

RAILWAY NEWS

£3.5m station plan

Old bridge to go in Dunblane revamp

Gareth Jones

Proposals for a £3.5m revamp of Dunblane station - including the removal of the Victorian footbridge there - have been unveiled.

Network Rail has submitted a planning application for a new footbridge with lifts to replace the existing ramped 'blue bridge' at the station.

And the company plan to relocate the 165-year-old station's old footbridge, which links platforms one and two, to the Caledonian Heritage Railway at Bridge of Dun.

They say the 19th century structure has to be moved to allow for both line electrification work and the installation of the new bridge.

A Network Rail spokesman said: "We have submitted a planning application to Stirling Council in respect of proposals to build step free access across Dunblane Station under Access for All - which is designed to improve access within stations for people with impaired mobility, travelling with luggage, children, cycles etc."

"Encompassed within the planning application is Listed Buildings consent, which is required to relocate the footbridge that links platform one and two within the station."

"It is proposed that a new, accessible footbridge at Dunblane station will be constructed over the next nine months. It will include lifts and stairs. We hope that the bridge will be open by Spring 2014."

Construction work will be carried out by Balfour Beatty, and Network Rail has said the design will be sympathetic to the surrounding area.

The spokesman added: "In keeping with the surrounding conservation area, a sympathetic design including stone finishes has been submitted as part of the application."

The plans are set to go on display on August 15 at the Victoria Halls between 3pm and 7pm.

The issue was debated at Dunblane Community Council on Monday evening, and Councillor Kate Fawcett said she was unhappy that there hadn't been more public engagement.

She said: "I don't think there has been enough information for people in Dunblane. I think to have a meeting in the middle of August suggests it's a done deal."

Chairman of the community council, Councillor Terence O'Byrne said an official response would be made once the detailed plans had been outlined.

What are your views on the plans: email john.rowbotham@trinitymirror.com or write to the Observer at 34 Upper Craig, Stirling, FK8 2DW



ChangeArtist's impression of new bridge with steps and lifts replacing the existing bridge (inset)

Internet speed test for Stirling

Gareth Jones

A fund to extend high speed broadband will mean that 93 per cent of the Stirling Council is included in the roll-out.

The council has committed a further £600,000 to the £250m government scheme to bring super fast broadband to Scotland.

Further details of the scheme have now been revealed, with the council claiming the vast majority of properties in the area will have access to speeds of up to 100 mbps.

More than half of Stirling's deployment is expected to be delivered within the initial phases of the project.

Councillor Neil Benny, finance and economy convener, said: "This is great news and I look forward to working with all our partners to deliver on high speed internet connectivity across the Stirling area."

"This is a key priority for Stirling Council and we will follow through on our pledge to invest £600,000 in this project over the next few years."

Access to high speed internet is vital to keeping rural communities alive, families and businesses alike will benefit from this project."

The Observer is collating information on broadband speeds for a survey. Email your download speed and where you are to gareth.jones01@trinitymirror.com