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11th April, 2008.

National Planning Framework Team,
The Scottish Government Planning Directorate,
Victoria Quay,
Edinburgh.
EH6 6QQ

Dear Sir/Madam,

First, I condemn in the strongest terms the truly deplorable decision to proceed with the long out-dated M74 extension, contrary to the finding of the Public Inquiry; a waste of £500m - £600m that could have been far more usefully invested in Public Transport schemes which, not only benefit the environment, but are much safer and offer socio-economic advantages such as long-term solutions to commuter travel to work, tourism, shopping and leisure.

Secondly, our political leaders seem to be half a century behind mainland Europe in their thinking - no vision, no imagination, no forethought. Far too many politicians and transport officials, i.e. the decision-makers, appear to spend their time looking for excuses to do nothing! The Edinburgh South Suburban line re-opening, and the Borders Railway are cases in point.

Electrification, Scotland has a meagre 23% of route mileage currently electrified, (39% for Britain, 54% for Europe and 98% for Switzerland).

What is needed is a rolling programme of mainline electrification, in addition to Edinburgh - Glasgow via Falkirk, and Edinburgh - Glasgow via Bathgate and Airdrie currently in progress, one hopes.

Some projects of national significance should include: -

(1) Electrification of the East Coast Main Line, Edinburgh, Dundee, Aberdeen.

(2) Electrification of the 'Stirling triangle': Glasgow and Edinburgh to Stirling and Perth including Cumbernauld, Alloa and Dunblane.

(3) Strathclyde Cross Rail, first recommended in 1968, needs to be progressed forthwith; this short 'missing link' across Glasgow would interconnect Strathclyde's north and south suburban networks and, moreover, offer direct Ayrshire/Inverclyde services through Glasgow to Edinburgh and Aberdeen.

(4) The Highland Main Line between Perth and Inverness needs to be doubled, or at least for as much of its length as is possible in engineering terms, and then electrified; this to be done in conjunction with the Dornoch Rail Link, first promoted in 1985.

Arguably, the fastest growing region in Scotland must have fast, convenient links to the Central Belt and the South.

Yours faithfully,

(MR. K. D. W. McCORM.)