

Preferred Site Identified for Skelmersdale Railway Station

Lancashire County Council, in partnership with West Lancashire Borough Council and Merseytravel, has identified the former Glenburn Sports College/Westbank Campus site as the preferred location for a railway station for Skelmersdale.

The decision follows a comparative assessment of the two possible sites, identified in an earlier study by Network Rail.

The assessment, commissioned by the county council and carried out by Network Rail, looked at the two identified sites: the former Glenburn Sports College / Westbank Campus site and the site next to the Concourse shopping centre.

The study assessed the potential station sites against a number of criteria, including:

- impact on the highway;
- good pedestrian and cycle access;
- able to provide a park and ride sufficient for 250 vehicles but capable of expansion to cater for up to 500 vehicles;
- able to provide a set down and pick up area;
- able to provide a station building with good passenger and staff accommodation along with the ability to provide a retail facility;
- able to provide good bus interchange with up to four drive through bus stands;
- able to provide good connectivity to the town centre/residential areas;
- potential challenges to the construction of the station; and
- ability to act as a catalyst for regeneration.

County Councillor John Fillis, cabinet member for highways and transport, said: "This is a really exciting step forward in the process of bringing a railway station to Skelmersdale.

"This was a comprehensive study and clearly identified the Glenburn Sports College and Westbank Campus site as the most suitable option. The site is big enough to provide a high quality station with scope to expand to meet future demand. It has good highway access and good connectivity to the town and the surrounding area.

"There is still a long way to go on this project but identifying the right site is a really significant milestone on the way."

Councillor John Hodson, West Lancashire Borough Council portfolio holder for Planning, said: "The Borough Council is really pleased that in partnership with Lancashire County Council progress continues to be made on this key project."

"The identification of the preferred location for a railway station is an important step in a major project for the people of Skelmersdale and the Borough Council looks forward to working with the county council to ensure the station is built."

The former Glenburn Sports College closed on 31 August 2016. The site is owned by Lancashire County Council. The former Westbank Campus is owned by Newcastle College, which merged with Skelmersdale and Ormskirk College in 2007. Both sites are currently unused.

The county council will now start the process of acquiring the relevant land.