
From: Robert Campbell []
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To: Rail 2014
Subject: C000157

I was indeed surprised to learn of the possible threat to stations in the Glasgow area at Ashfield, Barnhill, Duke Street, Gilshochill, Kelvindale, Kennishead, Maryhill, Mossspark and Nitshill, together with those at Airbles (Motherwell), Paisley St. James and Ardrossan Town, on the grounds that they are located within a mile of other stations.

Firstly, I would ask why it is apparently considered perfectly acceptable for many stations in the London area, for example, to be located less than a mile apart, but not in Glasgow? Does Transport Scotland really think that travellers, particularly the elderly and those encumbered with luggage and prams, will be prepared to walk a mile to the nearest station if their local one were to close?

Of the nine 'threatened' stations in Glasgow, six have been opened, or re-opened, at huge public expense since 1990 - Ashfield, Gilshochill and Maryhill as recently as 1993; Mossspark re-opened in 1990; Kennishead and Nitshill also re-opened around that time and Kelvindale as recently as 2005. Airbles is also a relatively new station, whilst the long-established Paisley St. James was closed for a month last year for an extensive refurbishment at much expense. The long-established Duke Street and Barnhill stations on the Springburn branch, both dating from 1883 and serving heavily populated suburbs, have continued to experience significant increases in patronage, amounting to 27% and 14% respectively, between 2008 and 2010. Also, any time I have used Ardrossan Town station it has been well patronised and, were it to close, trains would still have to pass through it en route to Ardrossan Harbour station. It would, therefore, be a gross waste of public funds to close any of these stations, while many thousands of passengers would inevitably be lost to rail.

Furthermore, it was recently revealed in the 'Evening Times' newspaper (9 January 2012) that all nine Glasgow stations have been experiencing significant increases in patronage of 2 to 32 per cent between 2008 and 2010. This is despite the fact that advertising and promotion of suburban rail services in Strathclyde has virtually ceased since Transport Scotland assumed responsibility for rail services from Strathclyde Passenger Transport in November 2005. Patronage at Paisley St. James has been boosted in the past three years with the opening of St. Mirren's new stadium and the building of new flats adjacent to the station. However, in my experience, passenger numbers at this unstaffed station are being adversely affected by the fact that many on-train ticket staff are simply not troubling to issue tickets; a situation which also, no doubt, applies at all the above unstaffed stations.

Finally, I would strongly recommend that Transport Scotland improves its public relations department, as the possible threat to these stations (the names of which were, surprisingly, not published in your consultation paper) was revealed under bold newspaper headlines such as, '9 City Rail Stations Under Threat'; 'Save Our Stations' and 'MADNESS - Passenger Numbers UP --- But Nine Glasgow Stations Still Under Threat'. This followed close upon your Scotrail franchise consultation resulting in headlines such as, 'DEARER, SLOWER, FULLER'. Also, as noted above, Transport Scotland and ScotRail appear to have completely abandoned advertising and promoting suburban services in Strathclyde since SPT was stripped of the responsibility. For example, there is nothing available advertising the new Airdrie - Bathgate line and consequently many of the commuters who daily crowd on to E & G main line services are probably not aware that they could be in Edinburgh within an hour using the new line instead. An

obligation should, therefore, be placed upon ScotRail to advertise and promote rail services in Strathclyde, as SPT once did.

I have no objections to the above comments being published under my name.

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