



## **SCOTTISH BORDERS PROPOSED LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN PUBLIC CONSULTATION RESPONSE**

### **PROVISION FOR BORDERS RAILWAY EXTENSION FROM TWEEDBANK TO HAWICK AND CARLISLE**

#### **LIST OF POINTS TO BE RAISED IN OBJECTIONS**

##### **Introduction**

The approved South-East Scotland Strategic Development Plan – SESplan - (para 81) supports the reopening of the Borders Railway and its extension from Tweedbank to Carlisle.

In line with the approved SESplan, paragraph 3.18 of the proposed Scottish Borders Local Development Plan states that the council wishes to see the future extension of the Borders Railway from Tweedbank to Carlisle via Hawick. The route of this extension is shown in Figure 8 ('Central Spatial Strategy').

The future extension of the railway is also shown on the Policy Map in Volume 2 of the proposed plan, identified as 'Railway Safeguarding – IS4'.

Policy IS3 deals with the seeking of developer contributions towards the cost of the new railway. Paragraph 1.3 of the policy states that the route of the future extension of the railway is "*safeguarded in the Proposals Maps*".

Policy IS4 deals with transport development and infrastructure. One of the transport schemes listed in the policy is the extension of the railway from Tweedbank to Hawick and the English border. The policy states: "*Development which could prejudice the delivery of these schemes will not be permitted. Planned routes and locations to be safeguarded are shown on the Proposals Maps*".

**Despite all these statements, there are major errors which require to be corrected for all the affected Settlement Proposals Maps and Settlement Profiles, and also in relation to the proposals for development on a number of sites (as shown in our detailed comments later):**

- 1) The proposed extension of the railway from Tweedbank southwards towards Carlisle is not shown on any of the Settlement Proposals Maps.**
- 2) There is nothing on any of these maps to indicate that the route is safeguarded.**
- 3) Furthermore, many of the Settlement Profiles for towns and villages which will be affected by the railway extension make no mention of it.**

A further concern is the lack of detail relating to the physical requirements of an effective safeguarding policy. The safeguarded rail corridor should in all locations allow sufficient space for the reinstatement of a double-track formation. Although the reinstated railway would not necessarily be double-tracked throughout, some sections of double track will certainly be needed for passing loops and it is not possible at this stage to predict where these will be needed. In the longer-term further double-tracking may be required to cater for increased traffic. The Council's policy should aim to avoid repeating past mistakes that allowed the disused railway trackbed to be constrained or even totally obstructed, for example by the Asda

development in central Galashiels that only allowed space for a single track railway to be reinstated alongside.

**Change required:**

- 1 Wording of Policy IS4 to be amended to include requirement for safeguarded railway corridor to be of sufficient width to allow reinstatement of a double-track formation.

**DARNICK**

The former Waverley Route railway passes to the south of Darnick, but the Settlement Proposals Map does not show the indicative line of the railway to be reopened or the safeguarding of the route. There is also no mention of the future reopening of the railway in the Settlement Profile.

**Development site EM9B** (Chiefswood Road) is a 1.5-hectare site safeguarded for housing. The railway runs along the southern boundary of the site and may require occupation of the edge of the site for its reopening, owing to encroachment of the A6091 Melrose Bypass on the original formation.

**Key Greenspace site zEL49** (Community Woodland) is a 0.6-hectare site which occupies part of the former railway alignment. Reinstatement of the railway would require the removal of some of the woodland.

**Change required:**

- 1 Settlement Proposals Map (page 262) requires amendment to show route of future railway through the area to be safeguarded from all development.
- 2 Section in Settlement Profile headed 'Infrastructure Considerations' (page 261) to be amended to include reference to future reopening of railway.
- 3 In the 'Site Requirements' for site EM9B (page 261), reference to be made to requirement for buffer zone to be maintained between new housing and railway.

**HAWICK**

In the Hawick Settlement Profile, on page 350 it is stated that "*The Council has long-term aspirations to see the southward extension of the Borders Railway to Hawick and Carlisle in accordance with SES plan policy. The indicative line of the railway, which is largely coincident with the disused railway line, is therefore protected from development*".

Despite this statement, the Settlement Proposals Map does not show the indicative line of the railway to be reopened or the safeguarding of the route. Furthermore several sites with development proposals will be affected by the reopening, as follows:

**Development site zEL49** (Burnfoot) is a 17-hectare site safeguarded for business and industry. The railway runs along the northern boundary of the site and may require to occupy the edge of the site for its reopening.

**Development site zEL50** (Mansfield Road) is a 5.6 hectare site safeguarded for business and industry. The railway runs along the northern boundary of the site and its reopening may affect future development / redevelopment of the site. The section of railway alongside this site is one of the possible locations for a new station in Hawick. The original railway station in Hawick was located close by near the Tweeddale Leisure Centre.

**Development site zEL51** (Lochpark Road / Garfield Street) is a 2.1 hectare site safeguarded for business and industry, and owned by the council. The railway runs through the centre of the site from north to south.

Very little if any development would be possible on this site without blocking the reopening of the railway. This site, part of which was formerly occupied by a railway civil engineering and maintenance depot, is another possible location for a new station in the town.

**Development site RHAWI001** (Slitrig Crescent) is a 1.6 hectare site safeguarded for housing. The railway will run along the site's eastern boundary. In the section headed 'Site Requirements', it is stated that land in direct proximity to the railway is required to be safeguarded to comply with Structure Plan policy.

#### **Changes Required:**

- 1 Settlement Proposals Map (page 359) to be amended to show route of future railway to be safeguarded from all development, including any effect on sites zEL49 and zEL50.
- 2 Business and industry safeguarding of development site zEL51 (page 354) to be reviewed to take account of requirement for the railway to pass centrally through it, and safeguarded as a possible station site.
- 3 In the 'Site Requirements' for site RHAWI001 (page 355), reference to be made to requirement for buffer zone to be maintained between new housing and railway.
- 4 Settlement Proposals Map (page 359) to be amended to include safeguarded land for railway station site (including access, car parking etc).

#### **MELROSE**

There is no mention of the future reopening of the railway in the Settlement Profile for Melrose, and the Settlement Proposals Map does not show the indicative line of the railway to be reopened or the safeguarding of the route.

#### **Changes Required:**

- 1 Settlement Proposals Map (page 418) to be amended to show route of future railway to be safeguarded from all development.
- 2 Section in Settlement Profile headed 'Infrastructure Considerations' (page 416) to be to be amended to include reference to future reopening of railway.

#### **NEWCASTLETON**

The future reopening of the railway is mentioned in the 'Placemaking Considerations' section but not the 'Infrastructure Considerations' section of the Settlement Profile for Newcastleton, and the Settlement Proposals Map does not show the indicative line of the railway to be reopened or the safeguarding of the route.

**Development site MNEWC001** (caravan site) is safeguarded for mixed use and is directly on the line of the railway. Under the heading 'Site Requirements', it is acknowledged that the site will be affected by the reopening of the railway, and states that the land safeguarded for the railway should be landscaped. However the Settlement Proposals Map does not show this safeguarding requirement.

**Development site ANEWC010** (Newcastleton West) is safeguarded for housing and is situated to the east of the line of the railway. Under the heading 'Site Requirements', it is acknowledged that the site will be affected by the reopening of the railway, and highlights the need for a separation barrier along the western edge of the site, alongside the line of the railway.

However, it may not have been appreciated that if the railway is to be reopened, it will not be possible to reinstate the former level crossing on Langholm Street. This is because Network Rail no longer permits new level crossings for safety reasons and is actively working to close as many existing level crossings as possible across the network.

A consequence of this is that additional land will be required for a new bridge to carry the Langholm road over the railway. It would not be possible to achieve this at the site of the former level crossing itself as Langholm Street is built up on both sides right up to the line of the railway.

A viable alternative would be a new road alignment, leaving the existing road at the hairpin bend just below Holmhill Cottages, descending diagonally across the Boosie Plantation, crossing the railway on a new bridge and then descending across the Newcastleton West site to join South Hermitage Street at the existing junction opposite George Street. Langholm Street would then become a cul-de-sac and the remaining stub of the road on the west side of the railway would be retained as an access to Station Cottages. A footbridge could be provided at the site of the former level crossing to maintain the right of way to the popular woodland walks on the west side of the village.

Refer to attached map for details.

### **Changes Required:**

- 1 Settlement Proposals Map (page 436) to show route of future railway to be safeguarded from all development, including any effect on site MNEWC001.
- 2 Section in Settlement Profile headed 'Infrastructure Considerations' (page 433) to be to be amended to include reference to future reopening of railway.
- 3 In the Site Requirements for Development Site ANEWC010 (page 434) include a requirement to safeguard sufficient land for a diversion of the Langholm Road across the site, including an allowance for the embankment needed for the road to gain sufficient height to cross the railway line.

### **NEWSTEAD**

The former Waverley Route railway passes from west to east immediately to the south of Newstead, but the Settlement Proposals Map does not show the indicative line of the railway to be reopened or the safeguarding of the route, and there is no mention of the future reopening of the railway in the Settlement Profile.

### **Changes required:**

- 1 Settlement Proposals Map (page 439) requires amendment to show route of future railway through the area to be safeguarded from all development.
- 2 Section in Settlement Profile headed 'Infrastructure Considerations' (page 438) to be amended to include reference to future reopening of railway.

### **NEWTOWN ST BOSWELLS**

The former Waverley Route railway passes from north to south through Newtown St Boswells, but the Settlement Proposals Map does not show the indicative line of the railway to be reopened or the safeguarding of the route, and there is no mention of the future reopening of the railway in the Settlement Profile. The narrative (p 440) merely states that Newtown St Boswells is "*convenient for the Borders Railway*".

Furthermore several sites with development proposals will be affected by the reopening, as follows:

**Development site zEL36** (Waverley Place) is council-owned and directly on the route of the railway but is stated as being safeguarded for business and industry, and shown as such on the Settlement Proposals Map. Were it to be developed for that use, it would block the reopening of the railway.

**Development site MNEWT001** (Auction Mart) is a site earmarked for mixed-use development, and for which an Approved Planning Brief (dating from 2007) already exists. The site area, as defined in the Proposed Local Development Plan differs from that shown in the Approved Planning Brief in that it has been extended across the line of the railway to meet site zRO23. Worryingly, the 2007 Approved Planning Brief makes no mention of the protected status of the railway alignment and indeed, refers to proposals for a new 'village square' in a position that would block the reopening of the railway.

**Development site ANEWT005** is described as the Newtown Expansion Area, extending to 58 hectares and with capacity for 900 houses. It extends across the former Waverley Route, and development for housing would block the reopening of the railway. In the section headed 'Site Requirements', which describes the planning issues to be considered in the master-planning of the area, no mention is made of the need to safeguard the route of the railway, and the railway is not shown on the Settlement Proposals Map.

**Development sites zRO21 and zRO23** are shown as redevelopment sites immediately to the west of the railway route and could be affected by its reopening.

### **Changes Required:**

- 1 Business and industry safeguarding of development site zEL36 (page 443) to be deleted
- 2 In the 'Site Requirements' for sites zRO21 and zRO23 (page 444), reference to be made to probable need for buffer zone between new development and railway.
- 3 In the 'Site Requirements' for site ANEWT005 (page 442), reference to be made to requirement to protect future railway route and to maintain buffer zones on either side of the railway where no housing may be permitted.
- 4 Settlement Proposals Map (page 445) requires amendment to show route of future railway through the area to be safeguarded from all development.
- 5 Settlement Proposals Map (page 445) requires amendment to omit portion of site MNEWT001 on line of railway, which was not part of the site as defined in the 2007 Approved Planning Brief.
- 6 In 'Site Requirements' for site ANEWT001 (Page 443), additional requirement for proposals to take account of the future reinstatement of the railway on its former alignment to be included, as the existing Approved Planning Brief makes no reference to it.
- 7 Section in Settlement Profile headed 'Infrastructure Considerations' (page 441) to be amended to include reference to future reopening of railway.
- 8 New Settlement Proposals or Planning Brief required for site MNEWT001 to replace outdated 2008 Approved Planning Brief.

## ST BOSWELLS

The former Waverley Route railway passes from north to south through open countryside to the west of St Boswells, and the route of the disused railway can be seen on the Settlement Proposals Map, but the map does not show the indicative line of the railway to be reopened or the safeguarding of the route.

### **Change Required:**

Settlement Proposals Map (page 510) requires amendment to show route of future railway through the area to be safeguarded from all development.

## TWEEDBANK

The Settlement Profile for Tweedbank refers to the proposed 'railway terminal' for the Borders Railway. There is no mention of the intended extension to the railway, and the Settlement Proposals Map does not show the indicative line of the railway to be reopened beyond Tweedbank Station, or the safeguarding of the route.

In addition, the following site will be affected by the reopening of the railway beyond Tweedbank:

**Development site zEL59** (north of Tweedbank Drive) is described as a strategic high amenity site of 6.3 hectares safeguarded for business and industry. The railway extension will pass through the southern part of the site, and development of this part of the site would block the railway route. The 'Site Requirements' make no mention of the need to safeguard the route of the railway extension.

### **Changes Required:**

- 1 In the 'Site Requirements' for site zEL59 (page 526), reference to be made to requirement to reserve the southern part of the site for the future railway extension route and to maintain a buffer zone along the northern edge of the railway route where no development may be permitted, or amend the site boundary to exclude the railway alignment.
- 2 Settlement Proposals Map (page 528) requires amendment to show route of future railway extension eastwards from Tweedbank Station to be safeguarded from all development.
- 3 Section in Settlement Profile headed 'Infrastructure Considerations' (page 526) to be amended to include reference to future reopening of the railway extension.

**Campaign for Borders Rail / February 2014**