

Report to Partnership Meeting 25 November 2016

RESEARCH AND STRATEGY DELIVERY

Cycle Training - WHL and Sleepers

Purpose of the Report

This report provides members with a proposal to analyse the demand for cycle carrying capacity on the West Highland Lines and Serco Caledonian Sleeper to identify potential solutions to manage it during peak times.

Summary

1. Survey work to be undertaken Spring 2017
2. ScotRail/ Caledonian sleeper reservation data to be requested for analysis
3. Interventions proposals and benefits to be developed.

Current situation- ScotRail

Services to Oban, Fort William and Mallaig are operated by Class 156 units which currently have 6 reserveable cycle spaces. Sometimes 4 cars operate therefore providing 12 spaces. The 1611 Oban-Dalmally 'schools' return is unreserveable and therefore has spaces available at conductor's discretion.

The West Highlands, and Fort William in particular are noted as an area for cycle touring, mountain-biking and some cycle commuting.

Current situation- Caledonian sleeper

Serco Caledonian Sleepers to Fort William and Inverness convey up to 6 bikes per train, but have assured cyclists that all demand will be met - this has led to the use of couriers to road the cycles overnight on occasion. HITRANS helped to negotiate the reduction to 3 southbound in order for high value shellfish to be conveyed. This may not be sustainable in the longer term. New vehicles will come into service in 2018.

Bike and Go

ScotRail is rolling out Bike&Go, with 4 bikes for hire at Inverness. Bike&Go is a flexible bike hire system designed to help people complete the last leg of their journey from the Station to destination. See Annexe 3 for more details.

ScotRail-Future

In 2019 the 156 units will be replaced by Class 158s, as part of the Scenic Trains roll-out. New legislation on Persons of Restricted Mobility require a second disabled/wheelchair space to be provided in the area that provided the 3rd and 4th reservable bike spaces. These two additional spaces were created as part of the 2008 Highland 158 refurbishment that HITRANS helped to develop and fund.

Disabled users have priority use of the second disabled space, and thus cycling organisations foresaw a potential 66% diminution in cycle carrying capacity.

ScotRail Alliance MD Phil Verster has clarified the situation saying that the 3rd and 4th spaces will be reservable for bikes, but that if a second disabled space is required then the conductor will arrange for the bikes to be stored safely elsewhere. This may overcome the problem.

HITRANS Study

HITRANS proposes to carry out a study to establish current level of demand for on train cycle carrying, to establish the associated benefits of rail/cycle visitors and to identify future trends and options for managing the demand. Our funding partners will be Transport Scotland. We will engage with VisitScotland, Sustrans, Cycling Scotland and other cycling organisations.

RISK REGISTER

RTS Delivery

Impact – Positive.

Comment – Develops connectivity and modal shift.

Policy

Impact – Positive.

Comment – Strategic fit with CAPS and HITRANS Active Travel Strategy.

Financial

Impact – Positive

Budget line and value – This item has financial costs, but wider benefits may be realised. The financial costs will in large part be met with additional budgetary support from Transport Scotland.

Comment – HITRANS funds railresearch through the CP5 Rail budget line.

Equality

Impact – Positive

Comment – Provides opportunities for those unable or unwilling to drive.

Recommendation

Members are asked to note the report and approve the proposal.

Report by:	Frank Roach
Designation:	Partnership Manager
Date:	16 November 2016

Annexe 1

Letter to ScotRail

Cycle carriage on rail services in the Highlands

At HITRANS recent Partnership Meeting held on 15th April, Members raised concern about recent announcements relating to the number of bikes which may be reserved on a number of rail services to and within the Highlands.

The award winning 2008 Highland 158 refurbishment set the standard of a minimum of 4 spaces per train and the refurbished / reliveried 170s followed suit.

We understand Abellio's rolling stock plan will see re-refurbished 'Scenic' 158s on all Highland Rural routes, plus a number of Inverness-Aberdeen workings, with 1 extra DDA space and 2 fewer reservable cycle spaces. Overall this will represent a reduction of 4 reservable bike spaces on current West Highland Line 156 routes.

HITRANS recognises the competing demands for space and the benefits that two unreservable spaces offer intermediate journey opportunities for cyclists and can help overcome the problem of remote space booking. We also understand that cyclists are now encouraged to reserve in person as we have recently noted incidences of problems with remote bookings via telesales.

Peak demand is July and August, particularly on Wick-Inverness (unbalanced, more northbound LEJOG than southbound JOGLE, so more using Wick trains to Inverness and beyond) and are mainly road/touring cyclists as opposed to regular commuters.

The West Highland Line experiences demand from both road / touring cyclists and mountain bikers to Fort William and other destinations. Some of this is for cycle access to start walks up Munros, touring the North West Highlands and to Oban and Mallaig for touring the islands with Oban in particular likely to see an increase as a result of the development of the Hebridean Way through the Western Isles.

HITRANS supports Transport Scotland's and Abellio's focus on encouraging more everyday cycling and looks forward to working with you and other local partners to increase provision for secure cycle parking at rail stations along with developing other innovative solutions for integrating with the bus network where there are no rail services available. However, we also recognise the significant economic contribution that cycle tourism offers to the Highlands and Islands and request that consideration is given to adopting policies / provision on the West Highland and Far North Lines that enable groups of cyclists to access the fantastic opportunities for cycling which the Highlands and Islands have to offer and use public rather private transport to complete their journey.

Annexe 2

Insert joost Mortier response here please

Annexe 3

ScotRail Press Release

Tuesday 25 October
76 bikes now available for hire at 11 Scottish stations

ScotRail has announced that 76 bikes are now available for hire across Scotland.

Passengers passing through Inverness may have noticed bicycles, operated by Bike&Go, at the station.

The roll out of the scheme at Inverness station means that even more ScotRail customers can now continue their journeys in environmentally friendly and cost-effective manner - reaffirming the train operator's commitment to encourage sustainable, integrated travel.

Under the Bike&Go system, anyone can hire one of the 10 bikes at the station for just £3.80 per 24-hours.

Bike&Go gives unlimited use of the bikes for 24 hours. It's quick and easy to hire a bike from the station ticket office – with first time users completing a simple registration form before pedalling off.

Falkirk High is the latest station to launch the cycle-hire service, bringing the number of stations offering the facility up to 11.

ScotRail's Programmes and Transformation Director Ian McConnell said: "We're committed to making sustainable integrated travel options as easy as possible.

Bike&Go is just one of the ways we are doing this – it's a fantastic way for customers to complete their onward journey by bicycle.

"Cycling is a great way for people of all age groups to increase their level of physical activity and improve their health and well-being.

"The easy-to-use bikes are ideal for business travellers, visitors and day-trippers."

More information on Bike & Go and ScotRail's cycling initiatives can be found at scotrail.co.uk/cycling

Media contacts

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Notes **to** **editors**
Registration is £10 for one year, and is valid at all Bike&Go locations. Members can hire up to two bikes at once.

Bike & Go is currently available at:

- × Aberdeen (10 bikes)
- × Dundee (4 bikes)
- × Edinburgh Haymarket (15 bikes)
- × Falkirk High (5 bikes)
- × Glasgow Central (4 bikes)
- × Inverness (10 bikes)

- x Kilmarnock (5 bikes)
- x Largs (7 bikes)
- x Linlithgow (5 bikes)
- x Perth (5 bikes)
- x Stirling (6 bikes)