

Rail electrification programme given the go-ahead

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Work on the East Kilbride and Barrhead Electrification Project has moved a step closer.

The scheme has been developed by Transport Scotland and Network Rail and will pass through East Renfrewshire and South Lanarkshire to the south of Glasgow.

Construction work is expected to get underway on the £63 million Barrhead corridor in April 2022 and due to be complete by December 2023. It will support passenger and freight services and will be used as a key diversionary route for cross-border services.

The East Kilbride corridor has recently been given approval for single track electrification infrastructure, and further development work is required to support this.

The projects are being taken forward in the face of the significant financial challenges, and in light of uncertain future demand. By progressing with single track this allows funds to be reallocated to other decarbonisation projects such as Borders electrification.

Further development work is being undertaken to review accessibility across both corridors.

Transport Minister Graeme Dey said: "I'm pleased that work on the full electrification of the Glasgow to Barrhead railway line is expected to start early next year as this will make a significant difference to passenger and freight services in the future.

"Delivery of the East Kilbride and Barrhead Electrification Project will not only ensure the decarbonisation of two critical corridors on this strategic network but will allow efficiencies to be achieved and disruption minimised for passengers during this period.

"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 through the deployment of existing rolling stock."

Katie Vollbracht, of Network Rail Scotland, said: "The East Kilbride and Barrhead Electrification Project is at the centre of our plans to decarbonise domestic passenger services by 2035.

"The project will deliver high-quality public transport choices for passengers through the introduction of greener, more reliable electric trains, with improved stations and passenger facilities along the two routes.

"We are working closely with government and our industry partners to ensure the enhancements we are making deliver best value for taxpayers' money and meet the changing needs of our customers."