

Perth: Scotland's Inter-City Hub

INTER-CITY EXPRESS

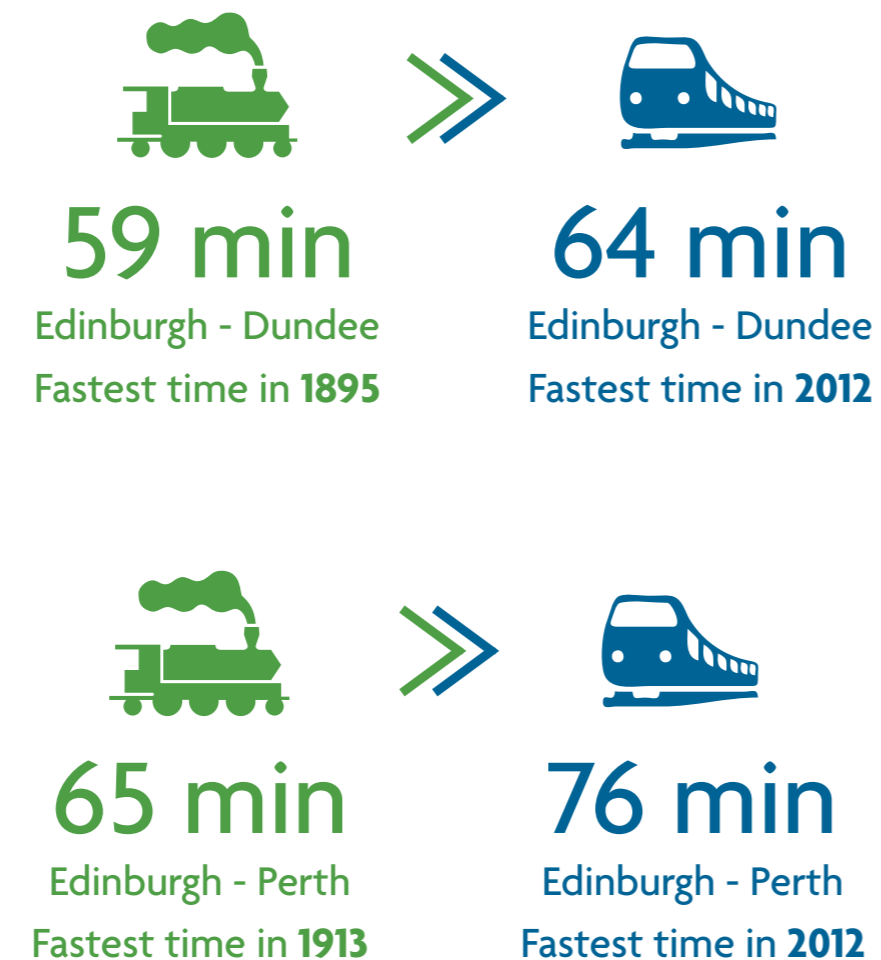
“All services and infrastructure need to be examined and subjected to proper scrutiny in order to develop a rail infrastructure and service that truly serves the whole of Scotland. There needs to be recognition that the Scottish rail network is essentially unfit for purpose north of Perth at present.”

Scottish Chambers of Commerce response to 'Rail 2014' consultation, February 2012

Our Ambition for Rail A competitive railway

In our full Inter-City Express brochure we set out a programme and timescale for upgrading the inter-city rail network in Scotland. We believe that this is essential to ensure that Scotland's cities are connected by a rail network fit for the 21st century, which – crucially – allows rail to compete with road between these cities. This is the stated objective of the Scottish Government in its Third National Planning Framework. However, there is still no programme for transforming the current Victorian railway into one which will allow this objective to be achieved. This is in marked contrast to the major road building programme which will see £6bn spent on the A9 and A96 roads.

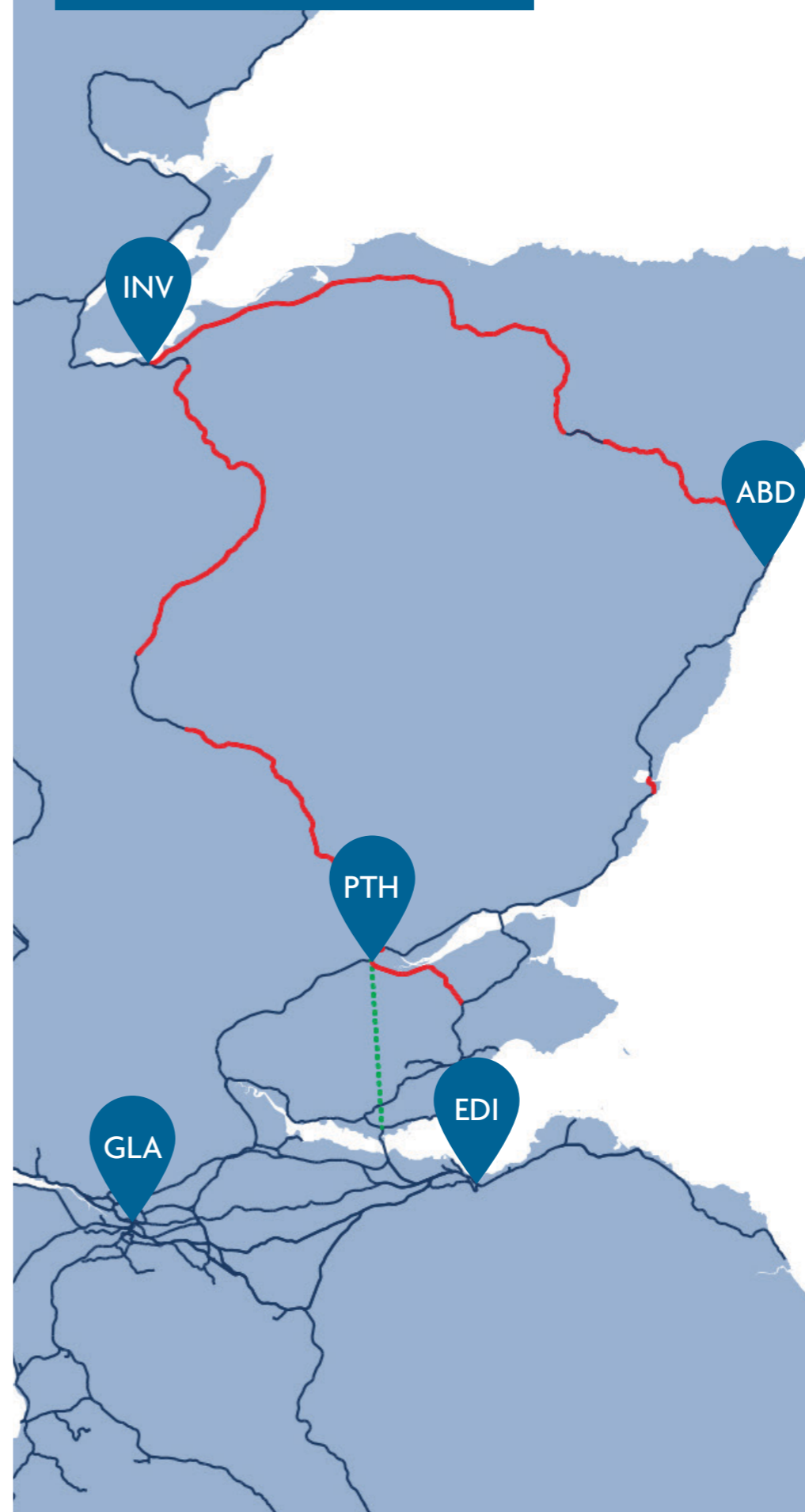
In this booklet we set out the benefits and opportunities for Perth, which lies at the heart of the Inter-City routes north from the Central Belt. The transformation of journey times to and from Perth would clearly also benefit those further north, whilst the restoration and development of the station would bring widespread urban regeneration opportunities.



The rail route from Edinburgh to Perth is slower than it was 100 years ago

Scotland's Rail Network

Map key:
 proposed new line
 single track sections
 doubled sections



“We all welcome Transform Scotland's ambition and many of the proposals that it makes, but it is important to highlight the need for promoters of change to approach the relevant regional transport partnerships to discuss the potential impact of proposals on areas and the requirement to develop an up-to-date feasibility study that examines all transport modes. The member is right to point out that the impact on communities on the Edinburgh to Perth corridor should be assessed as improvements are proposed.

The statistics show that these are exciting times for the railways in Scotland. There are laudable ambitions to make even greater progress.”

First Minister Q&A, 06 March 2014a



EDINBURGH-PERTH DIRECT JUST 45 MINUTES CENTRE TO CENTRE

Build and electrify a new direct rail link from Perth to Edinburgh, slashing up to 35 minutes off journey times from Inverness and Perth to Edinburgh.

The direct rail route from Edinburgh to Perth via Dunfermline, Kinross and Glenfarg was closed in 1970 to make way for the M90 motorway. This short-sighted decision has ever since condemned inter-city rail travellers to journey times significantly longer than the road alternative. Edinburgh-Perth (and Inverness) trains were originally diverted via Stirling, but now most run via Ladybank – still seriously uncompetitive with road. This has left the rail journey from Edinburgh to Perth slower than it was 100 years ago. The AA's Route Planner estimates a (legal) car journey time of just 59 minutes, compared to a 2013 rail average of 1 hour 22 minutes.

Only the reinstatement of a direct link to Perth would truly open up routes from the north to Edinburgh.

It would slash the journey time from Perth (and Inverness) to Edinburgh by up to 35 minutes; provide the opportunity to reduce journey times from Dundee and Aberdeen to Edinburgh; and allow the creation of new stations in key growth areas such as Kinross. The currently underutilised Perth station would be transformed into a new Inter-City hub – the catalyst for transport connectivity and urban regeneration.

Much of the proposed route alignment is still in existence. Some development has inevitably taken place at a number of locations, and a four-mile tunnelled section would be required to avoid the M90 and Glenfarg village.

If we are to start planning now for the transformation of rail travel between Perth and Edinburgh, top priority must be given to protecting the Inverkeithing-Halbeath-Bridge of Earn rail alignment from further inappropriate development.

In the 2009 Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR) the Scottish Government estimated a cost of between £500m and £1bn to build a new railway from Inverkeithing through Halbeath (bypassing Dunfermline) to Bridge of Earn (south of Perth), but concluded that the benefits would not exceed the costs. However STPR did not:

- Analyse the benefits of an electrified railway (in particular faster journey times).
- Assess the merits of a new railway from Halbeath to Bridge of Earn only – allowing Dunfermline to benefit from the project.
- Evaluate an intermediate park-and-ride station at Kinross, serving a wide catchment.
- Analyse the benefits of routing Aberdeen to Edinburgh trains this way – together with track upgrades in Perth, allowing reduced journey times and better connectivity.

“Scottish Planning Policy clearly states that disused railway lines with a reasonable prospect of being reused as rail, tram or active travel routes should be safeguarded in development plans.”

Keith Brown MSP

A Transport Scotland spokesman said
“However, Scottish Ministers are always willing to consider rail projects that provide a positive impact and we continue to liaise with Transform Scotland to assist in their development of proposals for a new rail link between Edinburgh and Perth via Kinross.”

The Courier, 21 September 2013



PERTH A NEW INTER-CITY RAIL HUB

Create a new Inter-City rail hub at Perth station – the catalyst for transport connectivity and urban regeneration.

The new direct rail link from Perth to Edinburgh would slash journey times – and create a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to make Perth station the crossroads of the rail network north of the Central Belt.

With fast, direct trains to all Scotland's cities – Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Inverness and Stirling – the vastly under-utilised station site at Perth could realise its untapped potential as a catalyst for urban regeneration.

This grand Victorian building offers a well-connected setting for retail and business development, tourist-related facilities, indeed all the kinds of enterprise and community activity, which would benefit from fast rail services to the rest of Scotland. At present, Perth station is a cul-de-sac – but in time, a new 'railway quarter' would extend Perth's nearby city centre westwards, on a new through route to the suburbs for pedestrians and cyclists. Perth has a very special opportunity to remake the best of its railway heritage for future generations.

Station investment can result in widespread urban and economic development in and around the station. A railway station plays an even bigger role in its community, generating greater investment, employment and income in the local area. The following stations demonstrate the value of station investment.



Sheffield Station

In and surrounding the station there has been a net increase of 2,799 jobs between 2003 and 2008, equating to 34% of the total employment growth in Sheffield.



Manchester Piccadilly

Footfall at the station is estimated at 28 million per annum. One third of visitors use the station for reasons other than travel. It is estimated that passengers spend on average 40% more in Manchester Piccadilly than in other Network Rail managed stations.



Birmingham New Street Gateway

The development scheme is estimated to result in 350 000 square feet of new development near the station.



St Helens Central

There has been a 65% increase in passenger demand between 2006/07 and 2009/10.



Inter-City Express is a joint campaign set up by Transform Scotland, Rail Freight Group, Capital Rail Action Group, Friends of the Far North Line, and the Scottish Association for Public Transport. It is an attempt to transform rail travel, bringing all seven of Scotland's cities closer together – with a safe, civilised and sustainable mode of transport. We want to see a long-term programme of investment in the Scottish inter-city rail network so that rail, rather than road, can become the norm for travel between our cities.

About Transform Scotland

Transform Scotland campaigns for a society where everyone can have their travel needs met within the limits of a transport system that is environmentally sustainable, socially inclusive and economically responsible.

We are the only organisation in Scotland making the case for sustainable transport across all modes. We have a membership of over 60 organisations across Scotland, including public transport operators, local authorities and sustainable transport voluntary organisations. Transform Scotland is a registered charity, politically independent, science-based and strictly not-for-profit.

Transform Scotland Limited is a registered Scottish charity (charity number SC041516). Our Board of Directors is elected by our member organisations in accordance with the rules set out in our Articles of Association.

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Campaign supported by



The Friends of the Far North Line