

**Spring Meeting**  
**Sat 24th March at 14:00**  
**in Royal Over-Seas League, 100 Princes St., Edinburgh**  
**Topic : Freight**

**Programme:**

- Talk - speaker t.b.a.
- Questions to the speaker
- Coffee/Tea break
- Branch AGM

## Branch AGM

**Agenda:**

- Reports from Office-Bearers (Chair, Secretary, Treasurer)
- Election of Office-Bearers

**General Discussion:**

- a chance for members to ask questions, and to provide guidance to the Committee for policy and activity for the coming year
- political May elections - policy / strategy ?
- lobbying RTPs ?

New volunteers for office or committee membership will be welcomed. Have you considered whether you could bring anything to the Committee?

*ROSL: Just west of Frederick Street junction with Princes St.*

**Recruitment**

If you know people interested in what we do, or will be attending any events where there is opportunity to promote the Society, spare copies of Branch Notes, Railwatch and membership leaflets are available from Tony Lennon [see page 4 for how to contact him].

## Re-Openings Conference

We are pleased to be hosting this in Glasgow on June 23rd. The Conference Fee is only £10 for the whole day's conference, so the only valid excuse for not having a good Scottish turnout is being on holiday or being one of our several island members (yes we do have members in Lewis, Skye, Orkney and Shetland!)

There will be a booking form in the next *Railwatch* and you can book now on-line on our website ([www.railfuturescotland.org.uk/conference](http://www.railfuturescotland.org.uk/conference)). Early booking would enable us to make a decision about the size of conference room we need to book. Please help us to make this event a success.

## National AGM

The AGM of Railfuture is in Preston on **Saturday May 12th**. For once this is easily reachable from Central Scotland without involving a night away. Before that will be the postal elections for members of the National Board. Please use your vote - all it costs you is a stamp! There's really no excuse for missing out on your right to vote.

## Editorial

We hope that as citizens you have exercised your right to make comments to the Regional Transport Partnerships about their draft strategies. Several committee members worked hard to put in official Railfuture Scotland comments. In most cases one person took on the task (if they had been written by committee they would never have been finished!) but the drafts were shared with other committee members to ensure consistency. Although we only managed to comment on the Hitrans, Westrans (SPT) and SW Scotland strategies, plus the Scottish Route Utilisation Consultation, the documents run to about 40 pages.

A few extracts have been selected for publication here, in general avoiding repeating the things you all know we have been saying for years but picking out points on which there is a new angle.

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*referring to Westrans RTS*

**QUESTION 4. Are there any interventions not listed which could be added to improve this strategy?**

YES. Perhaps these additional interventions are hidden within the stated interventions. However, there is such detail in some interventions that it appears others are excluded. Some are in Council LTS's.

1. Rail stations to serve regional hospitals where practical, typically Wishaw General.
2. Local stations on the proposed Airdrie to Bathgate line.
3. Local services on the West Coast Main Line with limited station re-openings.
4. Rail services to Edinburgh via Carstairs but actually stopping at Carstairs
5. Bridge of Weir/Kilmacolm Line re-opening.
6. The issue of rail links between East Kilbride and Hamilton, the most obvious missing link after Airdrie – Bathgate.
7. Kirkintilloch rail re-opening.
8. Mineral lines in the Muirkirk and Douglas area. How many more millions of tonnes have still to come out by road?
9. The previous SPT RTS mentioned a possibility of eventual extension of the Larkhall Line to Lesmahagow. With the Larkhall Line running very successfully and the difficult issues of integration into the Glasgow system overcome this intervention should remain on the long- term category.

**QUESTION 6. What additional powers, funding, delivery structures or other measures are needed to make the strategy successful?**

It does appear that structures and funding are sufficient to sustain the present high rate of transport investment, including S.E. commitment to Airdrie – Bathgate Railway and Glasgow Airport Rail Link. This rate of investment may not be secure further into the future but, or the time being, the situation is very good.

It is appreciated that a greater degree of bus regulation is needed to secure connecting services at rail stations.

It is a disappointment to learn that SPT has no statutory planning role. It is essential that transport routes are not destroyed for short term gain. There are examples of such occurrences which conflict with transport policy at RTP and Scottish Executive Level. RFS is grateful for SPT intervention in cases such as the Sustrans attempt to destroy the Bridge of Weir Station site and rail alignment.

RFS believes the RTP's should have a statutory responsibility to consider local cross-boundary transport issues.

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## Scottish Elections

Don't forget to ask prospective candidates for both local and parliamentary seats about their transport policies!

As a radical superior alternative to EARL, I would draw your attention to the more rational possibility of relocating the present Edinburgh Airport terminal buildings, and rebuilding this as a 4 platform integrated rail/Airport station on the existing Fife line [in the vicinity of Turnhouse and adjacent to an already planned new Scottish Executive trunk road: thereby facilitating ease of Airport access].

This proposal is known as the **Turnhouse Rail Airport Integrated Link (TRAIL)** but, quite incredibly, has never officially been examined previously. NOTE: This TRAIL proposal should not be confused with the much-discussed 'Turnhouse Option' with its need for a long underground 'travelator' link from a Fife Line station to the present Airport Terminal building.

Using TIE-derived figures to help calculate TRAIL's capital (rail element) costs, there would be approximately £100m required for creation of an integrated Rail/Airport Station at Turnhouse, inclusive of constructing a new 1.5 mile chord line directly linking the Dalmeny and Fife lines, together with quadrupling the existing Fife line from Turnhouse to Saughton Junction.

Only three (two new) junctions would be needed, (compared to EARL's total of seven), and with the added bonus of no requirement for any tunnel section, virtually level track, simplicity and operational flexibility of route setting which are inherently very straightforward to operate and maintain compared to the longer rail mileage and 'junction complexity' involved with the EARL plan. A further user benefit arising from the TRAIL proposal, is the creation of a modern, fully integrated Rail/Airport passenger station sited in a pleasant surface environment, with no requirement for permanent artificial lighting/ventilation or pumping necessitated with the underground EARL plan.

A figure of £400m has been suggested as the cost of assisting Ferrovial, as the current owners of Edinburgh Airport, to relocate/rebuild a new Airport Terminal building which would, inter-alia, incorporate required security enhancements, which is an inevitable additional expenditure item for the current Terminal building, [but not publicly factored into the current EARL capital costs].

In addition, the TRAIL alternative offers a very real possibility of private sector capital investment into shops/restaurants etc (which can constitute 50% of an airport terminal building) thereby helping defray the 'public purse' costs, of TRAIL's new Airport terminal building. This represents a potentially significant and very worthwhile reduction in the required element of public sector finance contribution, which is not likely to be forthcoming with the £659m estimated cost of EARL.

In outline therefore, TRAIL represents the possibility of achieving an inherently superior integrated Rail link directly into Edinburgh Airport for a total of £500m as against the significantly higher £659m suggested by the current EARL estimates. Even if the total cost of the TRAIL proposal were to increase to the same total cost of EARL, it is contended that TRAIL would represent an overwhelmingly superior 'end product' on all counts (only some of which have been touched upon in the above summary case).

Although it may seem astonishing that the 'elegant simplicity' and overall superior rail operating environment of TRAIL has never been officially examined before now, there is no reason for not doing so now, and involving Ferrovial with relocation discussions.

The truly enormous expenditure saving in rail capital infrastructure, with TRAIL (as opposed to that required for EARL) would therefore leave a very substantial Scottish Executive 'funding balance' with which to finance the required relocation/rebuilding of the present Edinburgh Airport Terminal Building. The probability is that Edinburgh Airport would get all the benefits of a 'fresh-start' with better/more satisfactory passenger facilities, meeting more rigorous security standards now in prospect. And all for a lesser comparable cost than 'further adaptation of an already modified 1977 building' is a further added bonus of TRAIL which should not be lightly discounted.

It is certainly recognised that the 'role' of Network Rail - Scotland is largely to 'facilitate' rail/transport policy as determined by the Scottish Executive/Transport Scotland. Yet, as above, it has become increasingly evident that there are many aspects of the EARL plan which are causing disquiet from the viewpoint of creating of an entirely new railway project with substantial inbuilt handicaps and disadvantages from 'day one'. This is a very disturbing prospect involving a self-inflicted handicap, which is quite distinct from the normal 'acceptance' of having to 'live with' various assorted drawbacks and handicaps already imposed by our 19th century 'railway inheritance'.

To this extent it is to be hoped that there are those within Network Rail - Scotland who will now have the courage and vision to lead informed public debate on the superior rail, and overall transport benefits, potentially arising from consideration of the TRAIL proposal. And before irrevocable expenditure decisions are taken on the current EARL plan. It is likely that there would be considerable public support for such a move.

**Fast routes to Edinburgh and England, high speed rail routes:** RFS Priority Support for a strategy but extreme caution about what is meant. RFS is not supporting bullet trains, maglev or any intervention which will damage freight and local passenger, present or future potential, on existing lines.

**Developing Strategic Park and Ride:** RFS supports a strategy in principle but opposes any strategy which would concentrate rail development on that of people having to buy a car in order to use the train. This would wreck the Strategy objectives and reverse the former SPT policy. It would increase social exclusion, increase road traffic, increase emissions and damage local rail services, stations and connecting bus services. The strategy should be to bring rail services within walking, cycling or guaranteed bus connection distances as far as is practicable to all communities. Of course, there are both communities and travel needs where this is impractical and park and ride provision should continue to be improved. There is no doubt many (most?) station car parks are full before 08.00 in the morning. SPT has supported some good developments including the absolutely brilliant parking charge voucher scheme although even this may not be justified given the cost of parking provision which the majority of rail users do not require. In this respect it should be recognised that even a 200 car park would only fill just over one 3-car set. The map shown for Strategic park and ride is quite disastrous showing motor car flows from a wide area driving past existing stations to the park and ride centres, some already in quite congested locations. This priority should be changed from "Providing strategic Park & Ride" to "A Strategy on Park & Ride"

**Airdrie to Bathgate rail scheme:** RFS strongly supports. This is the type of transport project which meets all the objectives. RFS has been disappointed at the low level of support from SPT as the project has been driven by the Scottish Executive and local communities. Where the project fails is (or was) in the lack of intermediate stations which conflicts with Scottish Executive and SPT policies. RFS is further disappointed by the apparent lack of support by SPT for these communities. Can RFS remind SPT that Plains and Caldercruix are in Lanarkshire, are in Strathclyde? Blackridge Station site is also hardly 200 metres outwith the Strathclyde boundary. SPT should have offered a very limited number of skip stops at stations between Airdrie and Glasgow in order to enable some stops at these peripheral and quite excluded communities. SPT should support this project fully and overcome the insensitive, almost ignorantly arrogant approach by the initial consultants in terms of their view of the existing stopping services on the Airdrie Line.

### 5.11 Climate Change and Reduction of Carbon Emissions

This is quite wordy but avoids the main issues.

Massive motorway construction and increased air travel are in complete conflict with efforts to reduce climate change. This should be stated clearly.

While supporting bus initiatives buses do not seem to tempt people out of their cars except as part of a rail journey. Bus re-regulation (of some sort) is essential.

Walking and cycling must be promoted together and in rural areas as well.

Rail services are the way forward and the strategy fails in that it only mentions three points, improvement of Glasgow Low station, support for modal shift of freight and rail service improvement on key rail lines. What does "Key" rail lines mean? It does, however, mention correctly the redress of high public transport fares.

This section on Climate Change and reducing Carbon emissions should emphasise the role of rail with:

- Service improvement on most rail lines (some frequencies are already at the optimum).
- Reopen stations and lines to bring services closer to communities to reduce car use and increase walking and cycling.
- Examine real improvement of long distance rail services to compete with air travel.
- Further transfer freight from road to rail (and water) although a change of Government policy is required.
- Electrification of rail lines (perhaps "Key" rail lines is appropriate here?)



## CELEBRATING SCOTLAND'S NEW RAILWAYS Sat 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2007 – 11:00

Renfield St Stephen, 260 Bath Street, Glasgow, G2 4JP

**Strathclyde Partnership for Transport : Cllr. Alistair Watson, Chairman**  
**Stirling-Alloa-Kincardine project : Speaker from *tie (transport initiatives edinburgh)***  
**Howard Pack (Corus)**

**Glasgow Airport Rail Link | Larkhall-Milngavie**  
**The Role of the Executive : Transport Scotland**

**The Role of the Campaigners : Paul Tetlaw, Chair of TRANSform Scotland**

£10 for Railfuture members \*or affiliates (up to 2)

£12.50 for non-members

£7.50 extra for buffet lunch

£2 extra for conference report



We will book tables at a convenient restaurant on Friday & Saturday evenings if there is sufficient interest.

*Why mess about with forms, cheques, stamps and envelopes?*

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### the E.S.S.R

Nearly half the cash needed to reopen the south suburban line in Edinburgh [usually referred to as 'the ESSR'] has been secured by a private consortium. The scheme is only likely to cost around £18 million, yet the Scottish Executive has so far refused to commit any funding. E-Rail has now been pledged £8.5m from land owners along the route. Properties within 100 metres of stations on the line are expected to increase in value by around ten per cent, and development land will be more sought-after as a result. The pledges have been made by both small as well as large land-owners and employers such as Edinburgh University, and the Cameron Toll and Fort Kinnaird shopping centres.

Politicians of all persuasions in the City of Edinburgh Council support the re-opening, and the Edinburgh public are strongly supportive. E-Rail will now work with the council as it draws up a new business case in a bid to persuade the Executive to provide the remainder of the cash.

### referring to South-West RTS

I would like to make two specific requests relating to the case for direct rail connection with the new/expanded Cairnryan Ireland ferry terminal:

(1) Cairnryan will become a 'gateway' route to Ireland of strategic Scottish/British/European significance. There is a prima facie reason for believing that the required short (about 6 miles) rail network extension would be highly consistent and supportive of the several Scottish Executive policy statements on Transport/Environment Policy as enunciated in their 'Scotland's Railways' and 'Scotland's National Transport Strategy' of 2006. Notwithstanding the negligible direct benefit to the South West Scotland administrative area (as already discussed) it is imperative that in view of the broader Scottish significance attached to this 'gateway' rail link, your authority should attempt some collaborative effort with the other Scottish RTPs - and the Strathclyde Partnership for Transport in particular. The SPT's Transport Consultation has already made some 'positive inferences' about the value / desirability of creating this rail extension to Cairnryan, and several of its key elected representatives and officials are known to be anxious to explore ways of securing the necessary funding for this route (see '£14 m Ferry Link Plan' report of Evening Times 3 July 2006 - enclosed as Appendix C). An estimated £14m to secure the overall benefits of this rail network extension is a surely a relatively small infrastructure expenditure item when set in the wider context of its wider pan-Scottish / British / European benefits. There is also a welcome possibility that this short, but vital, rail network extension may be eligible for EU assistance - given that there is believed to be some surplus, still available, from the EU capital grant given to assist Stena Line's move from Stranraer to Cairnryan. Given the thrust of a combined/collaborative RTP approach, and the relative absence of any large scale land use-obstructions on the line of the former World War 2 military railway route to Cairnryan, it would be reasonable to hope for some authorisation

progress on this issue with the Scottish Executive. Therefore, pending such efforts, the desirable Stranraer-Cairnryan line extension should now feature in your list of Appendix B 'Projects to be considered during the Lifetime of the Regional Transport Strategy' in its finalised form for presentation to the Transport Minister at the end of March 2007. Given this very specific reference to the SPT RTP, and my reference to the desirability of creating a Stranraer-Cairnryan rail link extension [raised as input to the SPT RTP 'Consultation Workshop Session' in Glasgow, 12th January 2007] I am also copying this submission to: Carol Gilbert (SPT's Project Manager) and to Councillor Alistair Watson (Chair SPTA).

(2) Within the localised Stranraer area, I would urge that the construction of the new Stranraer Station and the associated rail / bus interchange 'hub' are progressed in such a way that they do not impose any additional impediment to creation of a rail link extension to Cairnryan. Hopefully the currently intended 'hub' interchange will not impose any land use occupation / railway operational difficulties / inconvenience or future additional construction cost escalation on a future Cairnryan line extension: over and above what currently exists. Likewise I would hope that the current route of the former Military Railway is kept free of any land use developments which would be prejudicial to restoration of a standard specification rail line between Stranraer and Cairnryan. Such foresight, and statutory 'future proofing' would be very much appreciated and valued when the time comes to proceed with this short rail extension, which I feel sure will inevitably become accepted transport policy - sooner rather than later.

I trust the foregoing observations and suggestions have been of some constructive interest in the formulation of your Finalised Transport Strategy proposals.

### Linking Road User Charging to Vehicle Emissions

You may recall, at the 12 January 2007 SPT Consultative Conference/ Workshop, I ventured a personal view that in the event of a National scheme of road user charging for vehicle use being introduced, there should also be some inbuilt recognition of the type of vehicle being used in terms of its exhaust emissions.

At the present time, much Government attention has focussed on the possible case for introducing some 'pay as you drive' scheme for road users in an attempt to mitigate the physical congestion imposed in certain areas and at certain times. However the monitoring technology which would be utilised can also incorporate identification of the type of vehicle being driven.

There is every reason to believe that a metered system of payment which incorporated a variable differential for the type of vehicle being driven, would make a significantly greater contribution to the National and Scottish Governments desired to reduce (particularly) 'greenhouse gas' emissions, compared to introducing road user charging system which did not.

The impact of a very direct and visible road user charge, related to the type of vehicle being driven, would carry a very powerful and immediate message of the 'external cost' to the environment and wider society in a way which is regrettably not fully impacted on the individual road user at present.

As mentioned at the January SPT Conference, the move by the Mayor of London to impose a differentially higher road charging regime for higher emission vehicles (such as 4x4s) is a crude attempt to link pollution emissions with vehicle use *per se* and has probably been born out of rising frustration over the Government's lack of real leadership on this issue!

At the present time, despite the UK Government's 'good intentions' on reducing road vehicle emissions, its two 'mechanisms' for encouraging purchase and use of smaller, more environmentally friendly road vehicles (and greater use of sustainable public transport!) remain, in practice, weak and ineffectual.

The current differential in Vehicle Excise Duty paid between the most economic and most profligate fuel consumption vehicles remains far too small to have any meaningful impact on choice of vehicle purchase and use. The very small increment added, last year, to the VED payment for even the most gas-guzzling vehicles (including 4x4s) was widely criticised as being wholly ineffective for this intended purpose.

Furthermore, even if there were to be introduced very steeply progressive higher VED payments for increasing engine size / pollution emissions, the impact of this yearly payable tax is soon forgotten about and pays no meaningful or visible part in day-to-day driving behaviour.

Secondly, since the abolition of the 'fuel duty escalator' in 2000, the fuel cost impact between very economic/low emission vehicles and high consumption/ high emission vehicles has become much 'flatter' and less perceptible.

The inexorable increase of larger and un-necessarily more powerful cars (particularly fashion-related 4x4s) is clear testimony to the Government's failure to encourage a degree of behavioural change necessary to match their 'stated aspirations' about seriously curbing greenhouse gas emissions from road users - now accounting for around 25% - and rising - component of the UK total.

In short, the technical capability to incorporate vehicle emissions (by vehicle type) as an integral part of any National Road vehicle charging scheme is a vital opportunity which should not be squandered. Linking this into the (almost) total abolition of VED would not only make environmental sense, but generate a greater sense of equity and coherence of Government purpose, currently lacking at present. In overall terms of any credible and coherent transport / environment / energy land use policy, grasping this opportunity is probably crucial from a political viewpoint to gain the necessary public acceptance.

Although not strictly a part of this formal Consultation into the Draft Strategy, if the above argument is found acceptable to the SPT, it would be appreciated if the generality of the points raised could be incorporated into any subsequent discussion with the Scottish Executive and Central Government on this issue - thank you.

*from HiTrans comments*

In terms of this Consultation process therefore, it is desirable that HiTrans should make publicly and transparently available, the detailed nature and scope of its internal 'evaluation processes' employed and which seek to deny the Far North Line, the absolutely essential, and legitimate journey time improvements required over the next 16 years.

Especially given that HiTrans has already conceded, by inference, from its own Consultation data, that the need for (substantial) improvements in Far North journey times, are a cause for concern on the Far North Line. North of Tain this line, from the viewpoint of its existing and potential users, is simply regarded as 'not fit for purpose'.

There is a desire for more a meaningful dialogue with HiTrans, from a wide range of well informed local community based groups and their northern Highland representatives, anxious to conjointly explore further opportunities of how the required Far North Line funding improvement, including the Dornoch Rail Link, could be better justified - and secured.

Reference to 'further meetings with Stakeholder and focus group representatives' [Paragraph 5.12 - Key Steps in refining and finalising of the Strategy] should be used as a valuable opportunity for further dialogue with concerned local community group and their northern Highland representatives. Embracing their valuable knowledge and assistance would offer a positive and dynamic way of exploring additional and innovative ways of justifying and securing the necessary funding for essential Far North Line journey time improvements within the 2007-2023 term of the current Strategy.

In conclusion the level of investment now required for the Far North Line, including a Dornoch Firth crossing, would deliver:

- substantially reduced journey times (especially reduction of rural periphery)
- improved quality of life, accessibility and affordability
- a contribution to reduction of road accidents, congestion and greenhouse gas emissions
- improved economic development and social mobility opportunities
- attraction of more passenger and freight traffic to use rail transport

All of those attributes are consistent with, and supportive of, the several Scottish Executive Policy Objectives, as contained within their 'Scottish Railways' and 'Scotland's National Transport Strategy' documents

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