

Reducing Journey Times to Hastings & Bexhill

Working in partnership to support economic growth



Background

- ❖ Draft Kent Route Study published in March 2017
 - “Low” business case for ‘big bang’ approach
 - Suggested incremental approach:
 - Line speed improvements
 - Track layout changes
 - Rolling stock procurement
 - Full or partial electrification
- Arrival of new technology permits change in focus

An Updated Strategy

- ❖ Incremental approach will have a better business case
- ❖ Suggest three phase approach:
 - Phase 1 – Track layout changes at Ashford
 - Phase 2 – Line speed increases between Ashford and Eastbourne
 - Phase 3 – Full or partial Marshlink electrification
- ❖ Third Party funding is **essential** for any of these
 - New Business Development Director for NR South East appointed
- ❖ Phase 2 would significant deliver journey time savings to Hastings & Bexhill – will have the best business case

Phase 1 – Providing the Capability

- ❖ Ashford 'C' Junction now due for renewal by Dec 2020
- ❖ Opportunity to include vital connection for High Speed to Hastings
- ❖ Development work due to start in November this year
 - Third Party funding essential to include the enhancement
 - Work will deliver a fully costed design by Summer 2018
 - Additional benefits at Ashford, including cross platform interchange
- ❖ BUT this will not provide the capability alone, requires either:
 - Existing 'Bi-Mode IEP' train, with gauge clearance to Eastbourne
 - Or a battery-powered train
- ❖ These can only be delivered through a future franchising process

Phase 2 – Reducing Journey Times

- ❖ To Increase line speed:
 - Close, divert or upgrade 9 level & 26 foot crossings!
 - New signalling between Hastings & Ashford
 - Embankment & structural works for higher speed
 - Increase length of loop at Rye ?

- ❖ With full line speed improvement options:
 - London – Hastings 66-69 minutes
 - up to 20 minutes saving

 - London – Bexhill 76-79 minutes
 - up to 38 minutes saving

- ❖ Third Party funding essential to develop & deliver this

Next steps

- ❖ Short term: Secure investment to develop the enhancement at Ashford
 - Coastal Communities Fund ?
 - Housing Infrastructure Fund ?
 - Future regional Growth Fund allocated by the LEP ?
 - Other sources ?

- ❖ Resolve the rolling stock requirements

- ❖ Secure major investment for delivery of the enhancements

Thank You !

