



Department  
for Transport

Department for Transport  
Great Minster House  
33 Horseferry Road  
London  
SW1P 4DR  
Tel: 0300 330 3000

Web Site: [www.gov.uk/dft](http://www.gov.uk/dft)

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Stephen Waring

Dear Stephen Waring

### **Calder Valley Line issues latest: Elland station, TRU, electrification**

Thank you for your email of 22nd September 2020 to Grant Shapps. Please accept our apologies for the delay in responding to you.

We recognise your concerns for the Calder Valley line, the impact of related programmes and the wider issues raised in your letter. We endeavor to address each of these in our response.

The TRU programme aims to upgrade the railway between Manchester, Leeds and York and is the largest planned investment on the existing railway in the next five years; prioritising reliability, capacity and improved journey times. TRU is a critical further step in our commitment to transforming rail connectivity across the north, as part of the Government's "levelling up" agenda. The £589m of funding announced in July 2020 enables design and development work to upgrade and electrify the Transpennine main line from Manchester to York via Huddersfield and Leeds. As part of this, we are actively considering the case for TRU to deliver full electrification on the route, subject to further advice from Network Rail. We are assessing the case for this to determine the most optimal approach for electrification by mid-2021.

***Will you please require Network Rail and other bodies involved to ensure that opening of Elland station before the end of 2022 is not delayed?***

The Department for Transport is supportive of the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) and Calderdale Council's plans to construct a new station

at Elland on the Calder Valley (Leeds – Huddersfield) Line to improve the town's connectivity with the wider region, support future housing growth and ease congestion on the local road network (including the nearby A629).

WYCA are leading on the development of this new station and plan to fund its construction through their own West Yorkshire-plus Transport Fund programme and WYCA intend to submit a planning application for the new station over the coming weeks. They intend to seek an Approval in Principle from Network Rail in early 2021 to commence production of the outline design.

We would expect WYCA to work closely with Network Rail, DfT and relevant train operators to support co-ordination with other planned local rail schemes (including TRU) and develop a suitable timetable for services calling at the new station. Based on the information available at present, and assuming that all the necessary approvals are achieved, WYCA have indicated that the new station will be completed and in use by December 2022, as planned.

***Might there be a mechanism here to ensure that projects such as Elland station go ahead, on time, as planned?***

The Northern Transport Acceleration Council will provide the North's leaders with regular access to Ministers to discuss priority transport projects and make sure they are being progressed at pace. It can provide a mechanism for speeding up key decision making, though the exact projects to be considered will be determined by Ministers and Northern leaders working together.

***Please will you and your government colleagues now give the go-ahead to rolling programmes of rail electrification in England and Wales, based on regional proposals, including the March 2015 NETF report?***

The Government is committed to rail decarbonisation to meet our target of reaching net zero carbon emissions by 2050. The Network Rail-led TDNS will inform Government decisions about the scale and pace of rail decarbonisation and Department's forthcoming Transport Decarbonisation Plan. We note that the TDNS Interim Programme Business Case, published in September 2020, suggests that electrification should play a major role in a rail decarbonisation programme, alongside the use of alternative traction technologies like hydrogen and battery-powered trains. We will consider the recommendations of TDNS carefully and consider how these will be taken forwards to meet Government's net zero targets.

I hope the information above is helpful to you and The Halifax & District Rail Action Group.

Yours sincerely

Catherine Murphy

Rail Infrastructure North  
Department for Transport