

## **Community Rail Route Prospectus for the railway line between Preston and Ormskirk**

The line between Preston and Ormskirk is one of the routes listed in the Department for Transport Community Rail Development Strategy as being suitable for designation as a community rail line along with the local passenger service on this line. This document sets out ideas for development of the service subsequent to the proposed designation during 2011.

Unlike earlier designations, it is intended to actively change the route capacity to reduce the costs of operation in order to improve the service and the long term viability of the route.

The key measures of success will be:

- Reduction in operating costs associated with the simplification of track and signalling systems; and
- Increase in passengers - partly arising from the increased services on the line

The prospectus has been discussed and agreed with the West Lancashire CRP (which presently consists of Lancashire County Council, West Lancashire Borough Council, Sefton MBC, Wigan MBC, Merseytravel, Transport for Greater Manchester, Network Rail, Northern Rail and OPSTA).

Designation of the line is intended to bring focus to the development of the line and in particular the implementation of the Lancashire and Cumbria Route Utilisation Strategy.

Key actions of the partners:

- Examine the feasibility of reducing the operating costs of the line through the simplification of the track and signalling systems and to concurrently to look at the scope to improve the line speed to enable a more regular timetable pattern to be introduced.
- To take steps to secure the funding required to enable the above track, signalling and service changes to take place.
- To take steps to introduce a Sunday service.<sup>1</sup>
- To work with local councils and Merseytravel PTE to develop integrated transport initiatives to improve accessibility to the area.
- To explore the opportunities of alternative fare structures to ensure they are appropriate to the local market.

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<sup>1</sup> The Sunday service is very difficult to justify when the signal box needs to be staffed at Rufford.

- To explore innovative ticketing and marketing schemes with the aim of making it easier to buy tickets away from staffed stations, effective collection of revenue and higher service awareness and take-up by the local population.
- To evaluate the delivery of cost effective station improvements.
- To encourage and support community involvement at stations.
- To explore the opportunities to develop Gateway Stations at Ormskirk and Rufford
- To develop a Marketing Plan for the line.

It is intended to build on the work already undertaken on the route by the West Lancashire Community Rail Partnership, Northern Rail and other local stakeholders in developing the line.

This Prospectus does not prejudice longer term proposals for the Burscough Curves.

Designation is intended to be a permanent arrangement, but it can be reviewed periodically to assess whether the designation is still appropriate.