

Consultation Response

I strongly support the comments made by East Dunbartonshire Council, and wish to expand on its response to Q. 24 as follows:

* EDC has pointed to a 31% increase in passengers using its 6 stations between 2004/5 and 2009/10. The corresponding increase in those specifically using the Milngavie line (Bearsden, Hillfoot and Milngavie stations) was 45%.

* Further large increases are expected, due a) to the recent opening of a direct line from Milngavie to Edinburgh and b) further housing developments expected not only in the Milngavie/Bearsden area but also further north in Stirlingshire.

* We now have a very good service, with the doubling of the frequency of trains into Glasgow to every 15 minutes. For many, the main obstacle to its use is the lack of sufficient parking space at stations. Milngavie, Hillfoot and Bearsden station car parks are said to be full by 8 am. Parking on roads around stations is causing congestion on the roads. Many of the commuters using these stations live too far away to walk to them, for example in Stirlingshire.

* A further station near the Allander Leisure Centre (between Hillfoot and Milngavie stations which are about 2 miles apart) has therefore been an aspiration of this community for over 20 years. It would mean that far more people would live within walking distance of a station, and a substantial park and ride facility would help accommodate the expected increase in passengers from further north.

* If there is to be an increase in the frequency of trains or length of carriages on this line, a third platform is likely to be needed at Milngavie, as at other terminal stations such as Helensburgh. Formerly there was track also on the west side of platform 2 for a branch line serving a paper mill. Reservation of a strip of land, before it is developed, would allow for future re-laying of this track and re-opening of platform 3.

At Milngavie station there are frequently two trains standing at a platform. The local paper reported an incident when an incoming train was unable to reach a platform. Passengers had to be escorted off the train one by one through the driver's cab.

