

Winchburgh railway station could reduce commuter journeys into Edinburgh

Opening a rail link in the growing West Lothian town of Winchburgh could take almost half a million journeys off the already congested corridor into the capital, it has been claimed.

The drive to net zero emissions may be the trump card for Winchburgh Developments in its drive to secure a new railway station from the growing town.

Responding to a consultation on improving roads and travel along the corridor from Broxburn into Edinburgh, the team behind the creation of West Lothian's newest town poured scorn on proposals for improved bus services.

It highlighted the problems in securing bus provision to the rest of the county- something only just reintroduced after four months with a new subsidy.

Winchburgh Developments Ltd (WDL) submitted its proposals as part of a response to a consultation launched by The City of Edinburgh Council into ways to improve active travel between Broxburn and Maybury roundabout on the western fringe of the capital.

John Hamilton the chief Executive of WDL said that re-opening a railway station in Winchburgh would ensure the country would

take a “giant leap” towards its net-zero emissions goal.

A new station would take an estimated 1,658 cars journeys off the road per day, which totals 419,490 annually.

Mr Hamilton said: “Removing almost half a million cars from some of the busiest rush-hour corridors in the country represents a significant benefit, not only in terms of speed of travel and convenience to commuters but as a giant leap towards Scotland’s net-zero emissions target date of 2045”

Winchburgh is already on railway timetables though trains do not stop at the abandoned Victorian station. The developers have already earmarked sites for an integrated travel hub in the centre of the expanded village.

In the consultation response WDL said: “The proposed rail station will form part of a sustainable transport network and will be co-located with a new mobility hub adjacent to a new town centre incorporating active travel links including e-bike provision, EV charging and bus public transport links. It will encourage and promote walking, wheeling, cycling and link to public transport networks (both local and regional).

WDL added: “The principal concern raised by Winchburgh Developments Limited (WDL) is that the proposed improvements are restricted only to a fixed road corridor on the approach to the City from the west. They do not encourage active travel, relying predominantly on carriage widening and bus provision.

“The proposed limited cyclist improvements may bring partial benefits to those areas closest to the City but, by prioritising bus provision will do little or nothing to encourage cycling from other areas further west.”

Highlighting problems seen across Scotland with commercial bus operators WDL added: “In order to replace the bus link from Livingston to Winchburgh West Lothian Council has recently

committed up to £422,875 from WDL's Public Transport Section75 Contributions to pump-prime a new service to be operated for a minimum of one year by Lothian Country.

By Stuart Somerville Local Democracy Reporter



John Hamilton and Pamela Spowart of Winchburgh Developments Ltd. Local groups are backing proposals for a new railway station in Winchburgh, which it is argued would relieve

pressure on the Central Belt motorway network. Photograph:
Mike Wilkinson...30/08/23 P