

## Waverley Railway receives backing from Scottish Parliament

**The Waverley Railway Partnership proclaimed a "fantastic achievement" on 28th September when the Scottish Parliament approved the general principles of the Bill providing powers to build a railway between Edinburgh and Tweedbank in the Scottish Borders.**

The Bill will now be sent back to committee, for 'Consideration Stage', during which time objections to the details of the railway from individuals and organisations will be considered, with an opportunity for amendments to be made to the Bill. Once 'Consideration Stage' is completed, the Bill will be considered 'Final Stage' by the whole Parliament and, if agreed to, will become an Act.

Councillor David Parker, leader of Scottish Borders Council (which is promoting the Bill) was delighted with the result of the debate. He said:

*"Receiving approval of Parliament for the general principles of the Bill is a fantastic achievement for Scottish Borders Council*



Lothianbridge Viaduct

*and our partners at Midlothian and City of Edinburgh Councils. It is also an important day for the thousands of people living in the Borders, Midlothian and Edinburgh who will benefit from the construction of the Waverley line."*

*"This is a significant landmark for the Waverley Railway Project. However, there is no room for complacency, with much work still to be done with the Committee and the objectors at Consideration Stage. We will also continue to work closely with the Scottish Executive in relation to procurement, to ensure that we receive the best return possible on this investment."*

Councillor Jim Dunsmuir, chairman of the Waverley Joint Committee commented:

*"Receiving a favourable vote today is the culmination of a great deal of work by our dedicated team. This line will mean a great deal to the Borders, Midlothian and Edinburgh in terms of economic, social, tourism, travel and environmental benefits. For that reason, we will continue to work tirelessly towards our end goal, which is to connect the Scottish Borders and Midlothian by rail to the rest of Scotland and beyond."*



### The Waverley Railway has been approved in principal by the Scottish Parliament. So, what happens now?

The Waverley Railway (Scotland) Bill has now reached the 'Consideration Stage'. During this stage of proceedings, the parliamentary committee tasked with examining the case for the Waverley Railway will speak to individuals about the detail of the plans.

Representatives from the Waverley Railway Project are

already meeting objectors to the scheme to try and find a compromise agreement which will suit both parties.

Although in many cases a compromise will be found, there will be a number of issues which cannot be easily resolved. These cases will be split into groups and each of those then examined by the Bill committee.

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### This Month...

- Networked Waverley Route
- A long term view of the Borders

# Networked Waverley route will provide UK wide access

**Project leaders planning the Waverley rail link from Tweedbank to Edinburgh have stressed that passengers boarding in the Borders will be able to travel as far as Dunblane and Bathgate without changing trains.**

Once a rail link to Edinburgh airport is complete, it is anticipated that the Waverley line will also allow direct access from Tweedbank and Galashiels, meaning Borderers can safely leave their cars at home when travelling by plane on holiday or on business.

Councillor Gordon Edgar, vice chairman of the Waverley Railway Partnership said:

*"Unfortunately there has been a misunderstanding among some sections of the community who believe that the new Waverley rail service will only run to Newcraighall. I must emphasise that this is not the case."*

*"Track for the Waverley line will be built to join the existing track at Newcraighall and thus allow trains to run all the way to Edinburgh Waverley and onwards to other parts of Scotland from Tweedbank. Although the timetable is still to be confirmed, we expect the trains to travel to Haymarket and Edinburgh Park (the Gyle) and on to Bathgate and Dunblane. Once the Edinburgh airport rail link opens, it will also link the Scottish Borders to the rest of the world."*

*"The Waverley line will bring a huge amount of social, economic and environmental benefits to the Scottish Borders and by integrating the service into the rest of the rail network, it will also provide easy access to trains travelling to all destinations."*

*"One of our main considerations when planning a new transport link was to ensure that it was integrated into the rest of the Scottish transport network. In Edinburgh the train service will integrate with bus and tram services, while in the Borders and Midlothian local bus services will call at the main communities within the area. This integration will make onward travel to all destinations more convenient for all."*

**It is a fantastic achievement that the Edinburgh Borders rail link generated such huge cross-party support in securing an approval in principle from the Scottish Parliament.**



However, as the bill is sent back to the committee for consideration, all proponents of this hugely important project must now stand up and offer their support to help push through this bill that will help revitalise the Scottish Borders region.

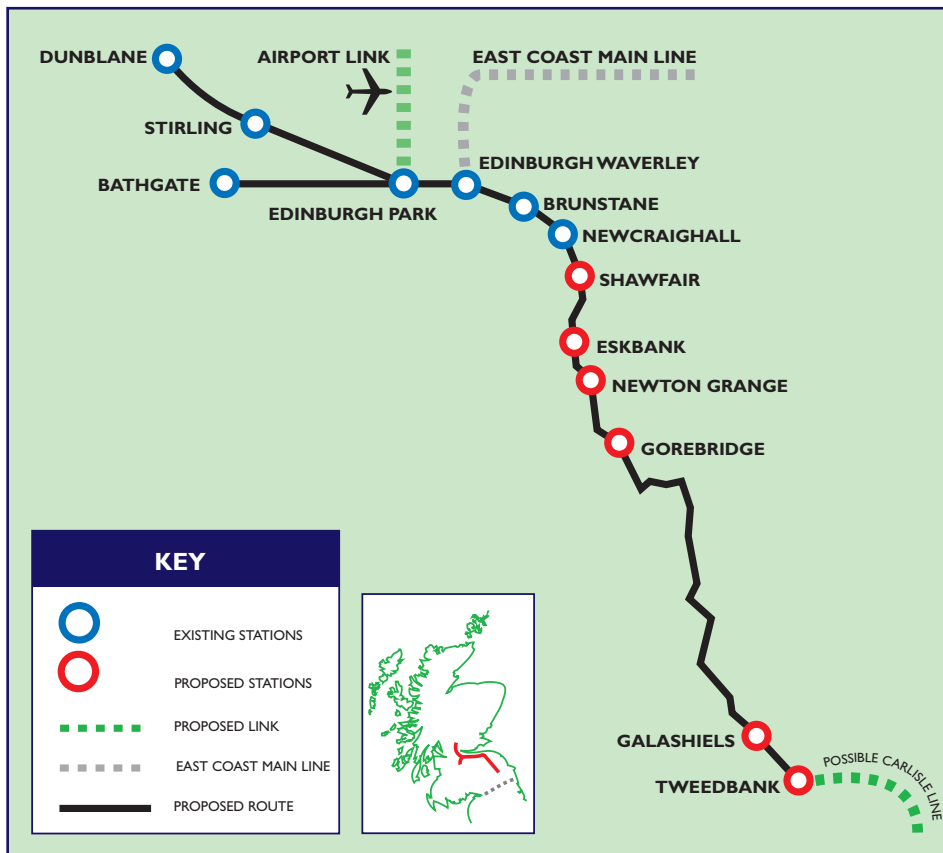
Previously, calls have come forward that the economic case does not stack up - rail journeys will be too slow, and roads and bus services should be improved instead.

The fact is that the Borders region has a long-term vision about the future. The rail link is one key gateway to realising that future.

It is a key regeneration project for an area which has faced considerable challenges as it tries to restructure its main industries of agriculture, fishing, forestry, textiles and electronics. Traditionally a low wage economy, it opens the door to the higher wage Edinburgh economy, bringing with it more investment and tourism opportunities and, equally importantly, more confidence in the area.

The Borders economy has had to face very severe economic conditions over the past decade. Whilst still renowned for the strength of its textile manufacturing in the face of an increasingly competitive global market, it had begun to diversify into the electronics industry, successfully attracting major circuit board manufacturers. Both these industries faced major downturns in the 90s, resulting in closures and redundancies.

In addition, traditional industries such as agriculture, fishing and forestry continue to restructure, particularly in light of the reform of the Common Agricultural Policy - not to mention the devastation caused by foot and mouth. Since 1998 there have been almost 5,000 job losses in the region.



# Borders - a long term vision

by David Gass, Chief Executive, Scottish Enterprise Borders

However, the area has responded well, building on the natural assets of the region, and the diversification and core strengths of the business base. The rail link will help to accelerate this progress and bring new opportunities for the Borders.

But it is not just the Borders that benefits - it's a double whammy.

Improved connectivity for Borders region supports the capital city's performance as a major driver in the nation's economic performance. The link supports Edinburgh's need for labour supply and housing.

There are more people commuting from the Borders and Midlothian to Edinburgh than any other direction yet all other directions are served by both motorways and railways and the Waverley Rail Link will help to ease the congestion of commuters who currently travel by car to daily jobs in the city.

Borders residents and businesses also need to look to the opportunities which the rail link will bring. Although not scheduled to

be operating until 2008, new housing needs to be planned and built. Rydens estimates that by 2038 there will be a significant increase in the Borders population from around 5,000 to 14,000, driving the need for family homes. This is good news in itself, as it helps keep young people and attract

friends and relatives. Greater accessibility means more visits from Edinburgh tourist Visitor packages need to be developed - attracting visiting rugby fans is a prime example where the rail link will offer opportunities to our tourism businesses.

Opening up rail connections to a wider geographical area, and the airport, will attract inward investment - and businesses should be encouraged to look at the Borders area as a business location - without the headache of the capital's parking and congestion problems for employees.

To date, the Scottish Borders is one of the only areas in the UK to be totally excluded from the current national rail network. This news changes that and opens up a long-term, positive future for a great area in Scotland.

The approval of the plans for the Waverley Borders rail link is good news, bringing considerable economic benefits to an ambitious capital and Scotland as a whole, as well as to the Scottish Borders.

*“Traditionally a low wage economy, it opens the door to the higher wage Edinburgh economy, bringing with it more investment and tourism opportunities.”*

new families into the area, while sustaining local retail and service sectors.

Tourism also has huge opportunities, especially at peak times where new country and capital breaks can be developed. New housing residents will attract visits from

*“The re-opening of the Waverley line is a must for the Scottish Borders!! Surely the rail will bring the Scottish Borders into the 21st century in a big way!!”*

*Craig Douglas (Chairman, Selkirk FC) & Proprietor, JCD Training Services*



Ladhopevale, Galashiels, looking north: The new line will run along the existing footpath.

# First train to Edinburgh : Anne Borthwick

**The 'First Train to Edinburgh' column features profiles on prominent campaigners for the Waverley Railway Project, all of whom have staked a claim to ride on the first train to Edinburgh. This edition features Anne Borthwick, Chair of Campaign For Borders Rail.**



Anne Borthwick is the owner of the Hopehill Guest House in Hawick and has lived in the town since the 1960s. Anne has been a member of Campaign for Borders Rail (CBR) since 1999 and is currently chair of the organisation. She presented evidence to the Waverley Railway Bill committee earlier this year and was subsequently

quoted in the committee's parliamentary report:

"The Borders are in great danger of being seen as stuck down at the bottom of Scotland, and we want to be part of a whole Scotland. We have a new Parliament and we want to be part of the new Scotland, but unless we have proper transport links, we cannot be."

What first prompted you to get involved with CBR?

I first moved to Hawick in the 1960s after I married my husband. At that time the railway still ran through Hawick. We had a young family at the time and my husband was keen to attend college in Edinburgh. He had intended to use the train to travel, but they ripped up the track the year he was due to start. We ended up having to buy a car and I had to return to work earlier than I would have liked. Since the closure of the railway, the community has declined. It was a combination of losing the railway and the downturn in the knitwear industry.

The main things you miss are the options such as attending concerts or theatre, especially events which finish after 9.30pm. You can't even go for a drink in Edinburgh because you have to take the car and the buses don't run late! It also costs so much to run a car and park it in Edinburgh.

How do you think the Waverley Railway will help the area?

Ultimately, I would like to see the railway line restored all the way to Carlisle, however, I believe we will still see many benefits from proposed line. I meet a lot of tourists through running the guest house and the only way they can get here is by hiring a car

and actively seeking out the area. There is a perception of Hawick as a mill town, however, I know that many visitors consider it to be a picturesque area and believe there is great potential for the Borders as a tourist destination. There are also opportunities to develop the area for activity tourism supported by a good railway service. We live in an area ideal for outdoor pursuits such as mountain-biking.

I also envisage many small businesses starting up in the Borders because they will be able to tap into the Edinburgh labour market. The railway will make business links so much easier as well. Direct access to the airport will make travelling much easier both for business-people visiting the area and those from the Borders travelling to other parts of the UK and internationally.

There are some people in the Borders who don't believe the rail link is a good idea. What do you say to them?

I think that after 30 years of not having access to rail travel, some people have become too wedded to their cars and can't see the broader picture. The Waverley line is about the future, not the past. It's about the people in the Borders who have limited opportunities: limited jobs, limited education and limited travel. Yes, the rail line will bring more people and more homes, but that can only be good for the future of an area which has gradually seen its population and its wealth slump.

My dream is to see the line run right through the Borders including Hawick, Newcastleton, right through to Carlisle with efficient bus services so that the Borders is once again properly connected within itself to Edinburgh and the rest of the world.

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## Committee meetings take place between 19th December and 29th March as follows:

Committee Meeting 1 (Groups1- 8)	19th	December
Committee Meeting 2 (Groups9- 10)	16th	January
Committee Meeting 3 (Groups11-15)	23rd	January
Committee Meeting 4 (Groups16- 22)	30th	January
Committee Meeting 5 (Groups 23- 27)	27th	February
Committee Meeting 6 (Groups28- 34)	6th	March
Committee Meeting 7 (Groups35- 37)	13th	March
Committee Meeting 8 (Groups 38- 40)	20th	March
Committee Oral Evidence Meeting	29th	March

Following the final meeting, the committee will consider all objections before producing a report on its recommendations for the bill.

In parallel to the committee meetings, the Waverley Railway team will continue working with the Scottish Executive on its procurement process and will investigate all potential additions to the railway, including a station at Stow.

The final vote in the Scottish Parliament is likely to take place in August /September 2006. If the Parliament offers its approval, the Waverley Railway (Scotland) Bill will proceed to Royal Assent where the Bill will become an Act.

Building work will begin shortly after that process is complete.

## The Team

The Waverley Railway Partnership comprises:

- Scottish Borders Council
- Midlothian Council
- City of Edinburgh Council
- Supported by Scottish Enterprise Borders.

If you would like to know more about the Waverley Railway Project or would like to add your support to the project, please visit:

- [www.waverleyrailwayproject.co.uk](http://www.waverleyrailwayproject.co.uk),
- phone: 0131 623 2008,
- email: [info@waverleyrailway.co.uk](mailto:info@waverleyrailway.co.uk).