

EDINBURGH TRAM (LINE TWO) BILL COMMITTEE

Wednesday 14 September 2005

Session 2

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EDINBURGH TRAM (LINE TWO) BILL COMMITTEE **10th Meeting 2005, Session 2**

CONVENER

*Bill Aitken (Glasgow) (Con)

DEPUTY CONVENER

*Jeremy Purvis (Tweeddale, Ettrick and Lauderdale) (LD)

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

*Marilyn Livingstone (Kirkcaldy) (Lab)

*Kate Maclean (Dundee West) (Lab)

*Alasdair Morgan (South of Scotland) (SNP)

*attended

THE FOLLOWING ALSO ATTENDED:

Laura Donald (Counsel for the Promoter)

THE FOLLOWING GAVE EVIDENCE:

Geoff Duke (Transport Initiatives Edinburgh Ltd)

CLERK TO THE COMMITTEE

Terry Shevlin

LOCATION

Committee Room 1

Scottish Parliament

Edinburgh Tram (Line Two) Bill Committee

Wednesday 14 September 2005

[THE CONVENER opened the meeting at 09:39]

Proposed Alternative Alignments

The Convener (Bill Aitken): Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. Welcome to the 10th meeting this year of the Edinburgh Tram (Line Two) Bill Committee. I ask everyone present to switch off their mobile phones and pagers, please.

The first agenda item today relates to proposed alternative alignments. As members will recollect, the promoter indicated that there is potential to change the alignment of the tram route at two points—in the Haymarket Yards area and in the area of the Gyle—which would take the track outwith the limits of deviation. The committee has previously agreed that the proposal merits examination.

A number of new objections to the proposed realignments have been received, and the promoter has produced various revised and supplementary accompanying documents to explain what the realignments would entail, if they were agreed by the committee.

I turn first to the eight admissible objections that were lodged in the new objection period. Members will recall that we undertook a similar exercise for the objections during the preliminary stage. The committee must give preliminary consideration to all the objections to satisfy itself that each is based on a reasonable claim that the objector's interests would be adversely affected by the proposed realignment. If they would not, the committee must reject the objection. If the committee cannot decide whether an objection demonstrates a clear adverse effect, it can offer objectors the opportunity to provide further written information or to be heard at a future meeting. I have reviewed the admissible objections and I am satisfied that all of them demonstrate that the respective objector would face a clear adverse effect.

There being no comments from the committee about the objections, do members agree that the objections are based on reasonable claims that the objectors' interests would be adversely affected and that the objections should proceed to consideration stage?

Members indicated agreement.

The Convener: Members will recall from a previous meeting that we agreed a truncated timetable for receiving written evidence from any new objectors. That is because we expected any objections to the realignments to come from parties who are already familiar with the process and because we face a very tight timetable in the coming weeks. However, because of the unexpected cancellation of last week's committee meeting, which was due to a change in the parliamentary timetable and was nothing to do with the committee, our timetable has had to be adjusted and new deadlines set. The revised timetable is clearly set out in the paper that is before us, and I invite members to agree that they are content with the deadlines that have been set.

Members indicated agreement.

The Convener: The clerks will now write to the objectors and the promoter, informing them of the next steps, including the deadlines for submitting written evidence. The committee will then consider all objections as part of its continuing consideration of the bill during the consideration stage. In addition to giving preliminary consideration to objections, the committee is required to consider the adequacy of the supplementary and revised accompanying documents that have been provided by the promoter, in order to ensure that they allow for adequate scrutiny of the proposed route changes and that they safely satisfy the criteria that are set out in the standing orders and the guidance on private bills.

The promoter has provided revised maps, plans and sections, a revised book of reference and an addendum to the environmental statement, as well as further clarification on certain points of the environmental statement following a review by our adviser, Bond Pearce LLP. I am pleased to see that the promoter has also provided an explanation of the notification process that it undertook for the new alignments. We have also received an explanatory memorandum from the promoter which, among other things, shows how the bill would appear if the proposed amendments were agreed by the committee.

On the basis of all the information that is before us today, I ask members whether they are content with the revised and supplementary accompanying documents that have been provided by the promoter; namely the maps, plans and sections, the book of reference and the environmental statement. Do members agree that those documents are adequate?

Members indicated agreement.

Edinburgh Tram (Line Two) Bill: Consideration Stage

09:43

The Convener: Agenda item 2 was to consist of oral evidence taking. It was our intention to take evidence today from two of the objectors: the Stakis Ltd organisation and BAA plc. Late yesterday, we were notified that the objection on behalf of Stakis had been withdrawn on the basis of a settlement's having been agreed with the promoter. We have been advised this morning that, after a period of considerable angst and a sleepless night on the part of the representatives who are present, the BAA objection has also been withdrawn.

We have a letter before us, which was written in considerable haste at 7.30 this morning. I understand, Ms Donald, that we will receive a full written explanation of what has been agreed by 12 o'clock.

Laura Donald (Counsel for the Promoter): That is the case.

The Convener: We appreciate that you have been working under considerable pressure. The committee would be interested to hear some expansion on the third paragraph of your letter. I understand that Mr Duke is in a position to speak briefly on that.

Laura Donald: Mr Duke is from the promoter.

09:45

Geoff Duke (Transport Initiatives Edinburgh Ltd): As part of the agreement that we were very pleased to reach with BAA last night, there are some amendments that we would like the committee to make. I will now read out what they will be.

There are three aspects where we seek alterations to the limits of deviation as they affect Edinburgh airport. Those relate to Jubilee Road, which is currently identified for construction and access purposes; to construction compounds at the airport; and to the location of the tram stop at the airport.

As we have confirmed in written evidence, the promoter does not intend to use Jubilee Road for construction traffic. Accordingly, the promoter recommends to the committee that plots 362 and 363 be excluded from the limits of land to be acquired or used to reflect that intention.

On the construction compound, it has now been established that there is no requirement to locate a construction compound within the airport site. The promoter recommends to the

committee that plots 354, 355 and 361 be excluded from the limits of land to be acquired or used.

As regards the tram stop, the limits of deviation that are currently shown on the plans would, if agreed by Parliament, authorise construction of tram infrastructure, including a tram stop, within the current proposed development zone of the airport. As part of the agreement, and in conjunction with a range of measures that we have agreed with Edinburgh Airport Ltd, it has been agreed that the tram stop should be relocated in the most appropriate location at the airport to promote the integration of that stop within a co-ordinated public transport hub. Accordingly, the promoter recommends to the committee that plot 360, in its entirety, and plots 345, 349, 350, 352 and 353 in part be excluded from the limits of deviation. A plan will be provided to the committee to show the extent of the amendment.

In conclusion, the promoter asks the committee to make, at the appropriate stage, the amendments as set out in our memorandum.

The Convener: There are no questions from the committee, so that can be agreed.

Item 3 can be declared redundant on the basis of the agreement that has been reached.

Meeting closed at 09:47.

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Wednesday 21 September 2005

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