

The case for Magor & Undy Walkway station

The development of Magor station should proceed as the work to date shows that the proposal

1. fits strategically with WG objectives
2. is deliverable
3. appears to be good value for money
4. and has a good chance of attract DfT funding

1. Strategic fit

- The proposed station is located at the heart of Magor & Undy, with the whole town (incl. proposed new developments) within a mile of the station.
- The proposal is at the heart of the community, it is embedded with the Magor & Undy Community Hub, which MCC in the process of delivering and which will double up as station building (incl. potential for ticket sales, café, toilets, etc)
- It is in line with the Future Generations Act, the Active Travel Act and WG's new Planning Policy guidance – the proposed walkway station is specifically located with active travel access in mind, it is at the centre of the Magor INM (proposed Active Travel network) and it does not include a park & ride (but next to main local bus route)

2. Deliverable

- The proposed station consists of two simple platforms at the outside of the track (relief lines). It uses an existing footbridge and underpass (though new ramps are needed to the underpass)
- Located between Severn Tunnel Junction and the Bishton flyover/Magor points, it is the only location on the SWML where trains can easily move from the main lines to the relief lines to stop, and with minimal delay (potential quick win).
- An initial timetable analysis undertaken as part of GRIP2 showed that it is likely that a stop could be inserted without much issue to the paths of the stopping trains or other trains. (A more detailed analysis could not be undertaken at the time as post-electrification plans of GWR Wales & Border were unknown.)

3. Value for money

- Costs are estimated at £7m (incl. optimism bias) – low for a new station, because of the use of the community hub, and existing footbridge and subway.
- A GRIP3 Initial Demand Forecast & Economic Appraisal has been undertaken, and this shows a benefit-cost ratio of 2.0. (DfT VFM category “high” – this assumes hourly trains to Cheltenham and Bristol, 2tph to Cardiff and 2 fast Cardiff-Bristol trains. Additional services would strengthen the case.)
- Patronage is forecast as 234,000 after 15 years, more than Maesteg, Rhymney or any Ebbw Valley Line station

4. External funding

- While the application for the New Station Fund was unsuccessful, the DfT came to Cardiff to meet MCC and the Magor Group to make clear that this was solely due to the fact that development had only got to GRIP2. It was specifically stated that a number of stations that were unsuccessful at an earlier NSF call were successful this time, we were urged not only to resubmit, but to do so as soon as possible and not to wait until the next NSF call.
- Key quote from DfT: “Our commercial director loved it”
- Proposed developments around Magor will also provide more than £200k towards the costs.