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Metro, Mainline and Rural Timetable Consultation,  
National Express East Anglia,  
Olivers Yard,  
55 City Road  
London  
EC1Y 1HQ

11<sup>th</sup> September 2009

Dear Sirs,

RE: Metro, Mainline and Rural Timetable Consultation

I write to set out my views on the Consultation you are currently undertaking. My comments largely relate to your proposals for the East Suffolk Line from Ipswich to Lowestoft.

Whilst the proposed investment in the East Anglian rail network is to be welcomed and I can see considerable advantages in your plans to upgrade the main line service from London Liverpool Street to Norwich, I am concerned that in both the short term and the long term the East Suffolk Line could suffer as a result.

The through trains from Lowestoft to Liverpool Street which were a franchise commitment and which you introduced in December 2004 have in my opinion been a success, have improved accessibility to Lowestoft and have helped overcome the perception of remoteness which has held back the local economy in recent years.

I welcome your recognition of the importance of an hourly service and the benefits that this will bring to communities along the route and your intention to introduce this from Ipswich to Saxmundham straight away and from December 2012 from Ipswich to Lowestoft provided that the Beccles Loop is installed.

I note that you are working hard to secure the funding for this improvement. However there is the concern that if funding is not forthcoming then the Waveney area could be left with an inferior service than it has at present. It is vital that this funding is put in place as soon as practically possible.

If you proceed with the proposals as set out in your Consultation I request that you should do so on the following basis:-

- 1 You should give the highest possible priority to the securing of funding for the Beccles Loop, so that the proposed hourly through service from Ipswich to Lowestoft does commence in December 2012.
- 2 The facilities for changing trains at Ipswich to and from the East Suffolk Line should be improved. The bridge over the main line at Ipswich and the lack of a passenger lift are major constraints.

The proposed connection time of 10 – 15 minutes appears reasonable and provides time for passengers to get from one platform to the next, as well as providing some flexibility in the case of delayed trains.

I would request that all trains from Lowestoft to Ipswich connecting to London bound trains should come in at platform one, so passengers can readily get to platform two to wait for the main line train.

The Lowestoft bound train, awaiting the connection from Liverpool Street should always be on platform four, so as to allow read accessibility from the main line train on platform three.

- 3 You should do all that you can to bring about other improvements to the line, working with other interested parties as necessary (i.e. Network Rail, Suffolk County Council, Waveney District Council, Suffolk Coastal District Council and First Group). These improvements include remodelling the station forecourt at Lowestoft and the provision of a bus and rail interchange there, improved parking facilities at other stations, re-signalling and improved level crossings.
- 4 You should provide extra capacity and should lay on additional services for seasonal and special events, such as the Lowestoft Air Festival and the Latitude Festival at Henham.
- 5 If your franchise is renewed in 2014, a top priority should be the reintroduction of through trains from Lowestoft to London Liverpool Street.

I trust this letter is self explanatory. If there are points which require clarification please let me know.

Yours sincerely,

Peter Aldous  
Conservative Parliamentary Candidate for Waveney