

£120 million investment to boost electricity power supply into Scotland's railway

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Network Rail will invest more than £120 million of Scottish Government funding in the next three years to boost the electricity power supply into Scotland's railway network.

The investment will see six new feeder stations at strategic locations across the network and a further nine sites upgraded to increase the resilience and reliability of the infrastructure for the operation of electrically powered passenger and freight traffic.

As well as increasing the resilience of the existing network, the new connections to the national grid via the feeder stations will increase the overall capability of the 25kV electrified network. This will accommodate future passenger and freight growth and reduce the railway's carbon footprint by supporting the removal of diesel passenger trains from the network.

It's all part of efforts to make Scotland's Railway greener in line with the Scottish Government's commitment to decarbonise the passenger rail network by 2035.

A contract to deliver the initial phase of work has been awarded to SPL Powerlines.

Scottish Government Transport Minister, Jenny Gilruth said, “Increasing power supply into the Scottish railway network is critical to enabling our ambitions to run more cleaner and greener electric trains.

“Upgrading the power supply network will enable the introduction of electric trains on services to East Kilbride and Barrhead, on the Borders line and across Fife but will also support increased traffic on existing routes such as the East Coast Mainline.

“This investment further demonstrates this Government’s commitment to creating a railway for Scotland that is fit for the future, for the benefit of employees and passengers. We want a rail infrastructure for Scotland that helps to cut emissions, to provide sustainable travel options for people and for freight, and which provides fair work and highly skilled employment opportunities.”

Alex Hynes, managing director of Scotland’s Railway said: “In tandem with the Scottish Government’s ambitions to increase the number of electric trains running on Scotland’s Railway, there comes an increase in the demand for power to operate these services.

“Investing in the power supply infrastructure will not only make the current electric network more resilient, it also delivers the significant growth in capacity needed as we continue to electrify our railway.

“Introducing quieter, quicker and greener electric trains on more routes across the country will enable both passengers and lineside communities to experience all the benefits that electrification of the rail network brings.”

Lee Pounder, Regional Director, SPL, said: “We’re delighted to be awarded this phase one contract and to be working on the fully integrated delivery of Scotland’s Railway’s traction power requirements alongside Network Rail.”

Photo credit: Network Rail