



Ein cyf/Our ref:KS/220/20

Rt Hon Grant Shapps MP
Secretary of State for Transport

TransportSecretary@dft.gov.uk

4 June 2020

Dear Grant,

I wrote to you on 2 March about the UK Government's Restoring Your Railways fund and investment in the Wales and Borders rail network. Thank you for your reply of 6 May.

I am writing now, following a report undertaken for me by Transport for Wales, to request formally UK Government investment in the delivery, by early 2024, of four new stations across the regions of Wales which are my shortlisted priorities for potential developments under the New Stations Fund 3. These are - in no particular order as they are all of the highest priority - Deeside Parkway, on the Borderlands Line in North Wales; Carno, on the Cambrian Mainline in Mid Wales; St Clears on the Great Western Mainline in West Wales; and Ely Mill on the City Line in Cardiff, in South Wales.

In combination, which is why I have not prioritised between them, the Transport for Wales report demonstrates that there is a compelling case for all four to be developed as an integrated programme to improve access to the rail network across the regions of Wales. This package will make a major contribution to improved rail connectivity, supercharge our post Covid19 recovery, and develop our public transport for the future. Our new station openings will be key to Building Back Better.

In the cases of Deeside Parkway and Ely Mill, both will be key components of their respective Metro developments with major contributions to improved urban connectivity, employment/economic growth and reduced car use. New stations in Carno and St Clears would support strong employment and sustainable economic growth through improved regional connectivity. They share extensive community and third party support (community councils, local authorities and community groups) within rural communities that have limited public transport opportunities and have historically been overlooked, particularly since the closure of previous stations in these communities and of Laura Ashley's famous factory in Carno. Carno station will adjoin a new community hub/museum at the factory site and there will be great synergy between the two developments.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

Each is deliverable, and is operationally viable, and will offer regular services to national hubs. Carno will also require Network Rail to expedite the planned upgrade of the adjacent level crossing to avoid increased risk.

Transport for Wales has an unsurpassed delivery record over the previous two rounds of NSF. I have requested Transport for Wales to submit the completed NSF application forms directly to your NSF team on my behalf. Given that the UK Government continues to maintain responsibility and funding for rail infrastructure enhancements, I requested in my letter of 2 March, a fair allocation of the Restoring Your Railways funding for enhancements in Wales to develop a rail infrastructure enhancement programme delivering on our priorities and those of our partners. Your commitment to meeting the full costs of our new station building programme would be a positive first step to deliver transformative benefits to those communities.

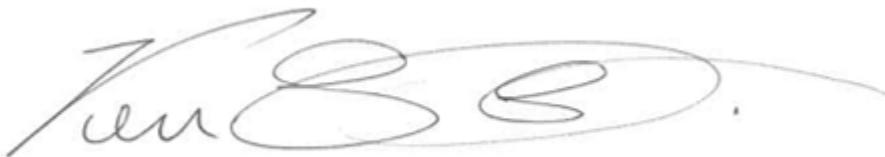
As set out in my letter of 2 March, I do have further priorities for rail investment, including new stations at Greenfield and Magor, supported by MPs and MSs, and I would be glad to assist with any evaluation process in these cases.

My letter also set out other priorities for rail reopenings and my officials have recently lodged an expression of interest for the New Ideas Fund, for the restoration of passenger services on the line between Gaerwen and Amlwch on Anglesey and an expression of interest for the Accelerating Existing Proposals fund to restore the line and services to Abertillery in South Wales. My priorities are not limited to these cases, as you will recall from the attachment to my 2 March letter, and I will continue to press the case strongly for them, including the Aberystwyth – Carmarthen and Bangor – Caernarfon reopenings.

I would be very glad to have a discussion with you on these important issues, and the forthcoming Williams Rail Review outcome, and I am also content for my officials and Transport for Wales to have any detailed discussion with your own officials on any of these schemes.

I am copying this letter to Members of the Senedd, the Secretary of State for Wales, and to the other Wales and Borders MPs to whom I copied my 2 March letter.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ken Skates', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Ken Skates AC/AM

Gweinidog yr Economi, Trafnidiaeth a Gogledd Cymru
Minister for Economy, Transport and North Wales