

Route Prospectus

For the line between Middlesbrough and Whitby (Esk Valley)

The line between Middlesbrough and Whitby is one of the routes chosen for the SRA Community Rail Development pilot projects. The pilot projects were chosen to demonstrate how the Community Rail Development approach can increase revenue, manage down costs and encourage greater community involvement in the local railway.

The keys measures of success of the pilots will be

- establishing the contribution of Community Rail Development in achieving locally set objectives such as road traffic and social benefits;
- establishing the costs for the line and services;
- establishing the effectiveness of different methods for reducing the net financial loss of Community Rail lines by increasing revenue and reducing costs where practicable.

A remit for the pilot project has been agreed by the Client Group for the pilot project. This remit forms the basis for this Route Prospectus. Like the remit, it is expected that the route prospectus will be a flexible document that will evolve (in format and substance) as the pilot project develops.

The Client Group referred to consists of Association of Community Rail Partnerships (ACoRP), Esk Valley Railway Development Company (EVRDC), Network Rail, Northern Rail, North York Moors National Park, North Yorkshire Moors Railway (NYMR), North Yorkshire County Council, Strategic Rail Authority (SRA), Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit (TVJSU).

Designation of the line between Middlesbrough and Whitby is needed to progress these aspects of the remit:

- Establish the real profit and loss costs of current operation of the Esk Valley Line
- Show how Train Operating Company costs might be reduced on the line by changes to regulatory arrangements, working practices and the performance regime
- Demonstrate how increasing patronage and local changes to fares can increase revenue yield
- Demonstrate how joint working of infrastructure owner, Train Operating Company and local community might reduce infrastructure costs, through joint planning of routine work, of work on track structures and stations, through sharing staff and through other cooperation
- Evaluation of signalling alterations at Grosmont to allow through working of NYMR trains to Whitby and vice versa
- Evaluate options for different types of rolling stock for the line
- Evaluate and, if viable, implement short term changes to the timetable to make the service more attractive
- Demonstrate the potential for revisions to the timetable including commuter and tourist services between Whitby and Middlesbrough and additional services to Nunthorpe

- Evaluate changes to the method of operation and appropriate changes to the required standards to see whether they offer the possibility of reducing costs, examples might include a new depot, multi-skilling, or changes to working practices
- Demonstrate the potential for a new station at James Cook University Hospital, Middlesbrough built to appropriate standards at the minimum cost
- Evaluate the costs and benefits of introducing the curve at Battersby to reduce maintenance costs, release land and improve journey times
- Encourage integration between local and longer bus links and the Esk Valley line
- Explore opportunities for local retailers to retail tickets for the train (and integrated transport)

Designation will also enable the pilot project to proceed, and therefore support the achievement of these objectives from the remit:

- Review and update of the market assessment of the line and its potential to serve different market sectors
- Implement a marketing plan for local promotion and marketing to raise the profile of the railway within the local community
- Demonstrate how joint working with the local community, including local enterprises can deliver extra revenue for the line
- Examine how the property income from buildings associated with the line - especially Whitby station - might be optimised
- Evaluate and, if viable, introduce ancillary sales (for example, aimed at the tourist market) to raise money for the line
- Establish a library of information about the line to be accessible to all partners

Designation will encourage continuation of the successful partnership working through the Esk Valley Railway Development Company.

Without designation the pilot project will not be able to deliver its aims and objectives. The pilot project is expected to last 3-5 years. During the time of the pilot project the designation may be reviewed and if there is a significant demand, then the consultation on designation can be repeated. This review process will enable designation to be reversed if there is significant demand once the pilot project has finished.

Community Rail Development
Strategic Rail Authority
55 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0EU

28th February 2005