



Richard Price
Chief Executive
Office of Rail Regulation
1 Kemble Street
London
WC2B 4AN

for sustainable transport

tel: +44 (0)131 243 2690

email: info@transformscotland.org.uk

web: www.transformscotland.org.uk

Transform Scotland 5 Rose Street Edinburgh EH2 2PR

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Dear Sir/Madam

Network Rail Strategic Business Plan for Scotland

I am writing in support of the NR Strategic Business Plan for Scotland (January 2013). In particular I would like to draw attention to the following issues:

Edinburgh South Suburban line

It is our belief that electrification of this route is essential as a diversionary route for freight and passenger services and as an avoiding route for the congested Waverley-Haymarket corridor. Additionally this route could serve tram-trains on the Edinburgh tram network and we note that Network Rail's 'Alternative Solutions' consultation has explored opportunities for tram-train operation.

Carstairs Junction

The junction at Carstairs has suffered from severe speed restrictions for more than a generation. This is a key inter-city route on the Anglo-Scottish network and in need of urgent improvement. In our view, trains from Edinburgh to Birmingham and Manchester suffer a 5 minute time penalty through the 15 mph speed restriction at the junction, while Edinburgh to Glasgow trains suffer in a similar manner.

This should be a top priority project and must not be deferred by any plans for a new higher speed line between Edinburgh and Glasgow (such as those proposed by the Scottish Government in late 2012) which are merely at a proposal stage and will take more than 10 years to come to fruition.

Waverley Station

Significant improvements have been undertaken in recent years to the infrastructure serving the station and the fabric of the building. However, the passenger facilities leave much to be desired especially as it is the gateway station to Scotland for many visitors and lies at the northern end of the East Coast Main Line. The King's Cross refurbishment sets a standard that should be repeated at Waverley if rail is to seriously compete with air on this key Anglo-Scottish route.

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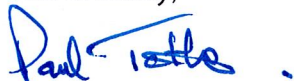
Scottish Inter-City routes

We note that limited improvements are proposed for the Highland Main Line and Aberdeen-Inverness routes. Routes from the Central Belt to Inverness and Aberdeen are long overdue for upgrading as journey times by rail are no longer able to compete with those by road. To aggravate this situation the Scottish Government has plans for large scale expenditure on the A9 road which will further improve journey times by road.

The present plans for upgrades on the Inter-City routes to Aberdeen and Inverness and between the two cities do not, in our view, go far enough or fast enough.

We see enhanced expenditure in this area during CP5 as a high priority.

Your sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Paul Tetlaw', followed by a small dot.

Paul Tetlaw
Board member, Transform Scotland
On behalf of Transform Scotland