



# SELRAP

**SKIPTON EAST LANCASHIRE RAIL ACTION PARTNERSHIP**

***Connecting Cities and Regions across the North***

**Hearing Statement under Matter 10:**

**“The Provision of Infrastructure and Delivery of the Plan”**

**Issue 7: “Have the needs for strategic infrastructure such as the A56 bypass and the reopening of the Colne-Skipton railway been appropriately justified and addressed in the Core Strategy?”**

It is SELRAP's contention that the Core Strategy should make the reopening of the Colne-Skipton Railway in conjunction with the upgrading of the railway between Colne and Gannow Junction, Burnley, a priority over other transport schemes in the policies of the final Plan, in the light of the Core Strategy's Spatial Vision/Strategy, Objectives and Environmental and other Policies, listed below:

- Connectivity (S3.93 – S3.96, Pages 29/30) – it is proven that rail connectivity is a greater key driver for social and economic regeneration than other modes of transport.
- There are 4 Headings under which Spatial Strategy Issues/ Challenges will be addressed (S3.109, Page 32). One of the 4 Principles to focus on the challenges will be “To protect and enhance the built and natural environment, managing the causes and impacts of climate change”. SELRAP would suggest that the rail scheme would be a better option in complying with this principle than other transport schemes, such as road schemes as it would have less environmental impact and produce less damaging climate change emissions.

- Giving priority to rail would seem to fit in with “Our Strategic Objectives: What we need to do” (S5.2.5, Table 5.1, Pages 35/36). The Strategy lists 11 strategic Objectives of which the last is to “Deliver a safe, sustainable transport network that improves both internal and external connectivity, reduces the need to travel by car, supports long-term growth and contributes to an improved environment”.
- Under “Our Foundation for a Sustainable Future: Improving the Environment We Live in” (S.8, Policy ENV 1: “Protecting and Enhancing Our Natural and Historic Environments”, Pages 69/70). Again, In transport terms, rail connections and improvements would be more sustainable and have less impact on the natural and historic environments than other modes of transport.
- Under Policy ENV 2: Achieving Quality in Design and Conservation (Pages 76/77) – in particular, “designing development to move towards a low carbon future”. In order to comply with this Policy requirement more emphasis should be placed on rail.
- Under Promoting Sustainable Travel. SELRAP agrees with the statement in the Core Strategy (S.8.94, Page 86): “A number of other factors will influence the way we plan for transport in the future. Emissions from transportation are one of the main contributors to the causes of climate change. Spatial planning has an important role to play in helping to address climate change and one way of doing this will be to reduce the need to travel. By planning sustainably, providing more environmentally friendly modes of transport, and better public transport we can help to reduce car usage and subsequently carbon emissions”. In order to achieve the objective of “planning sustainably, providing more environmentally friendly modes of transport, and better public transport we can help to reduce car usage and subsequently carbon emissions”. With the aim of reducing carbon emissions, rail should be given priority in the development plans over other transport schemes.
- Under Strategic Transport S.8.122 (Page 89), the Document states: “The reinstatement of the Colne to Skipton railway line is a longer term scheme which is unlikely to be delivered during the plan period”. SELRAP would question this statement. It is far more likely that the rail scheme will be started before the road scheme, which has been put back by Lancashire County Council to 2020/21, and definitely during the lifetime of the new Local Plan and before the end of the Plan in 2030. LCC has already convened an “Output Definition Group” of transport authorities and agencies to further this objective.
- Under Policy ENV 5: Pollution and Unstable Land (Page 95), the reinstatement of the railway would cause minimal disruption, contamination and pollution, as it would follow the existing route of the old railway, compared with any other transport developments.

- Under Policy ENV 7: Water Management – Development and Flood Risk (page 105/6), there would be less risk of flooding with the reinstatement of the railway, as it would follow the existing track bed route.
- Under Policy WRK 5: Tourism, Leisure and Culture (Page 176), the reinstatement of the railway would increase the potential for tourism into Pendle and access to Leisure and Cultural Venues within the Borough, as well as giving people more choice of links to other Social Centres in adjacent areas.
- Under Policy SUP 2: Health and Well-Being (Page 193), the Core Strategy advocates: "Support and develop healthy ways to travel". This reflects the aim of Policy ENV4: Promoting Sustainable Travel. Rail travel is more environmentally friendly and better for public health than other forms of polluting transport. Therefore, the Council should urge that the existing East Lancashire Railway from Preston to Colne be upgraded and the Colne – Skipton Railway be reopened to provide a regional rail link to City Regions across the North as soon as possible.
- Under Policy SUP 3: Education and Training (Pages 196/7), in order for Citizens of Pendle to take advantage of Education, Training (and Employment) opportunities not just in Pendle but elsewhere in East Lancashire, Manchester and North/West Yorkshire, rail connectivity is vital for people to gain access to such facilities.

In the light of the above evidence, SELRAP would urge Pendle Borough Council to make the reopening and upgrading of the existing railway between Colne and Gannow Junction, Burnley a major priority as part of the Local Plan.

Yours truly

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Dated: 18th March 2015