

Railfuture response of 29 November 2017 to Travelwest's Stage 2 Consultation on Reopening the Portishead Line as part of MetroWest Phase 1

The need to reduce the costs of delivering the project is understandable but Portishead station will be the gateway to the town and therefore needs to be more than a minimalist structure.

We welcome the decision to build platforms at Portishead and Pill long enough for five-car trains, which may prove necessary in the peak.

We welcome the provision for a retail outlet at Portishead station as this would maintain a human presence outside the hours of ticket office opening.

The design of Portishead station needs to provide weather protection for passengers outside ticket office hours.

Land needs to be safeguarded for expansion of the station at a later date.

The shelter at Pill station needs to be welcoming but sturdy, ie offering weather protection and resistance to possible vandalism.

The information screen needs to be of a similar type to that at Ashchurch for Tewkesbury station, Gloucestershire, ie showing the current position of the next few trains and not just a display of the scheduled times.

Footpath access to a possible new station at Ashton Gate needs to be considered even though that station is not included in MetroWest Phase 1. Land must be safeguarded for a station at Ashton Gate to allow it to open when funding permits.

Railfuture supports the pragmatic reopening of the Portishead line for an initial 30 mph service, as this would be much faster than bus or car journeys into Bristol, particularly in peak hours. For this reason and because stations in the West of England have shown a dramatic increase in usage over the past 20 years, we believe the reopened line will be very successful.