



## **PRESS RELEASE**

**8 November 2004**

**STRICTLY EMBARGOED UNTIL 11am MONDAY 8 NOVEMBER 2004**

### **EDINBURGH AIRPORT TO BE CENTRE OF WORLD CLASS TRANSPORT HUB**

A new rail link to Edinburgh Airport will create a world-class transport hub for Scotland and provide direct rail services between the airport and a wide range of stations throughout the country, it was announced today.

The Edinburgh Airport Rail Link (EARL) will connect the airport to main stations all over Scotland and a proposed eight trains per hour will stop at a new station at the airport's main terminal.

Details of the scheme emerged today (Monday November 8) when The Scottish Executive's Transport Minister, Nicol Stephen, and **tie** limited (Transport Initiatives Edinburgh) launched a major public consultation on the project.

The proposed scheme will involve existing services being diverted via new rail links to and from the main Edinburgh-Glasgow and Edinburgh-Fife lines. Trains will arrive and depart the airport via a tunnel under the main runway.

The rail link will result in new, direct services to and from destinations such as Inverness, Aberdeen, Dundee, Perth, Glasgow, Fife and Stirling.

Michael Howell, Chief Executive of **tie** limited, said: "This scheme will transform rail services in Scotland. People will be able to travel to and from Edinburgh Airport more quickly and efficiently. The benefits to Scotland, its business community and tourism industry are significant. EARL is a world-class project and will bring Scotland into line with many countries worldwide.

“The scheme being proposed involves minimum disruption to the existing infrastructure and the surrounding areas and delivers real benefits.”

The consultation process launched today aims to canvass opinion throughout Scotland will last until Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> December.

The consultation process includes:

- Distribution of 250,000 leaflet questionnaires to rail passengers throughout Scotland.
- Interactive Edinburgh Airport Rail Link website ([www.earlproject.com](http://www.earlproject.com))
- Telephone information service (0845 270 51 51)
- Newspaper advertising
- Public meeting

Landowners and businesses directly affected by the proposed route of the rail link have already been contacted by Transport Initiatives Edinburgh and discussions with them are continuing. Discussions have also been held with interested groups and organisations including local authorities, regional transport bodies and environmental groups.

Mr Howell said: “We now have an opportunity to make this a reality, to invest in Scotland’s transport infrastructure. Following the six week consultation period launched today, we will be putting forward a robust and comprehensive business case to the Scottish Executive prior to lodging the necessary Private Bill early next year. We ask all interested organisations and individuals to consult with us and let us know your views so that we can ensure the design and business cases are robust as possible.”

**For further information please contact Ramsay Smith on 0141 226 3700 or Gordon Robertson on 0131 555 1015.**

### **Notes to Editors**

1. Maps of the Edinburgh Airport Rail Link, showing the proposed scheme and how it links to the rest of the country, have been provided to your Picture desks
2. The scheme requires an Act to be passed by the Scottish Parliament and this process will start in Spring next year with the submission of a private bill to the parliament. The legislative process is expected to be completed by late 2006, with construction of the rail link beginning early the following year. The rail link will be operational during 2010/11.
3. The creation of a new station at Edinburgh Airport is separate to the work being done by City of Edinburgh Council to link the Airport to the proposed Edinburgh Tram Network.

4. A number of options were considered for the provision of a rail link to Edinburgh Airport including routes with surface access to the airport. Spur lines were also considered but these would have restricted the rail link to a route between the airport and stations in Edinburgh only. The preferred route now being consulted upon offers the best in terms of:
- a. Highest number of trains able to serve the airport in each direction
  - b. Ability to serve the widest possible catchment area
  - c. Greatest benefits overall to Scottish economy
  - d. Helping to reduce road congestion
  - e. Least disruption to the existing rail network and neighbouring properties during construction
5. The timetable has not been finalised but the following stopping pattern at the airport may be implemented:

<b>Route</b>	<b>Train Stopping</b>
Edinburgh-Glasgow	2 per hour
Edinburgh-Dunblane	2 per hour
Fife	2 per hour
Edinburgh-Dundee & Aberdeen	1 per hour
Edinburgh-Inverness & Perth	1 per hour