

TRANSform Scotland

the campaign for sustainable transport

Tram Final Business Case

Full Council, The City of Edinburgh Council, 25th October 2007

Briefing from TRANSform Scotland, 23rd October 2007

1. Why support trams?

TRANSform Scotland encourages The City of Edinburgh Council to support the Full Business Case for the Edinburgh tram scheme. Here are five key reasons why we think the tram scheme should proceed:

1. The project has received a clean bill of health from Audit Scotland

The project has been considered by Audit Scotland who, in its June 2007 report, gave the project a clean bill of health showing "sound financial management and reporting" and a "clear procurement strategy to minimise risk".

2. Funding has been confirmed by the Scottish Government

The tram scheme has the full support of the Scottish Government who, in June 2007, reconfirmed £500m funding towards the project. We welcome the Scottish Government's position regarding the Edinburgh tram scheme.

3. The cancellation of EARL makes trams the provider of rail access for Edinburgh Airport

The welcome announcement by the Transport Minister, on 27th September 2007, to cancel the EARL project makes the delivery of the Edinburgh tram scheme even more critical. The SNP administration have made it clear that the tram scheme will now be the way in which rail access will be provided to Edinburgh Airport, by means of an interchange with the heavy rail network at Gogar.

4. The cancellation of EARL makes the tram scheme provide even better value

The EARL announcement also improves the Benefit-Cost Ratio for the trams project to 1.77. Furthermore, it should be noted that this figure is expected to rise once the creation of the Gogar interchange station is factored in.

5. The more of the tram scheme is built, the higher is the Benefit-Cost Ratio

The report to the Council asks Councillors to approve a recommendation that "tie examine the means of funding Phase 1B, with a view to a potential commitment in 2008". Delivery of Phase 1B improves the Benefit-Cost Ratio for the project to 2.31. This option remains open until March 2009; after this, there would be a "substantial financial penalty" in pursuing tram links to the Granton Waterfront area.

Who supports trams for Edinburgh?

The following organisations, or leading individuals from them, are among those who have expressed their support for the introduction of trams to Edinburgh:

Education sector

Edinburgh's Telford College
Heriot-Watt University
Royal Botanic Gardens Edinburgh
The University of Edinburgh

Retail sector

George Street Association
John Lewis plc
Marks & Spencer, Edinburgh

Other businesses & business groups

Edinburgh Airport plc
Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce
Edinburgh City Centre Management Company
Edinburgh International Conference Centre
Forth Ports plc
Institute of Directors, Scotland
Oracle
Scottish Council Development and Industry
Scottish Gas
Standard Life

Health and disability organisations

Asthma UK Scotland
Capability Scotland
Voluntary Health Scotland

Heritage organisations

The Cockburn Association
National Trust for Scotland

Environment and transport groups

Capital Rail Action Group
Friends of the Earth Edinburgh
Friends of the Earth Scotland
Light Rail Scotland
RSPB Scotland
Scottish Association for Public Transport
Scottish Environment LINK
Spokes, the Lothian Cycle Campaign
Stop Climate Chaos Scotland
Sustrans Scotland
TRANSform Scotland
WWF Scotland

Plus, of course, **The Scottish Government**

2. Why trams work - worldwide

Light rail systems are a key component in the best transport networks around the world. They combine the frequent stops and on-street accessibility of bus services with the speed of train travel. They emit no fumes at street level and so do not damage the buildings or the health of the people they run past.

The high quality environment, reliability, low levels of noise and vibration, smooth ride and permanence of the service represented by the tracks means that motorists can be attracted out of their cars and on to light rail.

England is ahead of Scotland in implementing light rail systems. Successful light rail schemes are already in operation in Nottingham, Sheffield, Manchester, Croydon, London Docklands, Tyne & Wear and the West Midlands. Some of these are now being extended, while most continental countries are making substantial investment in light rail networks for their towns and cities. Indeed, across Europe over 250 towns and cities now have light rail systems.

3. And why they will work in Edinburgh

Edinburgh now needs to catch up with best practice across Europe. It is important to remember that, for many visitors, Edinburgh is the gateway to Scotland and their view of transport across the country will be formed by their experience of its capital city.

We believe that it is essential to proceed with the Edinburgh tram scheme because:

- Quality of life is an important factor in attracting a high quality workforce and visitors to Edinburgh. A **modern public transport system** integrating bus, trams & rail services will help to maintain a high quality of life in the city.
- **Congestion** poses a serious threat to the city and its future growth. The existing bus system has coped well in the past but buses inevitably become caught up in general traffic congestion.
- Trams are very **efficient** at carrying large numbers of passengers and are proven to be much more attractive at persuading car drivers to change mode. Modern trams are **accessible** to parents with pushchairs and by those using wheelchairs.
- We face very demanding **local air quality targets**: electric trams generate no emissions at the point of use.
- By providing **electrically-powered** trams we are investing in a transport system that is not dependent on future oil supplies, which are now the subject of numerous global threats. Electricity can be generated from many sources, including a variety of renewable options.

The unique character and setting of the City have made it a World Heritage Site. Trams will help to reduce the overall level of traffic in the city; they are already a common sight in historic cities around Europe.

Our Capital's competitor cities internationally have already made significant investments in high quality tram and metro systems, and it is imperative that Edinburgh takes steps to ensure that it too can pride itself with one of the best public transport systems in Europe.

4. About TRANSform Scotland

TRANSform Scotland is the national sustainable transport alliance, campaigning for a more sustainable and socially-just transport system. Our membership includes bus, rail and shipping operators; local authorities; national environment and conservation groups; consultancies; and local transport campaigns.

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