

# EDINBURGH TRAMS TO NEWHAVEN PUBLIC CONSULTATION

transform  
scotland

Transform Scotland response

Monday 23 April 2018

## 1. Consultation response from Transform Scotland

Transform Scotland fully supports the tram extension. We have previously issued briefing notes to CEC Councillors in which we set out the reasons for our support and have listed others who also indicated their support for the full tram scheme - of which this latest proposed extension is a part. We attach briefing notes issued on 23 May 2007, 23 June 2011 and 2 November 2015. You will note that the 2007 note lists those organisations who confirmed to us in writing their support for the full tram scheme. The 2011 note was issued jointly with Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce and the 2015 note was issued jointly with the Scottish Council for Development and Industry.

Reviewing the reasons given for proceeding with a tram network it appears to us that they are now more pressing than ever and that Edinburgh has fallen further behind competitor cities than was the case in 2007.

A final point that we would wish to make concerns the public realm along the extended tram route. It is normal practice in Continental Europe to use the building of new tram lines as an opportunity to enhance the public realm, reduce motor traffic and improve facilities for pedestrians and cyclists. This helps to create a better environment for all in which to live and work in the area and enhances the visitor experience. The earlier stage of tram construction did not fully capitalise on these opportunities and we would urge that this latest extension does indeed follow best practice in terms of public realm enhancement and re-allocation of road space. This will help to create a better quality of life in the city and it is well understood that this is a key measure that attracts people and businesses to a city.

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# TRANSform Scotland

the campaign for sustainable transport

## Trams for Edinburgh

23rd May 2007

Briefing from TRANSform Scotland

### 1. Introduction

As Scotland's capital, Edinburgh faces a crucial decision on the future of transport provision in the City. This decision will send important signals about how Edinburgh and Scotland are planning for its long-term future development.

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** centred on trams 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.**

### 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 and Enterprise  
Edinburgh City Centre Management Company  
Edinburgh International Conference Centre  
Forth Ports plc  
Institute of Directors, Scotland  
Oracle  
Scottish Council Development and Industry  
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

## 2. Why trams work

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.

Edinburgh now needs to catch up with the 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.

## 3. When to use trams

Buses, trams and trains are appropriate for different transport situations. Bus services are ideal for relatively low passenger flows. For busier routes, tram services become a more appropriate public transport technology. For moving very large numbers of people, a metro (underground) or conventional train service may be the best option.

Trams are perhaps best suited for medium-sized cities where full metro systems would not be justified. In the largest cities, metro systems tend to be the mainstay of public transport although such cities might use a light rail solution to supplement the metro system.

While a number of Europe's largest cities (e.g. Berlin, Milan or Vienna) feature extensive networks, trams more often form the backbone of the public transport network in cities similar in size to Edinburgh's 450,000 population (e.g. Helsinki, Dresden or Zürich).

Smaller-sized cities such as Graz and Linz (Austria), Bern and Lausanne (Switzerland) and Utrecht (Netherlands) all feature tram lines - yet have similar or lower population sizes than Aberdeen or Dundee. Even small towns may have corridors appropriate for a tramway. There are a number of small towns, especially in Germany, with populations as low as 50,000 with tram lines, while experience from Karlsruhe and Saarbrücken show the applicability of light rail for rural hinterlands.

## 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.

**TRANSform Scotland**

*the campaign for sustainable transport*

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## **BRIEFING FOR CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCILLORS:**

# **Trams are the right choice**

Thursday 23 June 2011

*Joint briefing from Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce and Transform Scotland*

### **1 Trams are the right choice**

- 1.1 The reasons for pursuing the tram scheme are even more pressing now than five years ago. These include the need to meet Climate Change Act targets on transport, rising oil prices, improving local air quality and reducing congestion.
- 1.2 The three key interchanges with the heavy rail network at Edinburgh Park, Haymarket and Gogar will connect high quality public transport in Edinburgh with the wider rail network in Scotland and beyond. This provides direct rail access to the airport and other key points along the route. The values of property adjacent to tram lines have risen across the world and the same effect will be seen in Edinburgh. This will drive investment in the city.
- 1.3 Wherever tram lines are built the construction phase always creates opposition but public opinion changes as soon as they are running and extensions are demanded. This will surely be the case in Edinburgh and the current line should be seen as the first phase of a larger network.

### **2 First choice around the world**

- 2.1 New tram systems are under construction around the world as well as extensions to existing networks. In the UK all the six existing systems are currently being enhanced while in Dublin two extensions have been added in the last year.
- 2.2 In the last five years in continental Europe more than 35 new systems have been built or are under construction.
- 2.3 Quite simply light rail systems are seen as essential for growing urban areas around the world.

### **3 The cost of not proceeding and reputational damage**

- 3.1 This is a straightforward engineering project of the type being built on a daily basis across the world. Our problems are already being reported around the world and failure to complete the scheme will result in serious reputational damage to Edinburgh and Scotland.
- 3.2 The extensive liability of the Council arising from numerous potential claims relating to both the multiple contracts entered into by tie, and from third parties, should not be underestimated. They alone could exceed any funding gap that exists and could themselves leave our city in a precarious financial situation.

## **4 Consensus, Vision and Determination Now Needed**

- 4.1 All parties supported the current contract at the Council vote in May 2008.
- 4.2 Expenditure to date has already delivered parliamentary approval, planning and design work, land acquisition, utility diversion, major new structures, the depot, the trams and the rails.
- 4.3 Capped funding to Edinburgh Trams should be contrasted with unlimited funding for other major transport projects. The M74 Northern Extension in Glasgow (approved at £245m with final cost of £692m) and the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route (approved at £120m (in 2003), increased to £295-395m (in 2005), and with a final cost likely to be higher still) are just two such examples.
- 4.4 Now is the time for politicians at all levels to pull together in a spirit that is both consensual and avoids recriminations. Failure to do so will leave Edinburgh and Scotland the poorer in the long term.

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## **BRIEFING FOR CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCILLORS: Edinburgh Trams – Building on success**

Monday 2 November 2015

*Joint briefing from SCDI and Transform Scotland*

### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1. As Scotland's capital city, Edinburgh yet again faces a crucial decision on the future of transport provision in the City. This decision will send important signals about how Edinburgh and Scotland are planning for its long-term future development.
- 1.2. As national organisations, Transform Scotland and SCDI recognise that what happens in Edinburgh – the strongest economy of any city in the UK outside London and with population growth forecast, at 28 per cent over 25 years, to be the fastest in Scotland (alongside Aberdeen City) – is key to Scotland's success as a sustainable, low carbon economy
- 1.3. Although delivery of the tram project faced a series of difficulties the first year of operation has been one of success. 4,920,000 passengers were carried 370,000 ahead of target. Passenger satisfaction is running at 95% and service reliability is 99%. Overall, the combined bus and tram network carried an extra 6,000,000 passengers during this first year. Trams have become an everyday part of life in the city. They frequently feature in media coverage of the city as images of a capital city with a modern transport system.
- 1.4. However, the lines so far built do not fully utilise the tram fleet and its associated infrastructure nor do they best serve the city. We believe that it is now essential to extend the tram system to Newhaven. This extension has the strongest business case and will help to unlock the huge development potential of the brownfield land in Leith as well as removing many buses from Leith Walk and so also from the city centre. Failure to do so will most likely lead to more dispersed development outside the city with its adverse environmental consequences as people commute ever longer distances to work.

### **2. Why trams are the right choice**

- 2.1. Our Capital's competitor cities internationally have already made significant investments in high quality tram and metro systems, closer to home the Northern Powerhouse in England is investing heavily in infrastructure. It is imperative that Edinburgh takes further steps to ensure that it too can pride itself with one of the best public transport systems in Europe.

## 2.2. Key factors include:

- Quality of life is an important factor in attracting a high quality workforce and visitors to Edinburgh. A modern public transport system centred on trams 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 readily accessible to parents with pushchairs and by those using wheelchairs.
- We face very demanding 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.

## 3. First choice around the world

- 3.1. New tram systems are under construction around the world as well as extensions to existing networks. In the UK all six existing systems have been or are being enhanced and two new lines have recently opened in Nottingham, a city much smaller than Edinburgh. Light rail systems are seen as essential for growing urban areas around the world.

## 4. The way forward for Edinburgh

- 4.1. The Edinburgh tram project has not been without its difficulties – political differences and project delays have caused reputational damage to Edinburgh and Scotland.
- 4.2. However the successful operation of the trams in the first year has brought many plaudits and a general change in the public mood. Visitors to the city readily take the tram and at times of major events the trams move many thousands of people. Already at peak times the trams are running at capacity.
- 4.3. Now is the time to take the next step towards a comprehensive network by extending the lines to Newhaven and so joining up development in Leith and Newhaven with the developments at the St.James Quarter, Edinburgh Park and Edinburgh Airport. This will send positive signals that Edinburgh is following the worldwide trend of developing sustainable transport infrastructure and intends to keep pace with competitor cities.

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- 4.4 Now is the time for politicians at all levels to pull together in a spirit that is both consensual and avoids recriminations. Failure to do so will leave Edinburgh and Scotland the poorer in the long term.

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# Scotland's alliance for sustainable transport

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We campaign for walking, cycling and public transport to be the easiest and most affordable options for everyone. Our diverse membership brings together public, private and third sector organisations from across Scotland. We are a registered Scottish charity (SC041516).

The logo for Transform Scotland features the word "transform" in a bold, lowercase, sans-serif font. The letter "o" in "transform" is replaced by a circular arrow icon. Below "transform" is the word "scotland" in a smaller, lowercase, sans-serif font. The logo is set against a dark blue background with a faint, stylized graphic of a person walking or cycling, composed of parallel lines.

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