

PE2133/B: Expand ScotRail's InterCity routes to include Dunfermline

Petitioner written submission, 2 March 2025

As a local resident of Dunfermline that regularly commutes across the country to support my role in government transport initiatives, I have a keen insight into the benefits of an effective and efficient public transport system and the wider industry. I thank the Cabinet Secretary for Transport for the response and the Committee for its consideration of this proposal.

I look forward to the addition of a service via Dunfermline to Leven however, this was originally meant to be in addition to existing services, meaning three trains an hour to and from the capital via north and west Fife (due to start last year). It is unclear if this will provide an improved additional train to Edinburgh (meaning one service every 20 minutes) or be made up from one of the current half hourly services so to create Leven's own half hourly service with no additional capacity for west Fife to the capital.

The proposed Edinburgh to Perth via Dunfermline service significantly improved the offerings from ScotRail, however, a small amount of feedback from Perth residents on a minor increase in journey time due to the additional stops on the North Fife line resulted in Dunfermline losing any improvement without a consultation into the benefits they had received to the city and wider area. When ScotRail were challenged the response stated no complaints came from our newest city, which had no need to complain as the service offer had improved significantly however, complaints were filled after the service was withdrawn.

Whilst I also appreciate Kirkcaldy saw a reduction in service the town is already incredibly well connected to London, Edinburgh, Dundee, Aberdeen, Perth, Inverness and Levenmouth. In comparison, Dunfermline and West Fife's city status and large, growing population is only served to Cowdenbeath, Glenrothes and Edinburgh. Additional stops on the south of Fife do help raise capacity however, the north and west have no ability to improve the service currently. Whilst at least 5 trains (sometimes as many as 8) an hour run in each direction via the south of Fife, the north in parts is only served by one.

My proposal was not to reduce capacity but instead to add additional routes to change the balance between west and north Fife with that of the south and east. According to Transport Scotland correspondence in June 2020, an express service via Dunfermline would be as quick for residents in the north of Scotland as any service via Kirkcaldy. The main difference being the higher number of stations between both sides of the line. The InterCity service provides a not all stopping service between Scotland's major cities and hubs, boosting connectivity and supporting the STPR2 recommendations for express city to city travel in addition to local commuter services creating the biggest benefit.

Procuring new rolling stock is the perfect time to consider that expansion, which should see an express offering via both Kirkcaldy and Dunfermline, with possible

alternative services to Perth and Dundee alternating via both sides of the Fife line with connection points at Markinch, Inverkeithing, and Haymarket.

The extensive time for passengers to get to Glasgow or Stirling from Fife on public transport, which has no direct connection to communities despite lines north and south of the river, is appalling and isolating our poorest communities whilst detrimentally affecting commuters, students, tourists, and our industry. ScotRail could utilise these lesser used lines by direct express services which would take pressure off existing pinch points such as Haymarket whilst not requiring significant infrastructure initially for new stations.

Whilst a full re-opening of the Alloa-Dunfermline line was clearly recommended I appreciate this needs to wait its turn however, a full business case should be worked up now as significant house re-development has already been approved and is under construction without any change to an already struggling infrastructure. The West Fife region was promised so much after the mines closed and now Longannets closure has also been let down by the knock-on effect of the failure to deliver HS2. The lack of promised investment in the area, with many working at the due to close Grangemouth, could be improved with a new rail service that could have the same positive impact that the Borders and East of Fife has seen. The £5m Levelling Up funding and £3m for a new ferry all have disappeared, the estimated £3m of additional support as outlined by Transport Scotland here would benefit the whole of the East of Scotland, spreading wealth between the north and south and helping develop our smaller cities. Our fragile tourist industry to the historic and picturesque West Fife has been underserved for decades making it almost impossible to see Culross, Dunfermline, and St Andrews without a car.

With the green freeport investment reviewing the Rosyth Dockyard Railway Halt for passengers and freight, and the potential to improve junctions and offerings into the port and West Fife villages already underway with support of government and private investment, now is the time to review the express offering alongside the Alloa-Dunfermline line.

Dunfermline's ancient capital status is underserved by rail, cuts beyond even those proposed by Beeching to remove our main station and lines out to West Fife and north to Perth in the past still hits commuters now, meaning crushing at peak times, too many cancelations, and no ability to grow with our fellow cities despite being the birthplace of the most successful and industry leading rail tycoon, Andrew Carnegie.

Across Europe the size and status of your local community means something. Each city is connected directly, smaller communities are provided stations, investment in infrastructure is a right delivered to those who need it. All the same arguments that met the Inter7City programme which has changed Scottish rail travel. It should now reach all 8 of Scotland's cities, make the Inter8City programme part of this new procurement from its inception.