

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIRECTORATE

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By e-mail

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This matter is being dealt with by:
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Our reference: Consultation 66745 & 66746
Date: 21/04/2021

Dear Madam

Consultation Response – Bury MBC Planning and Listed Building Consent Applications Reference 66745 & 66746

I would like to respond, with reference to the following two planning applications, which we **object to**:

66745

Proposal: Development of the ELR's historic locomotive and carriage works site including repair and restoration of the 1857 locomotive work building, the construction of new locomotive running shed, incorporation of associated new workshops and training facilities and construction of a standalone carriage shed. Location: Buckley Wells Locomotive Depot, Baron Street, Bury, BL9 0TY; and

66746

Proposal: Listed Building Consent for the development of the ELR's historic locomotive and carriage works site including repair and restoration of the 1857 locomotive work building, the construction of new locomotive running shed, incorporation of associated new workshops and training facilities and construction of a standalone carriage shed. Location: Buckley Wells Locomotive Depot, Baron Street, Bury, BL9 0TY

We would firstly like to state that the East Lancashire Railway Company is a long standing and valued partner to Rossendale Council. Our formal partnership dates over 40 years through the East Lancashire Railway Trust. We strongly value the railway and the role it plays in the cultural and visitor economy of Rossendale, Bury and Rochdale.

The Buckley Wells proposals 66745 and 66746 are in general terms positive additions to the railway and we welcome the principle of the development on the site.

This will widen the appeal of the railway and boost visitor number as well as enhance the engine and carriage shed facilities to the benefit of the railway as a whole.

However, it is unfortunate that the East Lancashire Railway has submitted this application without prior due diligence and dialogue with one of its main strategic partners, Rossendale Council.

Rossendale has a population of c71,000 and has one of the highest levels of UK non-city congestion levels, identified in a 2018 national infrastructure report. It also has high levels of out commuting to Greater Manchester and is the only borough in Lancashire not to have a railway link. The Council is actively seeking a rail link from Rawtenstall to Manchester along the route of the heritage railway that also enables the East Lancashire Railway to function in a similar way to today. This is a strategic objective of both Rossendale Borough Council and Lancashire County Councils. Transport for the North has identified as a 2027+ intervention, improved public transport to Rossendale from Manchester in its 2050 strategy. The rail link will also promote climate change and air quality improvements through reduced road congestion.

One of our leading options that is in development is a tram/train interchange at Buckley Wells specifically at the junction of the East Lancashire Railway and Metrolink.

This would require a through-uninterrupted single-track rail route between Bury Bolton Street station and Buckley Wells Interchange as shown by the red line route in Appendix 1.

Our main concerns with the current proposal are:

- This proposal is building over the future rail connection to North Bury and Rossendale. It is not supportive of the growth aspirations of Northern Gateway and East Lancashire. By doing this it is compounding growth on an already congested highway system and is not future proofing travel demand.
- The Carriage Shed building does not allow for a future dedicated single-track passenger carrying line to connect Bury Bolton Street with Buckley Wells Interchange.
- The track layout does not allow for an uninterrupted dedicated single track connecting Bury Bolton Street with Buckley Wells Interchange. The proposal would essentially turn this connection into a head shunt that would be frequently blocked by trains stopping and reversing into either the engine or carriage shed. The hand point controlled operation would also be unsuitable for a passenger connection.
- It is unclear the extent of visitor access across the site. As such we would require a single track connection to be visitor free and separate from the shed complex.
- The climate change and the economic and social benefits of an integrated passenger rail link to North Bury and Rossendale would not be realised if the route was built over or turned into a head shunt.

For strategic transport infrastructure reasons the removal of land to provide for a clear single track access line between Buckley Wells Interchange and Bury Bolton Street is the reason for Rossendale Councils objection, not the aims of the engine shed project. The proposed new build carriage shed and shunting lines need to move approximately 5 metres in an easterly direction to allow space for the dedicated connection line.

We also request that these applications be referred to the Secretary of State for his decision due to their implications on future strategic transport infrastructure in the region.

This proposal if unaltered would be contrary to the following strategies:

- 2021 Rossendale Council Corporate Plan
https://www.rossendale.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/16382/draft_corporate_plan_2021.pdf
- 2018 Rossendale infrastructure plan
<https://www.bing.com/search?q=2018+national+infrastructure+congestion+report+rossendale&q&qs=n&form=QBRE&sp=-1&pg=2018+national+infrastructure+congestion+report+rossendale&sc=0-57&sk=&cvid=DB1F6ED83ADF4B1FB12F2937EC6395E2>
- 2018 Economic Development Strategy <https://investinrossendale.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Economic-Development-Strategy-2018-6-Nov-2018-ME.pdf>
- Emerging Rossendale Local Plan policy TR1 and the duty to co-operate
- Transport for the North Strategic Transport Plan 2020-2050
<https://transportforthenorth.com/wp-content/uploads/TfN-final-strategic-transport-plan-2019.pdf>
- UK Government decarbonising transport
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/932122/decarbonising-transport-setting-the-challenge.pdf
- UK Government climate change strategy and 2008 Act
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/climate-change>
- UK Government Restoring Your Railway Fund – funding to support rail reopening and model shift.
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/restoring-your-railway-fund>
- Emerging Local Transport Plan 4 – Lancashire County Council.
- Emerging Lancashire Strategic Development and Infrastructure Plan - Lancashire County Council.

Yours faithfully,

Mike Atherton

Mike Atherton
Head of Planning

GUY Darragh

Guy Darragh
Head of Regeneration

Appendix 1- Red line shows required access route of dedicated Buckley Wells to Bury Bolton Street rail connection.

