

= Pill railway station =

Pill railway station was a railway station on the Portishead Branch Line , 7 @. @ 8 miles (12 @. @ 6 km) west of Bristol Temple Meads , serving the village of Pill in North Somerset , England . The station was opened by the Bristol and Portishead Pier and Railway Company on 18 April 1867 . It had two platforms , on either side of a passing loop , with a goods yard and signal box later additions . Services increased until the 1930s , at which point a half @-@ hourly service operated . However the Portishead Branch was recommended for closure by the Beeching report , and the station was closed on 7 September 1964 , although the line saw freight traffic until 1981 . Regular freight trains through the station began to run again in 2002 when Royal Portbury Dock was connected to the rail network .

The station is due to be reopened to passenger traffic in 2019 as part of MetroWest , a scheme to increase rail services in the Bristol area . The new station will have a single platform , an accessible footbridge and a car park , with trains running between Portishead and Bristol .

= = History = =

Pill railway station was opened on 18 April 1867 by the Bristol and Portishead Pier and Railway Company , when services began on their line from the Bristol and Exeter Railway at Portishead Junction to a pier on the Severn Estuary at Portishead . The station served the village of Pill on the south bank of the River Avon . The line was built as 7 ft (2 @, @ 134 mm) broad @-@ gauge , and was largely single track . The station was sited in a cutting close to the old centre of Pill , 3 miles 73 chains (6 @. @ 3 km) from the line 's terminus at Portishead , 7 miles 61 chains (12 @. @ 5 km) from Bristol Temple Meads and 126 miles 12 chains (203 @. @ 0 km) from the Great Western Railway 's terminus at London Paddington . To the east , the railway passed through the village and crossed a valley on the brick @-@ built Pill Viaduct , while to the west the line was largely through flat , open countryside . The station was initially the second along the line from Portishead Junction , after Clifton Bridge and before Portbury .

The station at Pill was aligned roughly north @-@ west / south @-@ east , with the line bridged to the east by Station Road and Myrtle Hill . There were two platforms , separated by two running lines , forming a passing loop . The southern " down " platform was for trains towards Portishead , the northern " up " platform for trains towards Bristol . Each platform was provided with a brick shelter and steps up to Station Road . The station building was sited on Station Road , west of the platforms .

There were initially six trains per day in each direction on weekdays and one on Sundays , operated by the Bristol and Exeter Railway . The Great Western took over the Bristol and Exeter in 1876 , and in 1884 took over ownership of the Bristol and Portishead . Services increased to nine trains per day on weekdays by 1889 . The line was relaid as 4 ft 8 1 ? 2 in (1 @, @ 435 mm) standard gauge in 1880 , coinciding with a lengthening of the platforms , and by 1909 there were 13 trains per day on weekdays and two trains on Sundays .

The double track loop through the station was extended at both ends in March 1912 , with the platforms also extended . A small goods yard and coal depot was built at the north @-@ west end of the station at the same time . A signal box was built on the southern platform at the end of the First World War . By 1929 , services had increased to 21 trains per day on weekdays and eight per day on Sundays . This allowed a train every half @-@ hour , with one train per hour running to Bristol Temple Meads and the other terminating at Ashton Gate . Passenger traffic was mainly commuters , to both Bristol and Portishead , as well as people who wished to use the Pill ferry across the river to Shirehampton . During the Second World War , many evacuees from Bristol commuted into the city from Pill . The station staff at this time consisted of a station master , two porters and two female signallers .

When the railways were nationalised in 1948 , Pill came under the aegis of the Western Region of British Railways . Passenger services had reduced by 1949 to 13 trains per day on weekdays and seven on Sundays . In 1963 the Beeching report suggested the complete withdrawal of services

along the line as a cost saving measure , and so goods services at Pill were ended on 10 June 1963 ; with the station closing completely on 7 September 1964 . In the final year of operation , there were only six trains on weekdays and none on Sundays . Freight trains continued to pass through the station , but their number decreased over time , and the line fell out of regular use after 30 March 1981 . The line however was kept intact by British Rail , with occasional freight trains , and in 2002 a single track was relaid to allow rail access to Royal Portbury Dock , which brought regular freight traffic . At this time remnants of both platforms could be seen and the station buildings were in commercial use .

= = Future = =

The Portishead Branch Line is to be reopened as part of the MetroWest scheme , a rail transport plan which aims to enhance transport capacity in the Bristol area . The scheme was given the go ahead in July 2012 as part of the City Deal , whereby local councils would be given greater control over money by the government . There had been calls for the line to reopen , primarily due to traffic congestion on the A369 , which is the only route from Portishead to Bristol . A consultation on the reopening plans was held between 22 June and 3 August 2015 to gather views from the community and stakeholders before moving on to detailed designs . The detailed proposals will be subject to a second consultation before the plans are finalised . Due to the additional capital costs , the line will not be electrified , however the design will include passive provision for future electrification .

As part of the works , Pill station will be reopened . Trains both to and from Portishead will use the southern platform , which will be resurfaced and provided with a waiting shelter , lighting , passenger information displays and audible announcements . The northern platform , adjacent to the current single track line to Royal Portbury Dock , will not be reinstated , however the track will be retained for freight trains . The two tracks will have a junction east of the station .

Initial plans for the station were for access to be from Monmouth Road , which runs parallel to the railway , north of the line . There was to be a fully accessible footbridge across the line , with both ramp and stairs , as well as a pedestrian crossing across Monmouth Road and a lit 50 space car park on the old goods yard at the eastern end of Monmouth Road . The very end of the goods yard would be maintained for Network Rail access . These plans were changed following an agreement to acquire a property on Station Road . The new plans have the entrance to be on Station Road , at the east end of the site , meaning there would be no need for a footbridge . There would be disabled parking and a pick up / drop off point adjacent to the entrance , although the exact design of this area is still under consideration . Noise mitigation options are to be investigated and there will be improvements to local footpaths . The line is due to reopen in 2020 .

It is expected that reopening the station will result in reduced car usage to and from Pill and the surrounding villages . Most station users will walk to the station , with the next largest share being car drivers and car passengers being dropped off , followed by cyclists and bus users . Some parking restrictions are proposed to prevent rail users parking on the local streets , which are narrow and not suitable for widening .

Trains along the reopened line will operate between Portishead and Bristol Temple Meads , with two trains per hour in each direction . Services would call at Pill and Parson Street , with aspirations to also call at Bedminster and a reopened Ashton Gate . Trains could also be extended on to the Severn Beach Line . The trains used will be diesel multiple units , likely three carriages long . The line will be operated as part of the Greater Western passenger franchise . Great Western Railway , a subsidiary of FirstGroup , currently operate the Greater Western franchise , however their contract expires in early 2019 , before services to Portishead are due to start .