



Community and Enterprise Resources
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Dear Madam

Comments on Network Rail's Strategic Business Plan for Scotland for Control Period 5

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments on Network Rail's Strategic Business Plan (SBR) for Scotland covering the period April 2014 – March 2019. Our views on the SBR and who it may affect South Lanarkshire in particular, are given below.

We welcome the level of investment that is proposed to be spent on Scottish rail infrastructure as we believe that this will encourage more people to travel by sustainable modes such as by train, instead of the car. This document details at a high level where Network Rail will invest approximately £4 billion in improving and maintaining the rail network.

Large scale projects that are scheduled for completion during this period include the Edinburgh Glasgow Improvements Programme (EGIP), the Borders New Railway, Aberdeen to Inverness Rail Line Improvements Phase 1, and Highland Main Line Rail Improvements Phase 2. The document also stated that Network Rail will implement a rolling programme of line electrification which will cover approximately 100 single track kilometres per annum and will commence following the completion of EGIP.

There are a number of projects listed that we think will be of benefit to users of rail services in South Lanarkshire, and therefore support, and these are detailed below;

- **Carstairs Junction Remodelling** – This project is estimated to cost £53 million and will lead to an increase in speed through the junction thereby reducing journey times for both passenger and freight services. It is viewed by Network Rail as a “once in a lifetime opportunity” to enhance the capacity and capability of the junction. We would however add that Carstairs Junction station, with platforms in both directions, should be retained in any remodelling proposals.
- **Electrification of line between Rutherglen East junction and Coatbridge** – This project will form part of the 100km per year of electrification after EGIP. At this moment in time there are a limited number of direct services between Rutherglen and Coatbridge, however it is unclear if there will be improvements or alterations to the service due to the completion of this scheme.

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- **Electrification of line between East Kilbride and Muirhouse South junction** – This scheme also forms part of the 100km per year of electrification after EGIP and will be delivered as an “alliance project”, an approach used to electrify the Paisley Canal line in 2012. It will be a partnership between Network Rail and the future Scotrail franchise holder and should lead to both project time and cost savings.
- **Motherwell re-signalling enhancements** – a substantial part of this scheme involves providing bi-directional signalling capability between Carluke and Law. It is envisaged that this will support the more effective operation of train services however the document does not detail if this will lead to improved or increased services on this line.

The Carstairs Junction Remodelling and the Motherwell re-signalling enhancements have the potential to reduce capacity constraints on the rail network in South Lanarkshire. This may provide new opportunities for the growth in rail travel in the area through the construction of new stations at locations where it can be demonstrated that there is an existing or potential future demand.

The document also details outstanding capacity gaps that were identified in the Scotland Route Utilisation Strategy (RUS) which Network Rail published in June 2011. Amongst those gaps listed was the demand for additional services on the Argyle Line. The majority of the train stations in South Lanarkshire are located on this line and any service improvements would be to the benefit of many South Lanarkshire residents. The document is not clear however on whether additional services are to be provided between 2014 and 2019. We would fully support the development of additional services on this vital transport corridor in South Lanarkshire.

Yours faithfully



Gordon Mackay
Head of Roads and Transportation Services