



PRESS RELEASE

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WAVERLEY PROJECT UNDER THREAT

Homes for Scotland has warned Scottish Borders Council that its ambition to reinstate the Waverley Line between Edinburgh and Tweedbank is being undermined by its own new planning proposals. Homes for Scotland fears these are incapable of delivering the housing that is required to support the introduction of the Waverley Line.

The original business case for the Waverley Line was dependent on some 14,000 new homes being built by 2030. Developers would pay contributions towards the project as part of negotiated land deals and the new homes would accommodate potential passengers, helping to make the line viable. Homes for Scotland warned the Council, and the Scottish Parliament, that this ambitious target for new housing set out in 2000 was optimistic.

According to the organisation's Head of Planning Strategy Blair Melville, the Council has consistently under achieved since that time and the now enormous housing shortfall will not be addressed by the new planning proposals set out in the Council's Structure Plan Alteration.

He said: "Homes for Scotland has always supported the Council's aspirations for economic growth and the reintroduction of the line. However house completions are 40% less than the business case projections made seven years ago. Every year that the Council misses its housing target, more homes must be added on to the target for the following year. This renders the target figure of almost 14,000 new homes by 2030 ever more pie in the sky, and puts the future of the Waverley Line in doubt.

"The new proposed Structure Plan Alteration does nothing to change our view. The plan fails to identify enough land in the Waverley line corridor. Combined with the Council's poor record on releasing planning consents we predict a potentially devastating impact on the Waverley project and on the future of economic growth in the Scottish Borders."

More...



However, according to Homes for Scotland, the case for the provision of increased land for housing development in the Borders is wider than the Waverley issue.

Blair Melville continued: “Firstly, the serious back log in the provision of homes for local families in the Borders needs to be dealt with urgently – there is a pent up demand across all tenures, from social housing and starter homes right up through the housing market. Secondly, given the Government’s aspirations to substantially increase the rate of house building across Scotland, the Council’s Structure Plan Alteration is just not up to the job.

“There needs to be a total rethink about the scale of development and more housing is needed in areas which will support the Waverley Railway Project.”

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For further information please contact:

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Notes to Editors

Homes for Scotland (www.homesforscotland.com) represents the country’s home building industry which:

- is the largest source of private investment in Scotland
- contributes £5bn to the economy annually
- builds 20,000 new homes per annum
- employs more than 110,000 people
- is the largest user of the planning system in Scotland