

Item:
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Report to Partnership Meeting 6 February 2015

RESEARCH AND STRATEGY DELIVERY

Platform 4 Change

Purpose of Report

To provide Members with information on Inverness Station developments

Platform 4 Change- Inverness Station

HITRANS is devising a blueprint for developing Inverness station, ensuring that it can meet the demands for the future, including a substantial growth in services and passengers, and the potential for electrification. This has been boosted by a proposal from Abellio to invest a significant sum in the station, and the decision of Serco Caledonian Sleepers to base their main office in the city.

Furthermore Highland Council has commissioned consultants to investigate improving the appearance of the three station entrances, making better use of available space, improving connectivity between Inverness bus and train station.

Station Limits

Inverness station currently handles 1.28m passengers a year, representing a 57% growth since 2005. It has other users on rail passes, meeters and greeters, people using the retail facilities on the concourse and those who use the station to cross from one side of the city to the other. Since 2005 there have been a number of developments, including:

- Invernet services
- more trains on Inverness-Aberdeen and the Highland Main Line
- increased retail activity at Eastgate
- Inverness Streetscape works

The introduction of ticket gates has exacerbated the problem of free movement around the station, with up to 5m40 for a Wick train's passengers to egress, and sometimes over 10m for East Coast arrivals to get through.

Keep Out

The station has three access points: Station Square, Falcon Square and Platform 6.5.

Flanked by the original buildings Station Square represents is the former public facing entrance, containing the War Memorial to the Cameron Highlanders, and also one to the Highland Railway Company's employees. It currently has car parking and a taxi concession.

Falcon Square is becoming increasingly important to the city for access to retail, to buses and for cultural events, yet the access to the station is unwelcoming, thanks to signs that imply 'Keep Out', a gauntlet to be run across a road past inappropriate car parking, and fencing left over from a penal institution upgrade.

Platform 6.5 is simply unpleasant, framed by aggressive ironwork, ill-placed bollards, poor surfacing and the refuse facility and leading to a car park where pedestrians may fear to tread.

The station itself is characterised by a draughty concourse, a shortage of TVMs, inadequate seating, heating and eating places, curved platforms of differing lengths (but a fine barber's).

One Direction

HITRANS has employed IDP and Douglas Binns to work up options for discussion with commercial parties. We will organise a summit of all commercial and statutory stakeholders to discuss the way ahead, ensuring that the station fully plays its role as the beating heart of the Old Town.

Recommendation

1. Members are asked to note the report.

Risk	Impact	Comment
RTS delivery	√	This project fits well with a number of RTS Horizontal themes.
Policy	√	This project has integration and environmental benefits.
Financial	√	This project is fully funded
Equality	-	No impact on equalities issues.

Report by: Frank Roach
Designation: Partnership Manager
Date: 26 January 2015