

Dear Sir,

**Gogar Interchange Planning Application by Network Rail 09/01784/PAN**

The Association has considered the outline planning application for the above interchange. It fully supports the principle of a major, integrated interchange at this location with an initial phase becoming operational no later than 2012 in line with completion of the tram project from the airport to central Edinburgh. However, the outline application is vague on several important aspects and the Association considers it important that the more detailed application to be made by Network Rail in October or November 2009 takes account of the points made in this letter and by other consultees. There is a need for greater public involvement and fuller discussion with tram and bus operators and with Transport Scotland on what is likely to become an increasingly important interchange. The outline application makes no mention of projected levels of usage but, in line with representations which the Association has already made on transport and other aspects of the West Edinburgh Planning Design Framework, the Association believes that the Gogar interchange will have usage considerably higher than any other station in Edinburgh west of Haymarket. Gogar offers significant potential for modal shift from cars to an integrated public transport network.

At the interchange exhibition in the Gyle Centre, Network Rail confirmed to the Association that the majority of Gogar usage was expected to come from West Edinburgh trips other than trips by passengers to and from the Airport. Airport usage would be significant but not dominating with Gogar acting as a general interchange for trips to and from west Edinburgh.

In these circumstances, the Association considers it essential that the final planning application and the detailed proposals for west Edinburgh transport (presently being prepared by Halcrow) be revised to ensure a top-quality interchange supported by smart multimodal ticketing and reservation of ample land for phased development of the interchange. Three phases are suggested:-

Phase 1 – completed by 2012 and involving integration of the Fife line with tram and bus interchange, car parking and an improved local network for walking and cycling

Phase 2 – completed by 2016/17 involving the Dalmeny south chord giving direct rail access from Gogar to Falkirk, Glasgow and Stirling

Phase 3 – completed by 2021/22 in phase with key developments in high-speed rail access from London, the West Midlands and Manchester to the Scottish Central Belt and beyond. This would take account of the newly published Network Rail plans for Anglo-Scottish high-speed rail.

In relation to Phase 1, the Association urges consideration of the following proposals as part of the finalised planning application and other work on a transport strategy for west Edinburgh:-

- 1) move the eastern ends of the 265m proposed platforms some 100 metres to the north-west in conjunction with design modifications and land safeguards permitting each platform to be developed as island platforms (this would allow future provision of four platform faces, ensuring sufficient capacity for the reliable operation of enhanced frequencies in Phase 2)
- 2) include escalators as well as lifts and stairs as part of interchange between differing levels
- 3) replace unsatisfactory 'cul-de-sac' arrangements for car, bus and taxi access to the site with substantially improved proposals as part of the West Edinburgh Design Framework. The Association reserves the right to make further comment as part of the finalisation of sustainable transport plans for west Edinburgh but we highlight four specific proposals:-
  - a) reducing the tram tracks through the site from four to two. Two of these tracks are stated to be for depot access but, given the limited amount of land at the interchange as presently proposed, depot tracks could diverge to the immediate west of the site. This would allow the present 'depot' tracks to be the tram station, leaving space to the south for bus and taxi use
  - b) using the former tram station as a site for both through and terminating bus services, with access to the west and east avoiding the congested A8/City Bypass roundabout. By 2012, buses could be shared users of the tram underpass being created under the A8 but then diverge to alternative routes serving west Edinburgh
  - c) ensure that tram station design will allow operation of additional shuttle links from Gogar to Edinburgh Airport and to Ingliston showground (and also the option of extending the more frequent tram services proposed from Ocean Terminal to Haymarket through to the Airport and Ingliston Showground at times of major events and at other busy periods)
  - d) providing parking space (mainly for users wishing to use rail for trips to the north and west

rather than into Edinburgh), possibly in the vacant area near the tram depot but still close to the interchange (such a car park would also reduce the risk of present parking at the Gyle Shopping Centre close to the proposed pedestrian underpass into the Gogar interchange being used for long-stay parking).

- 4) provide weather protection (as on the approach from the SECC station in Glasgow to the SECC main building) on the walkway approaches from the Gyle Shopping Centre and the Gogar interchange on either side of the planned pedestrian underpass under the A8. Make it clear that this route will also be available for cyclists and integrated in wider walking and cycling networks
- 5) provide similar, but uncovered, walking and cycling routes from Gogar to the RBS complex and planned developments on the corridor to the Airport
- 6) clarify that the proposed interchange will be staffed, including kiosk facilities and toilets, and have space available for cycle parking, car rental and car club usage
- 7) consider Edinburgh West as a more suitable name than Gogar for what is likely to become a major interchange in a key city development zone
- 8) safeguard land for interchange and related uses in the area north-east from the Fife rail line to Turnhouse and Craig Roads.
- 9) safeguard land for a potential future rail corridor from Gogar to Midcalder (with a spur to Edinburgh Park) as part of Anglo-Scottish and Glasgow-Edinburgh high-speed rail strategy.

The Association accepts that points (8) and (9) above may be more suited to consideration as part of current refinements in the West Edinburgh Planning Design Framework but it believes that the issue of land safeguards is one on which early decisions are required.

This comment is being copied to Network Rail (Scotland).

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*Any queries arising from this letter should be sent to Tom Hart, SAPT, Vice President  
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