



Transport Scotland
Buchanan House
58 Port Dundas Road
Glasgow
G4 0HF

3rd October 2013

Dear Sir or Madam,

2014 SCOTRAIL FRANCHISE

I am writing on behalf of the Campaign for Borders Rail about the forthcoming issue of the Invitation to Tender (ITT) for the next ScotRail franchise. CBR responded to the earlier consultation process (letter dated 20/2/2012). However, there are two further matters that we wish to bring to your attention in the hope that there may still be time to influence the content of the franchise specification.

1. Cycling capacity on Borders Railway trains

The central Borders is already a popular leisure cycling destination and this is likely to increase with the opening of the Borders Railway as the region becomes more readily accessible by public transport. In addition to this there is likely to be significant demand for combined bike and rail journeys between the Borders and Edinburgh, including among commuters.

Consequently, we suggest that the trains used on the Borders Railway be modified with enhanced cycle-carrying provision. Our own view is that there should be a minimum of 4-spaces per 2-car unit or 6-spaces per 3-car unit, rather than the current norm of 2 and 3 spaces, respectively. We would also urge you to consult cycling groups such as Sustrans, Spokes and CTC over the level of cycle-carrying capacity that they deem to be appropriate.

2. Pathing for charter train traffic on Borders Railway

The potential economic benefits to the Borders of charter train traffic highlighted by CBR have been widely recognised and this was key to the decision to provide increased platform lengths at the Tweedbank terminus. The First Minister has subsequently suggested that there could be a regular steam-hauled service on the line which, although no details have yet been released, we imagine might be similar in scope to the popular 'Fellsman' service that runs on summer Wednesdays over the Settle & Carlisle line.

As the current Borders Railway track configuration does not allow for additional train paths to be provided at the same time as a half-hourly ScotRail service, the timetable specification should ensure that an appropriate number of spare paths be reserved for both regular and occasional charter use at off-peak times during the week and on Saturdays; the times of maximum demand in the charter market. Moreover, because of the lack of turning facilities at Tweedbank, the timetable needs to take account of the lower allowable speed for tender-first running.

The importance of this path availability for the long-distance charter market cannot be stressed enough as restrictions could render them unviable.

CBR looks forward to the outcome of the franchising process and hopes that the successful bidder will put forward a package that seeks to maximise the potential social, economic and environmental benefits of the Borders Railway. We would be very happy to engage in further detailed consultation with potential franchisees as they develop their proposals in the course of the tendering process.

Yours faithfully,

Nick Bethune
on behalf of CBR

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