



By Email

Long Distance Market Study
RUS Planner
Network Rail
Kings Place
90 York Way
N1 9AG

27th June 2013

Dear Sir or Madam,

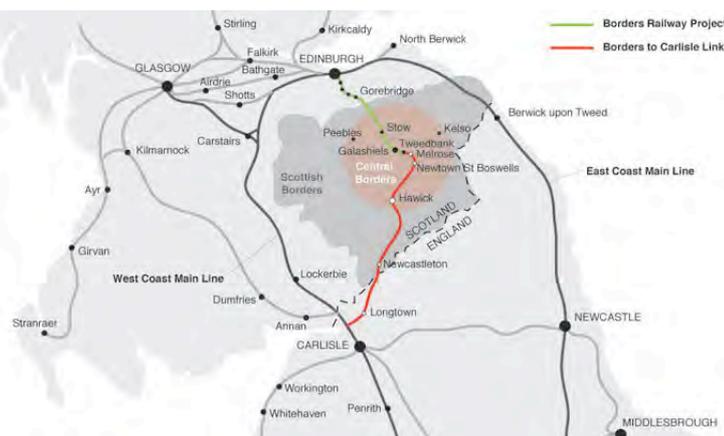
LONG DISTANCE MARKET STUDY CONSULTATION RESPONSE

I am writing to you on behalf of the Campaign for Borders Rail (CBR) in response to the issue of your draft *Long Distance Market Study* for consultation.

About CBR

CBR is a community grass-roots organisation with a wide membership base, concentrated in the Scottish Borders, but extending throughout the country. Our primary objective is the full reinstatement of the entire 98-mile 'Waverley Route' between Edinburgh and Carlisle, via Hawick. After the controversial closure of this important main line in 1969, the Scottish Borders was left as the only region in Great Britain without a single railway station. The towns of Hawick and Galashiels (pop. c.15,000 each) were left 35 and 45 miles, respectively, from the nearest railhead. The catchment area around these towns contains numerous other small towns and villages, while much new housing development has taken place since the railway closed and more is planned. The total population of the central Borders, which would gain access to the rail network as a result of reopening is about 75,000, while the region as a whole has a population of about 120,000.

The current Transport Scotland / Network Rail project to reinstate the northern 35-mile section between the central Borders and Edinburgh represents a welcome partial fulfilment of our aims. However, for the region to truly prosper, it needs a direct rail connection to the south as well as the north and, ideally, through services from Edinburgh, calling at the main Borders towns en route to cities in northern England and the Midlands. For further information about who we are and what we do, please visit our website www.campaignforbordersrail.org.



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Our response to the LTPP

We welcome Network Rail's initiation of the Long Term Planning Process (LTPP) as we recognise that, while sub-regional traffic potential alone may not make the case for reopening the railway between the Borders and Carlisle, there are wider strategic benefits that make the case far more compelling. We view the LTPP as the mechanism by which some of these strategic benefits can be identified, enabling the major investment decision to re-establish the line. We understand that the current stage of the process, the *Long Distance Market Study*, is not about identifying specific proposals. Nevertheless, we see it as a crucial exercise that sets the agenda for the subsequent *Route Studies* and *Cross-Boundary Analyses* and wish to influence it to take account of our objectives.

Conditional output aspirations for 2043

In the context of the *Long Distance Market Study* we were primarily interested in the Edinburgh to Leeds, Liverpool and Manchester flows. We are also interested in the Edinburgh to Nottingham and Sheffield flows. We particularly welcome the fact that the study predicts significant increases in demand on these flows, even in the most pessimistic forecasting scenarios. Increased traffic on Anglo-Scottish routes, particularly the West Coast Main Line, will strengthen the case for reopening the Carlisle – Borders – Edinburgh route to provide additional capacity and resilience. However, we were surprised that demand for journeys between Edinburgh and Leicester is deemed too low to forecast and, similarly from Glasgow to Sheffield, Nottingham and Leicester. These journeys fall within the 300-mile range over which rail is supposed to have the potential to dominate the market. Is the analysis model perhaps overly biased towards flows where reasonable long distance rail services already exist?

HS2

We would also like to clarify the assumptions made about HS2 in the 30-year forecasting studies. Is it assumed that HS2 would extend all the way to Edinburgh and Glasgow, or only as far as Leeds and Manchester? The increased demand growth potential for services north of Leeds and Manchester would appear to confirm that the former is the case. However, the most optimistic current predictions for completion of the high speed line to Scotland estimate completion around 2040 i.e. at the very end of the study's forecast period. We note the study predicts strong growth on Anglo-Scottish routes over the intervening period, particularly the next 10-15 years. This suggests that increased capacity will be needed well in advance of the completion of the high-speed network. We would ask, therefore, that subsequent stages of the LTPP carefully examine the case for reinstatement of the Carlisle – Borders – Edinburgh link as a more cost effective means of addressing Anglo-Scottish capacity problems in the shorter term.



The Anglo-Scottish passenger market

Our underlying concern is that the analysis of the Anglo-Scottish passenger market has been over-simplified into considering only Edinburgh, Glasgow and their services to large cities in Northern England. There is a risk that latent demand for travel between large and medium-sized towns in Central and Southern Scotland and a wider range of cities and towns in Northern England may be ignored in the LTPP.

We welcome the statements in Section 7.4 that “*service improvements between other regional centres and principal regional centres in other regions will also be of benefit against the strategic goals*” and that “*provision of improved opportunities to travel between a number of localities that are not directly served would be beneficial*”. In this context, we were surprised to see that the level of service between Carlisle and Edinburgh is expected to remain the same over the next 30 years (Table 7.3). Carlisle is a strategic location on the rail network with no fewer than 6 converging routes serving a very large ‘geographically dispersed’ catchment area, as well as having a growing population of its own, currently over 105,000. This seems to us exactly the sort of ‘other regional centre’ that would benefit from service improvements to ‘centres in other regions’ such as Edinburgh and Glasgow. By the same measure, surely the central Scottish Borders area (combined population over 75,000 and rising) should qualify as a ‘locality not directly served’ that would benefit from a reinstated rail connection to a regional centre in another region i.e. Carlisle, with its direct onward connections to cities such as Manchester, Leeds, Liverpool, Birmingham and London? We believe the studies should treat the Scottish Borders as a ‘single economic area analogous to a city-region’ in the same way that the North Wales Coast or Cornwall have been. The growth potential for services from Edinburgh and Carlisle should also be reappraised.

Our own vision for future cross-border services, including a reinstated ‘Waverley Route’ is for an inter-regional network with a central hub at Carlisle (see diagram above). We recognise that this proposal would comprise both long-distance and regional passenger services and so would straddle different *Market Studies*. Nevertheless, it is essential that this potential be recognised early in the LTTP since, without it, the proposed *Cross-Boundary Analysis* stage may overlook it altogether.

Other traffic

In addition to long and medium distance passenger traffic, we believe there is potential to capture a significant proportion of Carlisle-bound commuter traffic along the A7 corridor through the southern Borders and north Cumbria. Places such as Canonbie, Longtown, Langholm, Newcastleton and even Hawick already form part of Carlisle’s commuter catchment and would be well served by a reopened railway. There are also active proposals for new coal mining in the Canonbie area. The reinstatement of some of the former Waverley Route has been suggested as a means of transporting the extracted coal. This potential for other traffic flows emphasises the need for a joined-up assessment of the benefits of reinstating the Carlisle – Borders railway.

Concluding remarks

We welcome the opportunity to contribute to this consultation and we hope that our views will be given serious consideration. If further clarification of any of the points raised is required, we will be happy to provide it. We also hope that we may be included in further rounds of consultation as the *Long Term Planning Process* progresses.

Yours faithfully,

Nick Bethune

cc Simon Walton CBR Chairman