

Item:
11



Report to Partnership Meeting 12 November 2021

RESEARCH AND STRATEGY DELIVERY

Rail Round Up

Purpose of Report

To update the Board on rail matters in the HITRANS area.

Request to Stop

The project to introduce advance warning to the driver of the need to call at a request stop, conceived by HITRANS and taken up by Network Rail, is entering the implementation phase, with equipment being installed at Scotscaidder in the coming week, with others to follow.

This measure is designed to improve performance, and save on braking and acceleration and thus saving on emissions. It is likely to lead to a rollout across the North Highland and West Highland Lines.

Fair Exchange

The creation of a new Token Exchange Point at Stromeferry is well advanced. Part funded by HITRANS, it splits the long signalling section between Kyle and Strathcarron, providing additional capacity, greater flexibility in access to Kyle, improved access for engineering and, significantly, permits shorter waiting times for road vehicles when there are rock face works on the Stromeferry bypass.

Inverness Station Masterplan

HITRANS has been tasked with leading on Access and Connectivity in the next phase of the Inverness Station Masterplan. This will not only consider links between passenger rail and the city, but also freight and depot access requirements.

Inverness Airport Station

Construction of the two platform rail station and passing loop is underway. Earthworks are being carried out and rail has been delivered to site. It is hoped that the station will be completed for the December 22 timetable change.



Zero Emissions Train Programme

During COP26 the Class 314 Zero Emissions Train will be displayed at Bo'ness, along with the Angel Trains funded electrolyser. The aspiration is for live trials on Network Rail to be held on Wick-Thurso, and to ensure continuity HITRANS is contributing funds to the 158 Packaging Study, which will identify opportunities for installing a fuel cell, tanks etc on a 3 car 158.

Going With The Flow

The construction of a lineside loading facility at Altnabreac on land owned by Caledonian Forestry is going through the planning process. If approved the intention is to move roundwood to Inverness early next year as part of a demonstrator project for transshipment to mills, building on the success of the Georgemas trial last year.

Timetable Consultations

The May 22 LNER timetable consultation that would have seen the Highland Chieftain journey time slightly lengthened with reduced connection times in the morning created substantial concerns, particularly in NE England. It has now been paused.

HITRANS continues to play a role in ECMA- East Coast Mainline Authorities- which makes the case for further investment in the ECML.

The ScotRail May 22 timetable consultation exercise also created much interest, as a headline 300 daily services were proposed to be removed in order to more closely match provision with demand. Responses are being reviewed alongside Transport Scotland and the Rail Recovery Task Force.

RISK REGISTER

RTS Delivery

Impact –Mode shift, integration

Policy

Impact – Decarbonisation, transport efficiency, network usage maximisation.

Financial

Impact – HITRANS elements are fully funded

Equality

Impact – Access to the network.

Recommendation

1. Members are asked to approve the report.

Report by:	Frank Roach
Designation:	Partnership Manager
Date:	2 November 2021