

BRIEFING CONCERNING A SOUTH HUMBER COAST AND LONDON (CITY) RAILWAY

Renaissance Trains has been aware since the time services were promoted between London and Hull that there was a similar demand for through services to the City of London from the South Humberside towns and Lincoln.

Renaissance Trains has since 2003 been examining a business case for investment in the development of passenger services, consistent with Regulatory policy, between the south Humber coast and London, especially the City of London and Docklands.

Renaissance Trains is aware that the comparative prosperity of north-east Lincolnshire is low with unemployment levels at twice the national average. But as a result of our detailed market research, our own consultations with key stakeholders and the financial modelling we have done to compare potential revenue flows against operating costs, we have determined that there is both a financial case and a strong economic case for our investment in a through rail service to the City of London.

The population of Lincolnshire as a whole is 647,000 (2001) which showed an increase of 9% over the previous decade. The 'county' area of which Lincoln is the centre is more prosperous but rail journeys are largely undertaken by 'rail heading' and many potential users are put off by the inconvenience of changing trains and make the throughout journey by road or not at all.

For the whole region the absence of an effective rail link with the Capital brings considerable economic and social disadvantage and the new rail services will address this.

Renaissance Trains is mindful of the need to minimise revenue abstraction from the franchised operators and is also aware of capacity constraints on the East Coast Main Line. It therefore proposes to route the trains via the Joint Line and thence by the West Anglia route to Stratford.

In the choice of Stratford the Government's City Airport Master Plan has been noted as well as proposals made by Transport for London to extend the Docklands Light Railway to Stratford International station.

Urban regeneration is also taking place at Stratford on a large scale and there are a number of plans in the public domain that will create a very large future centre for employment and homes. The area has the potential to accommodate 100,000 new homes and 300,000 new jobs over the next two decades.

There are also plans for significant population growth in the corridor between Peterborough and Stratford as part of the Government's Sustainable Communities Plan.

In summary there is considered to be extensive economic and social benefit at both ends of the route served.

We have begun work to determine an optimal train service plan and have already held a briefing meeting with Network Rail and the structure and form of a future track access agreement has been agreed.

The proposed number of services will depend on business plan modelling based on earlier experience in the promotion of open access services where stakeholder aspirations are melded with likely operational costs and revenue.

The rolling stock, which would be leased, is likely to be 100 mph diesel multiple units conveying First and Standard Class accommodation and providing at seat and buffet counter refreshments. A range of direct marketing channels would be established to attract new rail users who would make up the great majority of passengers.

We would anticipate commencement of services in the late summer of the year 2008/9, allowing time for the full, obligatory and necessary planning and consultation processes to be undertaken.

Renaissance Trains Ltd
17th October 2006