

# Perth railway enhancement project achieves major milestone

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Network Rail engineers delivering £6.8 million of enhancement work near Perth station recently completed a major milestone that will speed up journey times and also increase capacity on to the route.

The project is part of ongoing investment by the Scottish Government in Scotland's Railway that will help reduce rail journey times between the Central Belt and the North East, improve connectivity and enhance capacity for both passenger and freight trains.

Starting in March 2022, this initial phase involved track work east of Perth station at Barnhill, historically a constrained section of the route next to the River Tay.

Working with contractor the Rail Systems Alliance, Network Rail undertook a nine-month programme of alignment work to replace a curved section of track by installing a new single line and also remodelling the junction by replacing switches and crossings. This allows an increase in line speed for trains from 20mph to 50mph on this part of the route

Speeding up journey times also improves capacity for more freight services to be introduced to the

network.

Chris Sharkey, Network Rail programme manager, said: “Completion of work at Barnhill represents a significant part of enhancement work that provides tangible benefits for our passengers and freight customers.

“Ultimately, the work enables smoother, faster journey times and more resilience on the network, particularly during times of disruption.

“This was a challenging location to work in, given it is constricted by the existing railway infrastructure and I’m delighted the team achieved this key milestone on time.

“I would like to thank our lineside neighbours at Barnhill for their patience during the delivery of this vital improvement work to Scotland’s Railway.”

Damian Briody, Transport Scotland’s head of rail projects and technical services, said: “This latest Scottish Government investment in Scotland’s Railway is another example of our efforts to reduce journey times on this important route between the north east and the Central Belt.

“These enhancements will improve connectivity for both passenger and freight services which, in turn, will help encourage more people out of their cars and more companies to opt for rail freight over road transportation.”

With work at Barnhill complete, the team is focused on the next phase of activity – installing a new cross over south of Dunblane station to further improve operational resilience.

The existing turnback facilities for trains at Dunblane constrain the timetable and network resilience in this location. By installing the new cross over, this will help eliminate these issues by reducing the time it takes for a train to move up the line and significantly improve the diversionary capability when work is completed in advance of the May 2024 timetable.

If you have any questions about Network Rail’s current works, you can contact the 24-hour national helpline on 03457 11 41 41. For the latest information and progress updates visit

[www.scotlandsrailway.com](http://www.scotlandsrailway.com)

*Photo credit: Network Rail*