

Railfuture response to Gloucestershire Draft Rail Strategy (part of Gloucestershire County Council Local Transport Plan Consultation), 3 February 2016.

On the whole, Railfuture supports the Draft Rail Strategy and makes the following comments relating to specific paragraphs in it:

1.6 We agree that rail has a role in managing short-distance travel, eg Lydney- Gloucester. It is often quicker to travel between Gloucester and Cheltenham by train than by bus, even with the walk from Cheltenham station to the town centre.

3.1.5 Electrification from Swindon to Kemble only is illogical because Cheltenham, Gloucester and Stroud stations serve much larger populations than Kemble. The Strategy favours electrification of the entire North Cotswold Line which has a smaller intermediate population than Swindon- Cheltenham. Figure F supports extension of electrification to Gloucester, Cheltenham and the Bristol- Birmingham route.

3.1.8 Extension of MetroWest to Gloucester is said here would be an hourly service but in 4.1.4 is described as half-hourly.

3.2 We support the suggested approach to new stopping patterns on the Bristol- Gloucester route including the possibility of new stations. We agree on the need for half-hourly Gloucester- Bristol services but Gloucester also needs better Cross Country services. It is not acceptable that it should have little more than a local stopping service to Bristol. Cross Country services used to reverse at Gloucester when they were loco-hauled so this must be less of a problem with multiple units.

4.1.7 We agree that the barrier to improving the service at Ashchurch is shortage of rolling stock but this should improve with the cascade following electrification of GWR Thames Valley services.

4.1.8 Classic Compatible services linking with HS2 at Birmingham could include Cardiff- Gloucester- York.

4.2 We support moves towards reinstatement of the Honeybourne- Stratford-upon-Avon line which would be a major step towards reconnecting Cheltenham with Stratford, linking major centres of tourism.

4.3.2 We favour upgrading Cardiff- Gloucester- Birmingham / Nottingham services into Cardiff- Gloucester- York.

5.1.5 We agree that Gloucester's centrally sited station is an asset, being close to the city's commercial heart and main visitor attractions.

5.1.6 We support the Gloucester central transport hub and plans to enlarge the station car park and improve access between the station and hospital.

5.1.13 Lydney is indeed the only (National Rail) station in the Forest of Dean. There is a case for an additional station in the Newnham area to serve Cinderford and the eastern Forest.