



return to **KESWICK**



...on a modern train from your station !

UPDATE NUMBER 54

SUMMER 2013

PROTECTING THE ROUTE

The Lake District National Park Authority (LDNPA) has shown more practical support for reinstating the Railway with its handling of planning applications.

The application to “infill” a bridge at Highgate (announced in Update 53) was rejected on the grounds that such work would physically obstruct the trackbed and make it unusable as a sustainable transport route of any kind, thus contradicting LDNPA policies.

Following that was an application to expand the LDNPA maintenance depot at Threlkeld station. As proposed, the plans could have seriously damaged the trackbed and made it difficult to find any route for a Railway through the site in future.

Fortunately, there was an opportunity to speak to the people designing the depot extension before the application was heard. CKP Railways plc’s main concern was that the proposed construction of car parking and lorry turning areas would destroy the existing earthworks of the Railway and would need to be re-located anyway when the Railway returns.

CKP suggested that planning, construction and operation of the depot should be done in such a way that the route for the Railway was not obstructed or damaged, to avoid future redesign and costs.

The LDNPA granted permission for the depot expansion in a modified form with conditions that require any damage to the trackbed to be repaired appropriately, when needed by the Railway.



The LDNPA depot building on the right is planned to be extended towards the camera. The platform is on the left. The trackbed between the camera and the building would become a lorry turning area and access road. Parts of the platform and northerly trackbed (to the left) are planned to become car parking areas.

Photograph: Cedric Martindale

www.keswickrailway.com

email: ckp@martindale.force9.co.uk

POLITICAL PURSUIT

The support of all the Local Authorities along the route is essential for the Railway Re-instatement Project to be approved and built in the shortest possible time. The Parish, District and County Councils and the Lake District National Park Authority have shown interest and support to differing degrees. Some seem reluctant because they feel they may be expected to manage or pay for the Railway. That is not the intention – this is an independent Project, but one which will bring many benefits for the area and those Authorities. Their support would speed the process.

As an independent Project, there is much more freedom to choose partners, construction methods and funding sources. The result should be more benefits at a lower cost.

Efforts continue to convince Eden District Council to formally protect the route at the eastern end, to complement the policies and positive decisions of the LDNPA.

MPs Rory Stewart (Penrith and the Borders) and John Stevenson (Carlisle, who is part of a Parliamentary Rail Group) have both found time to speak with the Directors of CKP Railways plc to listen and offer insight and guidance. Their help is greatly appreciated.

Business Secretary Vince Cable was reported telling the Engineering Employers Federation that the UK should have a “decade of engineering” to encourage more young people to want to become Engineers – what better way than to have locally driven projects coming to life around the country, benefitting their own communities? Such projects have a visible and approachable “face” who can involve and inform local businesses. Large scale public sector projects tend to bring in managers and contractors from other areas, often remotely controlled, which reduces their local interaction.

The Directors of CKP have their own practical experience of the design, construction and operation of railways as well as access to professionals with experience in re-instating railways using modern and innovative methods.

NOT COMPETING WITH THE A66

One of the arguments often put forward for not supporting this Railway Project is that “the A66 is a good fast road so people can easily drive to or from Keswick”.

Many people do not want to drive to or from Keswick but find that currently there is little alternative. Many visitors “dump” their cars on arrival and use buses, boats, taxis and cycles.

Many people are unable to drive because of age or other factors. Not everyone in a car-owning household has access to a car when they want it. Many households do not have cars at all.

Further, many, including some parts of the County Council, feel that the X4/X5 buses between Penrith and Workington provide a good enough service. They do indeed provide useful links along the route, but are not considered by most people as a realistic form of inter-regional transport.

People in other areas of the UK wanting to visit Keswick are unlikely to consider a bus for the last part of their journey – but they would consider trains, especially through trains from regions such as Scotland, Yorkshire, Lancashire or the Midlands.

Finally, it is virtually unheard of for “business trips” to be made by bus.

Anywhere without a railway station is typically not considered to be a serious place to do business.

The capacity of car parks in Keswick limits business growth. Even a BBC personality earlier this year recounted a family trip to Keswick, not even in the peak summer season, where their failure to find a parking space led them to drive away disappointed.

Such experiences must be repeated many times each year and probably spread by word of mouth.

With a regular inter-regional train service, Keswick and the North Lakes could do more business with less road traffic and less pressure on parking, reduced noise, emissions, visual impact and so on.

Even a small percentage shift from road to rail by people travelling to and from Keswick would save millions of pounds worth of fuel every year – a strategic benefit for the UK as a whole.

MAINTAINING THE ROUTE

The Lake District National Park Authority (LDNPA) has a team of Rangers and other specialists, including keen apprentices, who look after the Railway Footpath between Keswick and Threlkeld - including maintaining the decks of the bridges over the River Greta for pedestrians and cyclists.

Over the years, CKP has established several contacts and keeps in touch with developments on the ground. This helps ensure that maintenance and development along the route provides the best possible facilities for walkers and cyclists now, with the future needs of the Railway in mind.

This extends to details such as clearances under bridges which may need to be repaired or replaced over the line.



Scaffolding and boards under one of the river bridges during previous inspections and repairs.

REGIONAL GROWTH FUND

CKP Railways plc applied to the 4th round of the Regional Growth Fund this summer.

As in the 2nd round in 2011, CKP's application was unsuccessful, with only a small proportion of applications being approved for funding. So far there has been no feedback on reasons for acceptance or rejection of individual applications, but that may be forthcoming later.

This time around there was an opportunity to speak with Regional Growth Fund officials before the final choices were made. That proved quite useful and CKP were pleased to hear the Keswick to Penrith Railway Re-opening Project described as "worthwhile".

Sadly, that was not enough to win the support of the judging panel of Ministers.

CKP continues to explore independent and unusual methods of funding the Railway re-instatement, recognising that there are no Government plans to even consider investment in new or re-opened railways (apart from a small number of "nationally significant" projects) before 2019.

NO BALE OUT

The recent "transfer fee" for footballer Gareth Bale moving from Tottenham Hotspur to Real Madrid, reported as £ 85 million, would have been more than enough to re-open this Railway.

SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR UPDATES – PRICE STILL HELD

Subscription for a full year has always been £10 (*despite rises in VAT and postage costs !*)

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 !!!

Cheques payable to "Iceni Enterprises Ltd", please, and send to the address below.

Next Update planned for the winter – plus e-mail or website alerts for hot news.

Iceni Enterprises Ltd. does not pass on mailing list details to anybody else !

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 978-1-902543-02-4.
2. "Trains to Keswick" is a professionally produced film featuring people along the line. Originally in VHS format, the DVD version with additional information is 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 (minimum order of 3 cards please).

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

N.B. All 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.

BUY BONDS – INVEST IN THE RAILWAY PROJECT !

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

About £400,000 raised so far towards 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, giving your postal address, to receive a free copy of the Prospectus.

Interested in Sustainable Transport generally ?

CKP Railways plc Director, Cedric Martindale, has produced a book to inform and encourage debate.

Too often, planning of communities neglects transport, while transport planning may be done later by operators who are not part of the communities they are expected to serve. Communities may not know what is available and Local Authorities may not have a detailed appreciation of what transport could really do for their areas.

The book takes a broader view of transport, reflecting community needs, planning processes and environmental factors, offering information and opinions gained from working and living in many different places.

It should interest anyone studying transport or trying to find solutions for transport problems.

The book has 264 pages and many illustrations, with a soft cover. ISBN 978 1 902543 04 8.

Available direct from Iceni Enterprises Ltd. at £ 27.50 per copy including UK second class postage.

Cedric A. Martindale.

BSc.Hons, AUS, CEng., MIMechE, CMILT. - Director

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