



Claremont House, 130 East Claremont Street, Edinburgh, EH7 4LB, Tel: 0131 524 5150

Chairman: Cllr Russell Imrie Partnership Director: Alex Macaulay

Reference: SES-Rail

The Scottish Parliament  
c/o Public Petitions Clerks  
Room T3.40  
The Scottish Parliament  
Edinburgh  
EH99 1SP

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### **Petition PE1578; Forth Circle Rail Link**

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to respond to this petition about a rail link between Alloa and Dunfermline/Rosyth

I can confirm that back in 2009, SEStran, in partnership with Fife and Clackmannanshire Councils, commissioned a STAG-based study into improving Clackmannanshire-Fife-Edinburgh transport links and the improvement to freight transport, in particular into Rosyth. STAG stands for Scottish Transport Advisory Guidance and is the standard evaluation procedure employed by Transport Scotland

The report was presented to the SEStran Board in February 2010 and the outcome of the study was that the most cost-beneficial (although also the most costly at around £65 million) solution would be to extend the existing Glasgow – Alloa service to Edinburgh via West Fife and via a new Charlestown Chord, to provide a direct Alloa – Edinburgh service with several new stations in West Fife as well as providing a more direct rail freight route into Rosyth. The outcome was 'moderately positive' in economic terms with a benefit/cost ratio of 1.5.

It is also the case that the study did not include all elements that would be required for a scheme of this magnitude and it is not included in the Government's Strategic Transport Project Review (STPR) that is the main document outlining the Government's current transport investment priorities. Furthermore, with the study now being nearly 6 years old, it would need to be refreshed should the project be taken a further step forward.

You will also be aware that under the 'CoSLA concordat', transport funding for the Regional Transport Partnerships was largely transferred to the Local Authorities (and without any 'ring-fencing') so we are now very much depending on the Local Authorities to provide the major part of the funding for transport studies such as the one for West Fife - but it would of course also be of significant advantage if Transport Scotland could be a funding partner as well as a stakeholder in such a study.

In conjunction with the planned closure of Longannet Power Station, a Fife Council led Task Force has been set up involving the Government, several Local Authorities and agencies. As part of this, a strategic transport working group (also involving

SEStran) has been established and the work of this group should no doubt include the potential utilisation of the Alloa – Dunfermline railway.

Please contact myself or Trond Haugen should you wish to discuss this issue in more detail.

Yours sincerely,

Alex Macaulay  
Partnership Director