

Strategy and Investment

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COMHDHAIL ALBA TRANSPORT SCOTLAND

Alison Wilson
Assistant Clerk
Public Petitions Committee
TG.01
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

Your ref:

Our ref:

Date:
1 September 2010

Dear Ms Wilson,

Consideration of Petition PE1115

Thank you for your letter of 2 July in relation to Petition PE1115, which supports the re-opening of Blackford Railway Station.

Your letter enquires about transport planning for the 2014 Ryder Cup at Gleneagles and seeks an update on the next stage of work with TACTRAN. You also ask Transport Scotland to take into consideration Cobra's request to participate in future work.

The Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR) provides Ministers with the basis to make informed decisions about future transport spending beyond the current programme and serves as a forecast for transport development in Scotland for the next 20 years.

Consideration of the case for any new rail stations is carried out within the context of the investment hierarchy, set out in the STPR, of maintaining and safely operating the network, making best use of our existing network and targeted infrastructure improvements subject to funds becoming available. As such, making best use of current services and stations to achieve optimum utilisation of the existing network should be considered before the opening of new stations or former rail links.

Rail interventions recommended in the STPR will inform the basis of future High Level Output Specifications (HLOS) for period 2014-2019 and beyond. Other rail interventions that contribute to the Government's objectives and do not adversely impact our strategic priorities will be considered as we develop the specifications for the next HLOS and future franchises.

Transport Planning on 2014 Ryder Cup

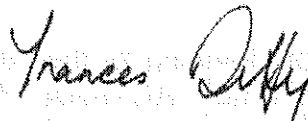
I can confirm that Transport Scotland is working with Events Scotland, Perth and Kinross Council, Stirling Council and other agencies to develop a transport plan for the Ryder Cup in 2014. Scottish Ministers will make decisions on future resource allocation, which includes proposals for Gleneagles later this year as part of the Spending Review.

Future work with TACTRAN

We will continue to work with TACTRAN to examine which improvements from the TERS report can be delivered as part of the next HLOS and future franchise. However, we must ensure that any improvements do not impact on our strategic priorities, such as the delivery of the Highland Main Line Improvements and the Edinburgh – Glasgow Improvements Programme. Delivery of future rail interventions is dependent on funds becoming available through the Spending Review process.

Details of our approach, activities and timescales for our future work with TACTRAN and other interested parties in creating the next HLOS and future franchise agreement has yet to be developed as it is at an early stage. We will work within the timescales of the Office of Rail Regulations (ORR) Periodic Review process which examines the procedures required to establish the outputs, access charges and sources of funding required for the wider regulatory framework for Network Rail. The full details are set out in ORR's letter of 29 October 2009, which can be viewed at <http://www.rail-reg.gov.uk/upload/pdf/pr13-orr-letter-291009.pdf>.

I hope this helps to clarify the present position.



FRANCES DUFFY
Director of Strategy and Investment