

# **Edinburgh South Suburban Railway – campaigners remind you to respond to online consultation this week**

**Edinburgh South Suburban Railway is a campaign group run mostly on Twitter and which has one aim – to reopen the railway line to passengers within the city, taking cars off the streets and providing another means of public transport.**

The group would like you to support their cause by responding to the online consultation on the Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR2) for Scotland which ends at midnight on 15 April 2022. We asked them to explain their campaign and what they do.



## Who are you?

I'm a railway formally called the Edinburgh Suburban & Southside Junction Railway but colloquially called the #EdSouthSub! I opened in 1884, I am still here today but sadly only used for freight and occasional empty passenger services as my stations closed in 1962. The route of the remaining #EdSouthSub spans from Murrayfield in the west to Newcraighall in the east. Historically there were stations at Gorgie, Craiglockhart, Morningside, Blackford, Newington, Duddingston / Craigmillar and Niddrie along this section of dual track railway.

## Why is this important?

The #EdSouthSub provides an existing cross city segregated public transport corridor avoiding the city centre, which could be useful to many from Edinburgh, the Lothians and beyond. This is because the route passes several shopping, education, healthcare and residential destinations. This double track route is currently open, has a speed limit of 40mph and it is still maintained to this day by Network Rail Scotland, therefore if the stations were reopening (or ones constructed in new locations) these could be cheaper and less carbon intensive than building new on road infrastructure from scratch. Helping reduce transport related carbon emissions by recycling existing infrastructure with limited on going cost to the Council. The #EdSouthSub could possibly be utilised by services provided by either of the following modes;

Scotrail Trains to connect South Edinburgh to the wider National Rail network and recent EGIP improvements. Providing faster journeys elsewhere in Central Scotland & beyond e.g. Morningside to Glasgow perhaps, thus reducing congestion on the A720/M8/M9 whilst also providing direct east/west cross city journeys e.g. Edinburgh Park to Brunstane.

TramTrains that join the Edinburgh Trams network from Haymarket providing routes to the Airport or Newhaven to South Edinburgh as well an east/west link across Edinburgh, or a combination of both, as seen in Rotherham, Karlsruhe and other areas.

Taking into account CEC's City Centre Transformation, proposed electrification of the line planned by Network Rail Scotland in coming years and not least the Climate Emergency declared by Edinburgh, Scottish & UK governments in 2019, it seems this project would be a great opportunity to put these words into action. However very frustratingly the City Mobility Plan 2030 didn't include the reopening of stations. This was even though the #EdSouthSub was the most requested suggestion by respondents to the public consultation.





# What form does your campaign have?

There is an active Twitter account [@edsouthsub](#) which has the latest comings and goings on the route. This also helps people to engage with statutory consultations that may affect the lines future. There is also a [petition](#) to support reopening stations (with more than 4,900 signatures) with the aim of getting passengers back onboard. There are supportive Facebook groups who also provide wider engagement. This campaign appears to have raised awareness of the line, its potential and was acknowledged at the CECs Transport & Environment Committee in February 2021, building upon the work of Capital Rail Action Group (CRAG).

# What do you hope to achieve?

A reinstated regular passenger service that connects communities in the areas along the route to the rest of the public transport network, as a viable alternative to the same trips by car. It is our belief that the most sustainable public transport investment is achieved by reutilising infrastructure such as the #EdSouthSub. For example the Borders, Alloa or Leven lines reinstatement all prove this proposal could be viable. South, East and West Edinburgh are underserved by rail meaning many medium to long distance trips are by default easier and faster by private car. Providing truly viable alternative without the need for journeys to Waverley or Haymarket stations would help achieve several local and national government targets.

This includes but is not limited to...

Reducing car miles driven by 20% (30% in Edinburgh),

Net Zero carbon emissions,

Improve air quality

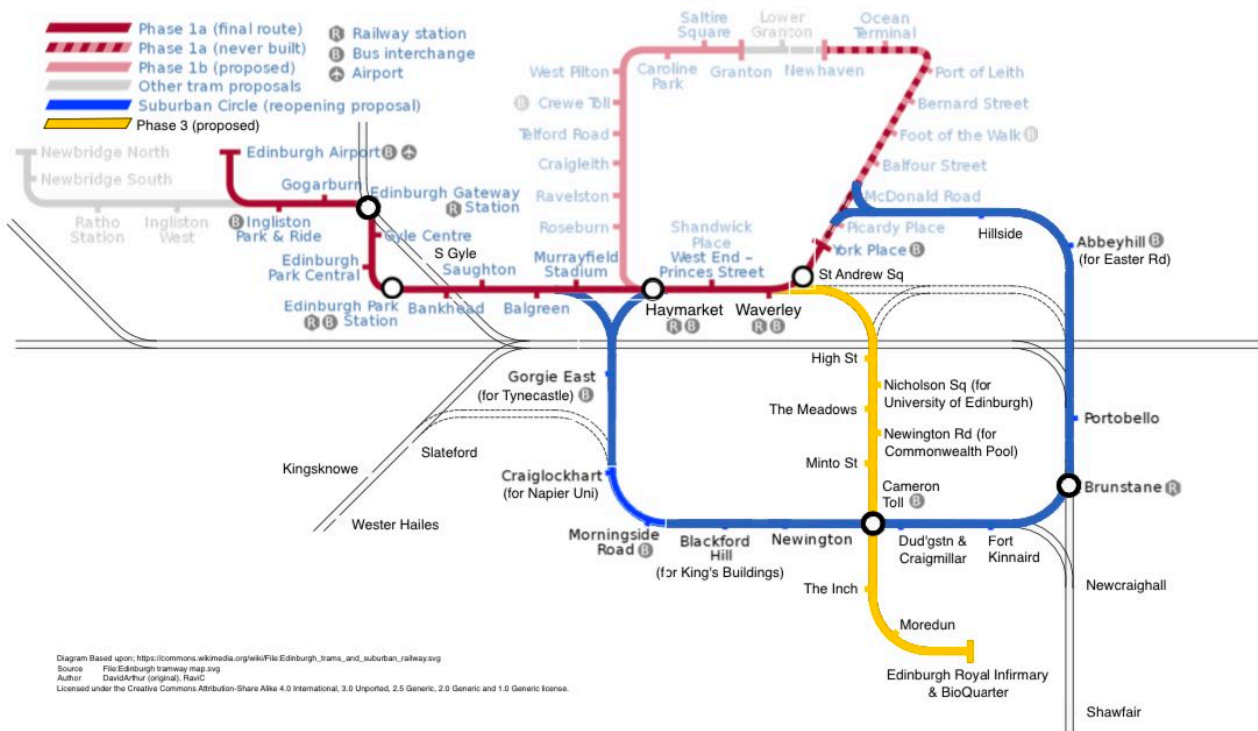
20 minute liveable neighbourhoods,

improving road safety for vulnerable road users & improving reliability of buses by getting private cars off our streets.

## How can people reading this article help?

Please respond to the [STPR 2 consultation currently underway by Transport Scotland \(ends 15 April 2022\)](#), speak to local council election candidates about the line and vote for those that support the #EdSouthSub, email your local MSPs asking them to support a Feasibility Study or sign the petition sharing it with anyone else you think might be interested.

Finally try and spot a train in the #EdSouthSub, take a photo, tag and share it online!







Morningside Station – the old platform. Photo: © 2021, Martin P. McAdam [www.martinmcadam.com](http://www.martinmcadam.com)