



Capital Rail Action Group

Dear Sir/Madam,

Network Rail Strategic Business Plan for Scotland - Control Period 5 (2014 - 2019)

1) I write to convey the support of the Capital Rail Action Group (CRAG) for Network Rail's proposals in the above Plan to electrify Edinburgh's South Suburban line (costed at £27m). With electrification already in place or planned for all other lines connected to the "South Sub", it would not make sense for this line to be left isolated from the surrounding wired railway. Electrification would allow electric locomotives to haul freight trains coming off both the East and West Coast main lines.

With the depot for electric multiple units now decided to be at Millerhill, it will also allow EMUs to reach Waverley and other starting stations via the South Sub as well as via the ECML at Portobello junction, thus providing operational resilience and a direct approach, if required, to the terminal platforms at the west end of Waverley station (where most trains leave from).

Moreover, with trams about to run in Edinburgh, electrification of the South Sub opens up the possibility of tram-train operation in Scotland's capital city, providing a new public transport corridor, for instance, from Haymarket via the underused but densely populated South Sub corridor to the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh and other medical facilities at Little France.

With Scotland having led the way in pioneering cost-effective electrification of the Paisley Canal line, tram-train operation over the South Sub would realise one more goal outlined in Network Rail's recent "Alternative Solutions" document.

Finally, electrification saves energy and pollution. It is *per se* a good thing to do.

2) We are also supportive of the proposal to re-model Carstairs Junction (£53m). Notwithstanding current aspirations for a high speed railway between Edinburgh and Glasgow, the fact remains that this junction will for years to come otherwise continue to impose an avoidable time penalty of some five minutes on journeys between Scotland's two main cities via Carstairs and between Edinburgh and points south via the West Coast Main Line.

We very much hope that the ORR will see fit to allow these two enhancement schemes - additional to those proposed in the Initial Industry Plan - to be funded.

3) Finally, we welcome the current restoration and enhancement works at Edinburgh Waverley. There is much more work to be done, however, since, in comparison with many London and continental stations, what Waverley offers is far below its potential.

CRAG has long believed that Network Rail, Transport Scotland and the City of Edinburgh Council should commission a study to see whether better use could be made of the large amount of land beneath the impressively restored roof. Is it really necessary for railway back offices to occupy the majority of the station's central building? Whilst retaining a central ticket and booking office, could not administrative, staff and train servicing facilities be better provided for in the largely vacant east end of the station? Could the main building become a mini version of Glasgow's very successful Princes Square?

The current works essentially only restore and enhance Waverley's skeleton. What is additionally required is the creation of a more vibrant retail and leisure hub, strengthening the heart of this vital city centre asset. We would look to significant progress being made in this regard during Control Period 5 (2014 - 2019).

Yours sincerely

Lawrence Marshall

Chair

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