

Deliver Magor and Undy Walkway Station, part of the Burns Delivery Programme, as a quick win

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 7 Tachwedd 2022
Petitions Committee | 7 November 2022

Reference: SR22/3945-4

Petition Number: P-06-1288

Petition title: Deliver Magor and Undy Walkway Station, part of the Burns Delivery Programme, as a quick win.

Text of petition:

We urge the Welsh Government to expedite the opening of Magor and Undy Walkway Station, as a 'quick win' in the delivery of the Lord Burns report. The station is needed now, with the population of Magor with Undy rapidly expanding and shortly becoming a town.

Magor Action Group on Rail (M.A.G.O.R.) has been campaigning for 10 years to restore a railway station to the communities of Magor and Undy. It has had massive community support and the full backing of local politicians in the County, Senedd and from our MP. This resulted in it being included in the Burns Report Recommendations and its inclusion in the Burns Delivery Programme. We believe this would be a 'quick win' because it is a technically simple and cost-effective element of the plan.

The full history of the campaign is available on our website - magorstation.co.uk.



1. Background

Rail infrastructure planning and funding in Wales, including stations, is the responsibility of the UK Government and Network Rail. However, the Welsh Government has powers to invest in rail infrastructure and is responsible for Welsh rail services delivered via Transport for Wales (TfW).

The former Magor railway station closed in 1964 following the Beeching Review. Magor Action Group on Rail (MAGOR), formed in 2012, campaigns for the reopening of the station. Since then, it has worked to reopen the station – including working with Monmouthshire Council on bids to the UK Department for Transport (DfT) New Stations Fund (NSF) in 2016 (NSF 2), and again in 2020 (NSF 3). These were unsuccessful.

Following the Welsh Government decision to cancel the M4 relief road in 2019, the South East Wales Transport Commission (the ‘Burns Commission’) was established to consider alternatives. Its final report, published in November 2020, proposed a ‘network of alternatives’ to the relief road.

The Burns Commission recommended a ‘a programme of new rail station developments along the main line, facilitated by the reconfiguration of rail services’. This comprised a list of six new stations between Cardiff Central and Severn Tunnel Junction stations, including a new station at Magor as a ‘walk and ride’ station, which it “primarily envisaged as an ‘origin’ station serving the local community”.

The Welsh Government subsequently endorsed the Commission’s recommendations. A delivery unit was established led by TfW. The TfW webpage for the unit says:

The Unit are initially focusing on facilitating enhancements to the South Wales Main Line railway, and new stations along it, plus taking a hands on approach to designing options for bus and active travel corridors in and between Cardiff, Newport, and Monmouthshire, improving bus and active travel access to new, and existing, rail stations.

The annual report by the Chairs of the delivery unit, published in January 2022 includes a timeline. This indicates that “designs for new railway stations and track improvements” would be developed between 2021 and 2026, and new stations

and services introduced between Cardiff Central and Severn Tunnel Junction between 2025 and 2029. However, as the Burns Commission report noted, rail infrastructure improvements require action by the UK Government which is responsible for rail infrastructure in Wales.

In November 2021 the Burns Commission recommendations were endorsed by the [Union Connectivity Review](#), which was commissioned by the UK Government to make recommendations to improve transport connectivity across the UK.

The [UK Government press release](#) announcing publication of the review report said it would “carefully consider the Union Connectivity Review’s recommendations in detail”, working with the devolved governments. In May 2022 [the Secretary of State for Transport](#) indicated he expected to publish a response “later this year”.

2. Welsh Government action

The letter to the Chair from the Deputy Minister for Climate Change, Lee Waters MS, draws attention to the recommendations of the Burns Commission and says:

The Unit has secured financing from UK Government to carry out feasibility studies for the capacity improvements of the South Wales Main Line that would enable new stations on it and that work is now underway to inform next steps of decision making.

I see rail improvements as key to the delivery of our improving public transport agenda. However, as you know, most of our rail infrastructure and the funding for it is non-devolved and the sole responsibility of the UK Government. We will continue to press the UK Government for full devolution of rail infrastructure powers to the Welsh Government, alongside a full and fair funding settlement.

3. Welsh Parliament action

The issue of a station at Magor has been raised by Members many times in the Senedd. [Recent responses to written questions](#) reflect the content of the Deputy Minister’s letter.

Every effort is made to ensure that the information contained in this briefing is correct at the time of publication. Readers should be aware that these briefings are not necessarily updated or otherwise amended to reflect subsequent changes.