

19<sup>th</sup> January 2012

## On track to transform Manchester Road Station as plans are submitted



An application for planning permission has been submitted for the redevelopment of Manchester Road Railway Station in Burnley.

Burnley Council in partnership with Lancashire County Council, the East Lancashire Community Rail Partnership, Northern Rail and Network Rail is redeveloping the station in advance of the implementation of the Todmorden Curve railway improvements, which will see travel times to Manchester cut from 1 hour and 45 minutes to 53 minutes. These improvements are likely to see a strong increase in passenger numbers at the station, which is already Burnley's busiest station.

The plans include:

- The refurbishment of the former railway station building;
- Introducing manned ticket facilities;
- New canopies for the station building;
- New platform waiting shelters to both platform 1 & 2;
- A Community Facility for use by the East Lancashire Community Rail Partnership and the Northern Rail Community Ambassadors
- Improved entrance for pedestrian use of Manchester Road;
- New car parking to provide 49 spaces and 4 new DDA parking spaces; and
- New cycle parking provision.

Work has already started at the station, with some initial enabling works including the demolition of extensions relating to the former use a dairy distribution depot and the clearance of vegetation.

In addition, a funding submission to the Interreg IV B programme for ERDF funding has been submitted by Lancashire County Council. The application has been conditionally approved with full approval expected within two months.

The station was originally built in the current location at Manchester Road in 1886. This station was, in turn, closed on 6 November 1961 and subsequently re-opened on 29 September 1986. By the time it was re-opened, the station building, the majority of which still exists, had been sold out of railway use for use as a dairy storage and distribution facility. The site was purchased by Burnley Council and Lancashire County Council in November 2011 with the aim of bringing the building back into rail use.

**Councillor Roger Frost**, Executive Member for Regeneration & Economic Development, said: "Rail travel grew by 4.8% in 2011, with more and more people choosing to travel by train, despite difficult economic times. To accommodate this growth it is important Burnley creates welcoming stations able to accommodate an increase in passenger numbers.

"For some passengers it can be the first impression they get of a town, and with the transformations underway in Burnley, with new schools, college and universities, it is important that visitors arriving, or passing through see the 'new' modern, changing Burnley.

"Work is due to commence on the new University Technical College later this year, which will have a major impact on the Manchester Road station with a number of students coming into Burnley from across the region by rail." Adding: "With the £8.8 million RGF bid approved last year to reinstate the Todmorden Curve direct rail link to Manchester halving the travel times between in Burnley and Manchester, it is a key priority for the council to regenerate the Manchester Road Station."

**County Councillor Tim Ashton**, Lancashire County Council Cabinet member for highways and transport, said: "We're at the start of what will be a new and more prosperous time for Burnley as a result of being able to travel to Manchester in under an hour thanks to the restored Todmorden Curve.

"The redeveloped Manchester Road railway station is an important part of this and it's exciting that the process is now underway.

"Lancashire is already due to benefit from considerable inward investment in its transport infrastructure over the coming years and it will be an added bonus if we can also win European funding towards Manchester Road station."

**James Syson, Chair East Lancashire Community Rail Partnership** "The refurbishment of Burnley Manchester Road station is an important project for the ELCRP especially as it provides a base for the Community Rail Officers and the Northern Community Ambassadors. This is an exciting project that will make a real difference for passengers".

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***To editors and journalists:***

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