



return to **KESWICK**



...on a modern train from your station !

UPDATE NUMBER 44

WINTER 2009- 2010

RAILWAYS ARE NEEDED !

Keswick is seen as one of the National Park's "transport hubs" by the Lake District National Park Authority (LDNPA). Inter-regional connections by rail would be a logical part of a sustainable transport strategy, as highlighted in the "Low Carbon Lake District" report in 2008 (*Update 40*).

The recent floods in west Cumbria have shown very dramatically that relying on roads for all transport is very risky. The Railway Industry demonstrated what can be done to provide essential transport very quickly using a minimum of resources, especially in an emergency.

A new (temporary) station was built within a week at Workington North and special shuttle services laid on to re-connect areas separated by the collapse of several road bridges over the River Derwent.

Railways are not just an alternative means of transport, or something just for leisure and tourism, but a vital and strategic transport network. Anyone can use a train – not just car owners.

In the long term, there will be more pressure to conserve all types of resources:

- ◆ Journeys by train are about 5 times more fuel efficient than car journeys.
- ◆ A Railway uses far less land than a road for a given volume of traffic and is much less visually intrusive with much less light pollution, noise and other emissions too.
- ◆ Railways promote economic development and social inclusion without more roads and car-parks.

PROTECTING THE ROUTE

All the design and development work for the Keswick to Penrith line has been drawn up and costed based on the condition of the trackbed and structures as found and surveyed by specialist Engineers in the last few years. Any changes to the existing infrastructure (e.g. damage to bridges, removal of earthworks, or building on the alignment) mean that some costly re-design is needed.

More crucially, the cost of re-instating the Railway increases dramatically after any such change.

Relaying track on an empty and undamaged trackbed costs about £1 Million per mile.

Having to build new earthworks or bridges multiplies the cost per mile by a factor of 4 or 5 at least.

If the alignment has been built on, there are additional costs and difficulties to consider – can the new development be relocated, or would that be so expensive that the Railway needs to find a new way past that location ? In many cases trying to change the alignment of the Railway at one point results in a "diversion" several miles long due to substantial changes in ground level, unsuitable ground, other obstruction and so on. Costs multiply even further and the old route is wasted.

The decision by the LDNPA to protect the track-bed in its Local Development Framework (LDF) was therefore a huge and very welcome step forward (*see Update 43*).

This was soon put to the test with an application to build a garage on the alignment at Troutbeck. That application was subsequently withdrawn after the conflict with the LDF was highlighted.

There was a scare in November when another planning application was submitted at Flusco.

The drawings were not available immediately, even though the consultation period had started.

This inevitably raised suspicions as Flusco is already a sensitive location.

Eventually information was provided and, fortunately, there was no threat to the trackbed this time.

THE WAY AHEAD

We currently have to focus on preparations to apply for a Transport and Works Order (TWO), which is the legal document giving permission to build and operate a public service Railway.

A TWO can only be granted by the Secretary of State for Transport, after the Project has been examined by the Department for Transport and consultation has taken place with all relevant authorities and interested parties.

We have to provide:

- Engineering plans and reports (substantially complete, to review before submission)
- Environmental Impact Assessments (mostly done except for those which have only a short “shelf life” and need to be undertaken just before final submission)
- Business Case - core study from the NWDA needs some refinement
- Legal submission with detailed information about implementation of the works. Much of the information for this has also been compiled

We also have to provide evidence of consultations with interested parties, some of which we have done, more of which will follow as we approach the actual submission date.

The system for approving infrastructure projects, including Railways, at Government level is currently being overhauled and we will make our submission when the procedure is clear and the time is right, as well as having all the material in place. We also need to be sure that funding remains available to complete the whole process. A start-stop approach will not succeed.

For the greatest chance of success with the minimum of procedure and bureaucracy, we need the support and understanding of relevant Local Authorities and other statutory bodies.

This occupies most of our time and effort at the moment.

Despite being only 18 miles long, the Keswick to Penrith route passes through the territories of:

- Several Parish Councils
- Keswick Town Council
- Allerdale Borough Council
- Eden District Council
- The Lake District National Park Authority (LDNPA)
- Cumbria County Council
- The Northwest Regional Development Agency (NWDA) has an overview of all of these and an area much further beyond, where the benefits of the re-opened Railway will also be felt.
- Two MP’s Constituencies. This will become three at the next boundary changes.
- There are MEPs for the North West. They can influence policy at all levels.

All of these Authorities have policies, views and aims which need to be aligned for the Railway to be a success. Clearly, each has different priorities and approaches to issues such as transport provision and its integration into the community and planning systems.

Each has a different role in planning processes and responsibilities for different services which can affect, or be affected by, the Railway.

As with any Project, preparation is key. The more questions we resolve through consultation and engagement with the appropriate authorities before the final submission, the simpler the process. Simplicity and clarity translates into significant amounts of time and money saved.

Engineering and building a Railway is relatively straightforward - there are standards and processes which have evolved over more than 150 years and which are clearly documented and enforced.

The “softer aspects” - ensuring that everyone understands and facilitates the Railway Project - require a totally different approach and can not be so easily planned.

These do not respond to logic or formulae – they need lots of time, effort and involvement.

Keswick Town Council continues to help us navigate this course, as our Public Sector “Champion”. The Railway will benefit a much wider area, including much of Cumbria and Northern England when a whole new pattern of train services from East to West becomes possible as a result of re-opening this line, but Keswick is the obvious focal point.

The prospect of the Railway to Keswick becoming a “bridge-head” for improved transport links to the Cumbrian Coast, which is now targeted for significant industrial development, also has to be part of the bigger picture.

Penrith would benefit significantly from new cross-country rail links, also justifying more West Coast Main Line trains stopping at its station and creating less pressure on car parking in the area.

The questions “how long will it take to build” and “when will it open” are the most frequent ones we are asked, not surprisingly. Working backwards:

- An Engineer from Corus who had been involved with re-building and re-opening a main line Railway in Northern Ireland advised us that the track could be laid and brought up to standard for full speed running in just 40 DAYS.
- Before that, earthworks have to be cleared and repaired or re-instated where they have been affected by other developments after the line closed. This would probably take about 6 months.
- Some bridges need to be built (for example over the A66 near Penriddock) or existing ones modified to bring them up to modern standards. The vast majority of bridges still stand, generally are very sound and many still well maintained. A detailed programme of work has been developed for each one. All of this work could be done in about 18 - 24 months.
- The process to acquire a TWO can take from 6 months up to 2 or 3 years, depending on many factors - legal, economic and political.
- Putting together a TWO submission typically takes about 6 months.

Most of the information required for a submission is available, at least in draft form, or a programme of work exists to compile it. This would also occupy a few months.

Before launching in to the whole programme we need to be reasonably certain of a positive outcome. As mentioned above this is something which will make itself known and can not be accurately predicted. All major political parties have listed the Keswick to Penrith line as one which should be re-opened, the Northwest Regional Development Agency (NWDA) supports it in principle and work continues to complete the picture.

So, the Railway COULD be approved, built and open for traffic in about three years, once all relevant parties agree that it is the “right thing to do”. We have not reached that moment yet, but we are heading in the right direction.

In 2010 there will be Parliamentary and local elections. Getting candidates for all levels of Government to pledge support, whatever their party and whatever their chances of winning, to agree that this is the “right thing to do” makes the course much clearer and simpler.

So, please lobby your existing Councillors and MP and MEP – as well as any candidate who wants your vote in the next few months !

THANK YOU !

Thank you to everyone who has written to object to damaging planning applications over the last few years. It may seem frustrating at times, but every challenge raises the profile of the Railway Project and brings us nearer to a situation where protection of the route becomes automatic.

A very big “thank you” to everyone who has invested in Bonds, bought subscriptions and goods, or simply made donations to support the Railway re-instatement Project !

The time to plan and build for the future is now.

HAPPY NEW YEAR !

YOU CAN SUBSCRIBE NOW FOR ALL UPDATES IN 2010

Subscription for the full year is still only £10 (*price held since Updates started !*)

If you have access to e-mail, we can send Updates electronically - saving all resources.

...but please, please, do tell us if you change your e-mail address !!!

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Order forms are distributed with printed Updates and can be downloaded from the website.

Next Updates planned for April and August – plus e-mail or website alerts for hot news.

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WHAT TO BUY TO SUPPORT THE RAILWAY PROJECT

25% of the price of each item goes directly to the Keswick to Penrith Railway Project.

The BBC found that only 8% of the price of charity Christmas Cards goes to the named causes.

1. The report "Return to Keswick - the case for a New Railway" is available at £20 per copy direct from us (post free), or order through bookshops by quoting ISBN 9781-902543-02-4.
2. "Trains to Keswick" is a professionally produced film featuring people along the line. The DVD version with additional information is now available at £14 per copy.
3. Fine Art prints and greetings cards featuring a stunning winter view of the steam hauled "Lakes Express" near Bassenthwaite Lake station, painted by Eric Bottomley of the Guild of Railway Artists. Prints (24" x 16") are £18 each, cards (6" x 8") with envelopes - £1.40 each.

N.B. All the prices above include postage to addresses in the UK, but please add £2.50 per order for posting to addresses outside the UK (Posting packages to overseas destinations is not cheap !).

Cheques payable to Iceni Enterprises Ltd for any of the items above, please.

Order forms are distributed with printed Updates and can be downloaded from the website.

TRAVEL BY TRAIN – HELP RE-OPEN THE KESWICK RAILWAY

Phone and book your rail tickets through "Chester-le-Track" for any journey on the National Rail Network, including Railovers and discounts for Railcard holders.

Phone Chester-le-Track on 0191-387-1387, quote "CKP Offer" and they will pay

3% of the total sale as commission to CKP Railways plc.

The total sale must be at least £25, paid for by credit card.

BUY BONDS – INVEST IN THE RAILWAY PROJECT !

CKP Railways plc Bonds, in multiples of £100, pay interest at 4% per annum gross.

Over £350,000 raised and invested so far in design and development.

These funds are used only for the Railway reconstruction project. No unnecessary overheads !

Bonds have been bought by organisations and individual holders.

Can be bought for children, grandchildren, friends or relatives.

Fully coloured and signed Certificates are issued - designed to appeal to collectors.

Please write or e-mail with your postal address for a free copy of the Prospectus.

Cedric A. Martindale. BSc.Hons, AUS, CEng., MIMechE, CMILT. - Director

No. 44. December 2009.

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