

**Proposal for rail station at Parkhead
June 2018****Background**

This briefing note provides some initial considerations on technical and operational issues and potential challenges which would require to be taken into account prior to any further detailed feasibility study to reinstate a rail station at Parkhead (near Parkhead Forge), on the main line between Edinburgh and Glasgow via Airdrie (see location plan at end).

A rail station existed previously in Parkhead (east of Duke Street). This station, latterly known as Parkhead North, was closed on 19 September 1955.

Glasgow City Council considered a number of rail options during 2011 as part of the preparation of the Local Development Plan, City Plan 2. These included proposals for rail stations at Robroyston/Millerston (now being progressed as Robroyston station), Parkhead Forge and Ibrox. Taking into account the results of public consultation, proposals for Parkhead Forge and Ibrox stations did not feature in the finalised City Plan 2. Engagement is currently underway for City Plan 3.

The proposed new station location is approximately 300m west of former Parkhead North site. It would be situated 1.3km east of Bellgrove station, approximately 1.5km west of Carntyne and c.0.8km walk distance from Duke Street station (which is located on the Springburn branch). The location map at the end of this briefing note outlines the geography of the area.

There are, however, a range of technical and operational challenges that would require to be addressed when considering any proposals to reinstate Parkhead rail station. These are set out below.

Potential demand

There are some issues as regards the amount of significant residential walk-in catchment in the area – much of the local housing has been removed and the area has a significant amount of retail/commercial property. There are, however, significant trip generators:

- Glasgow Kelvin College (eastern annex) to the north of proposed site,
- Parkhead Forge Shopping Centre/Cinema Complex,
- Parkhead Retail Park,
- Emirates/Sir Chris Hoy Velodrome, and
- Parkhead Stadium (Celtic Park - fortnightly + some potential mid-week fixtures)

As stated above, there is relatively limited walk-in catchment given the reduction in adjacent higher density housing in recent years. The site of a proposed station would most likely be adjacent to the East End Regeneration Route roundabout north of the Parkhead Forge Shopping centre. However, as previously stated the land around this site is predominantly given over to retail and some sizeable areas of currently disused or derelict land. Local housing is limited and lies predominantly to the north of the proposed site.

Although the reinstatement of a station at Parkhead would increase travel options, these would be relatively limited when compared to destinations on the local bus network. Travel times from Parkhead to Glasgow city centre by rail would be quicker but might not necessarily have the same

level of frequency nor the same level of penetration without a longer walk distance at either end of the journey. Travellers at Parkhead would be able to access Airdrie and Edinburgh services although the level of service at Parkhead would depend on the level of demand which is likely to be limited out with perhaps match days.

It should be noted that recently the main focus of SPT's rail investment in the wider Parkhead area has in recent times concentrated on the redevelopment of Dalmarnock Station. Access for the 2014 Commonwealth Games drove that particular project but this was very closely allied with the legacy benefits in the area which are now being increasingly realised along with the improved access to the rail network to and from Celtic Park on match days.

Operational considerations

There are also a number of technical and operational considerations that would come into play when considering options for a rail station at Parkhead, including:

- Such a proposal could be potentially unattractive to ScotRail as it might extract rail passengers from longer journeys to destinations in Dunbartonshire, Lanarkshire and to Edinburgh;
- Stopping services at a reinstated rail station would have negative knock on effects on rail journey times serving the line. Increased overall journey times could also bring pressures including costs associated with rail units and staff availability and could in turn bring increased operational costs. It may also abstract demand to car as rail becomes less attractive due to lengthened journey times;
- A reinstated station would slow trains at a point in the network where current speed levels are relatively high. The new station would necessitate challenges in terms of acceleration-braking-deceleration (if trains were to be stopped at all 3 locations (Carntyne-Parkhead-Bellgrove) and given that neighbouring stations will then be situated at shorter intervals this would result in a series of less efficient rail movements;
- A rail station at Parkhead would likely result in a degree of abstraction of patronage from the local bus network which already provides good connectivity to the city centre and beyond via interchange.
- Construction and associated access might prove challenging and therefore expensive given that there is currently limited direct road access (north side only) to the likeliest location adjacent to the roundabout to the north of the Forge. Access issues will require further examination dependant on the completion of the East End Regeneration Route, whilst consideration would need to be given to issues around adjacent land ownership to secure potential access;
- Overhead clearance and visibility issues would have to be considered if the station is adjacent or beneath the proposed final phase of the EERR;
- Signalling and electrical supply issues on the rail network will require to be examined thoroughly prior to the selection of a preferred location and whether or not it is suitable to meet access demands for the area;
- Any contributions (i.e. developer S75) towards the cost of a new rail station are likely to be relatively limited given limited scope for adjacent new development; and
- Other considerations are current regulations that would be applicable to a new station development that may preclude the ability to construct and operate a station at this location,

for example minimum platform width requirements – particularly with regard to trains expressing through the station without stopping and overhead clearance requirements where bridge and tunnel sections adjacent to the site may not allow clearances between platform and overhead wires within current more stringent regulations.

Indicative Timeline and Costs

The following outlines the likely timeline if a rail station proposal continues to pass each stage of the gateway process (decision point at the end of each stage to determine appropriate next steps, viability of options and what options should be pursued, if anything).

The process will require to be overseen by an appropriate governance structure, of Project Board, Steering Group, Delivery Group, Project Management as appropriate for each stage.

The Board and Steering Groups will be responsible for developing the necessary funding packages for each stage and procurement / agreements with the funders.

Activity	Minimum Timescale Incl. Procurement	Likely cost
Phase 1 <u>STAG compliant Transportation Study</u> To examine the transport issues in the area, set objectives, examine options and identify the optimum, affordable and deliverable means of meeting the objectives.	1yr	£60k - £80k
Phase 2 <u>Outline Business Case</u>	3mths	£5k
Phase 3 <u>Outline Design</u> GRIP Stage 3 / 4	1.5 – 2yrs	£500k
Phase 4 <u>Full Business Case</u>	5 mths	£10k - £15k
Phase 5* <u>Final Design</u> GRIP Stage 5	1yr	£300k
Phase 6* <u>Construction</u> GRIP Stage 6, 7 & 8	1.5yrs	£20m - £25m

*Phases 5 & 6 may be combined

STAG Appraisal

Options to consider opening of a new railway station would require undertaking a detailed and robust appraisal using Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance Process (STAG). A STAG appraisal is fundamental to any business case development and is required when government support or approval is sought for justified proposals to change the transport system. According to STAG, it must be adopted when there is likely to be the creation of a new asset; a significant enhancement to an existing asset; or any change to an existing asset which will materially impact upon the operation of this asset.

STAG must be objective-led and identify problems and opportunities that exist rather than bringing forward any pre-conceived solutions. Should problems and opportunities be identified, STAG would enable a process that would assess all potential solutions – not just rail.

Even at this early stage, it seems highly unlikely that any proposal for a Parkhead rail station would be seen as feasible. The problems and issues in this area are considered to be minimal in so far as there is limited walk-in catchment or regular trip generators/attractors and is at present served by good transport links by both bus and rail.

STAG requires that objectives are measured against criteria that includes economic benefits; both local and wider. Again, it is considered at this stage that any economic benefits of a new station would be limited and in fact may even show more dis-benefits to existing users in terms of increased journey times between Edinburgh and Glasgow via Airdrie.

There are several other aspects of the STAG process, including feasibility, affordability, the social and economic contexts and the wider geographical contexts, which would all point to difficulties in being able to deliver a robust evidenced based business case for a new rail station at Parkhead.



