stretch of the Felixstowe branch line will be sufficient to deliver the necessary capacity to handle the Port's future rail volumes, as well as allowing the existing passenger service to be maintained. This is a shorter length than anticipated and means that the extent of the proposed works in the TWA Order will not include Nacton Bridge or the bridge crossing the A14. The dualled section of track will now run from Trimley Station to a point west of Levington Bridge.

### ***Downtime of Barriers at Level Crossings***

The Port of Felixstowe has received detailed information from Network Rail on



the existing duration and frequency of barrier downtime. The Port is working closely with Network Rail to ensure that the barrier downtime per train is kept as short as possible.

Within the scope of the scheme, a change to the speed limit is proposed at Trimley, where the speed will be increased on the branch line to and from the Port to 20 miles per hour, from the existing 10 miles per hour. This is to enable freight trains to pass more quickly over Trimley level crossing, to keep barrier downtime per train as low as possible.

### ***Signalling and Standing Trains***

The dualling of the Felixstowe branch line will require new signals for the dualled section of track. The Port of Felixstowe is aware of the concerns of residents who currently experience standing trains directly adjacent to their properties. Whilst



standing trains will occur on the dualled section of the Felixstowe branch line, the location of signals and the timetabling will seek to minimise the impact on residents and their properties. These design objectives are subject to compliance with railway standards, detailed design work and Network Rail's approval process and requirements. The proposed locations of signals and associated impacts will be reported in the Environmental Statement.

### **Train Horns**

Residents raised concerns about the current use of locomotive horns at night. Railway Safety's 'Rule Book' governs the use of locomotive horns. Application of these rules is mandatory for train operators.

The issue affecting Trimley residents is the requirement to sound the horn at 'whistle' boards. These are positioned by the track on the approaches to level crossings at which risk assessments have deemed such a warning to be necessary to ensure road user/pedestrian safety. One set of additional whistle boards has been identified as being required as a result of the dualling scheme. However, the opportunity for the relocation of some existing whistle boards, and for the stopping up and the diversion of existing crossings, via new bridge crossings, may improve the situation in some locations and negate the need for any new whistle boards. Again, this design objective is subject to meeting railway standards, detailed design work and Network Rail's approval process.



The issue affecting residents adjacent to Ipswich marshalling yard is the requirement for trains to sound the horn when: approaching a location where shunting is taking place; personnel are on or near the line; works are taking place on the line; and, at other times considered necessary. The activities that will take place within the reconfigured sidings at Ipswich marshalling yard will be assessed in the Environmental Statement.

### **Noise, Vibration and Speed of Freight Trains**

The Environmental Statement that will accompany the TWA Order Application will report on current levels of noise and vibration (the baseline), and predicted levels. It will detail mitigation proposals where changes in noise and vibration levels are predicted to be capable of control during the construction or future use of the development. A specialist noise and vibration consultant has visited several properties and locations that are representative of the areas that may be affected in order to record information to identify the baseline.

Several comments were received from residents concerning freight train speed. The maximum speed limit for freight trains is 60 miles per hour on the Felixstowe branch line, with passenger trains running at a maximum speed of 75 miles per hour. Network Rail has advised that in the last 10 years data recorders have been fitted in many locomotives. These record certain aspects of the train's performance like a 'black box' in an airliner. The recorders are subject to random checks, and a driver's failure to comply with speed limits or to use the locomotive horn as required would be shown on the record obtained. This constant monitoring is a deterrent from breaching the rules.

### **Property Values**

One of the concerns of residents was that the scheme would have an adverse impact on property values. There is statutory provision made for compensation in certain circumstances. The existing railway line is already in operation and it is the incremental impact of the proposed works that is to be considered. For the purposes of compensation, in very general terms, there are two different ways in which property can be affected by the proposals: the first is if land is acquired or used for the scheme; the second is if property value is affected by the scheme owing to its "physical factors", i.e. noise, vibration, smell, fumes, smoke and artificial lighting, and the discharge onto land of any solid or liquid substance. The main difference between the two is that, where land is used or acquired, a compensation claim should be made at the time of that acquisition or use. Where property has devalued due to the "physical factors" - which should be related to the scheme, not those that already exist - then compensation should be claimed no earlier than 12 months after the scheme comes into public use. This period is to allow the scheme's effects to be known and assessed.

Compensation is complicated and the above is only a simple guide. More details on compensation are available in a series of booklets available free of charge from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister - please contact the Port Development Team for further details.

### **Other**

All comments received have been passed on to the relevant Parish and Borough Councils to ensure that they are aware of the issues within their area.

**Thank you for taking the time to read this update. If you require any further information, please contact the Port Development Team on 01394 604435, or at [branchline@hpuk.co.uk](mailto:branchline@hpuk.co.uk), or in writing to Port Development, Port of Felixstowe, 4th Floor, Tomline House, The Dock, Felixstowe, Suffolk IP11 3SY.**