

Green light for £55 million Scottish Government investment in decarbonisation

June 1, 2022



The first phase of a rail decarbonisation scheme to electrify the Fife route has been approved to move to construction phase.

The scheme has been developed by Transport Scotland and Network Rail and will commence with electrification of the section between Haymarket and Dalmeny (south of the Forth Bridge).

Construction work is expected to get underway on the estimated £55 million scheme in June 2022 and is due to be completed by December 2024. It forms part of a rolling programme that is expected to see electrification extended to Dundee and Aberdeen.

Transport Minister Jenny Gilruth: “It is great news that the first phase of the Fife electrification project is expected to start this month as this will make a significant difference to passenger and freight services in the future.

“Delivery of the Fife Decarbonisation project will support introduction of new rolling stock through partial electrification of the route.

“It will also help towards the delivery of our Rail Decarbonisation Action Plan which will see removal of all diesel on passenger services by 2035.

“The development work also being progressed on Borders electrification and on procuring new rolling stock shows we are fully focussed on rail decarbonisation. Our commitment is securing jobs in the rail design and delivery sector, as well as providing a stream of work for the supply chain.”

Alex Hynes, managing director of Scotland’s Railway said: “We’re working hard alongside the Scottish Government to bring the benefits of electrification to communities across Scotland.

“The government has set an ambitious target to decarbonise our railway and projects such as the electrification of the Fife Circle – starting with the line connecting Fife to Edinburgh, will be key to delivering on that commitment.

“We look forward to delivering further investment in Scotland’s Railway and significantly improving the quality of service for the communities it serves. This is one of a number of projects that will create an even greener, cleaner, and more reliable railway for Scotland.”

The overall Fife electrification scheme has recently been given approval for partial electrification, using battery electric multiple units, and further development work is to be undertaken to support this. The project is part of the plan to decarbonise the railway network by 2035.

The project is being taken forward in the face of the significant financial challenges, and in light of uncertain future demand.

Further development work is being undertaken to progress the business cases for other decarbonisation schemes:

Borders Decarbonisation

The project to decarbonise the Borders Line has also taken a step forward, with approval given to progress the next design phase of the scheme to deliver partial electrification of the route using battery electric multiple units.

Rolling stock procurement

Approval has also been given to hold a procurement competition to identify a preferred manufacturer and financier for new suburban trains to operate decarbonised rail passenger services on the routes covered by East Kilbride, Fife and Borders routes, replacing 42 Class 156 trains and to replace the 55 Class 318 and 320 trains operating in the Strathclyde area.

Photo credit: Transport Scotland