



T : 0300 244 4000
E : scottish.ministers@gov.scot

Russell Borthwick
Heather.morrell@agcc.co.uk

Our Reference: 202600525805
Your Reference: Campaign for North East Rail

3 August 2026

Dear Jordan Jack and Russell Borthwick,

Thank you for your letter of 5 June 2026 to Stephen Flynn MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Tourism and Transport, regarding rail connectivity improvements across the North East.

As Mr Flynn has recused himself from consideration of the matters raised in your correspondence, I am responding on behalf of the Scottish Government.

I welcome the continued commitment shown by the Campaign for North East Rail and Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce in advocating for improved rail connectivity across the North East. I recognise the significant work undertaken by both organisations to highlight the economic, social and environmental benefits that enhanced rail services can bring to communities across the region.

I note the priorities set out in your letter, including Buchan Rail, rail improvements between Aberdeen and the Central Belt, and proposals for new stations at Cove and Newtonhill.

Since the publication of the Buchan Sustainable Transport Study, I understand that Transport Scotland officials have been engaging with the Campaign for North East Rail (CNER), Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce (AGCC), and Nestrans on the findings.

The study identifies potential opportunities to enhance sustainable transport connectivity in the North East and highlights possible benefits for both passenger and freight movements. It also highlights a significant opportunity to better support both existing and future freight demand, particularly in the context of renewable energy and carbon capture industries as the region transitions away from oil and gas.

Scottish Ministers, special advisers and the Permanent Secretary are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See www.lobbying.scot

Tha Ministearanna h-Alba, an luchd-comhairleachaidh sònraichte agus Rùnaire Maireannach fo chumhachan Achd Coiteachaidh (Alba) 2016. Faicibh www.lobbying.scot



As you note, Nestrans is taking forward a further complementary piece of work and I understand that an announcement on the outcome of the tender process is imminent. I look forward to receiving advice on the outcomes of this further work.

It is important that due process is followed, and any decision on progressing to the Detailed Options Appraisal (DOA) stage of the Buchan Sustainable Transport Study will be taken once the findings of this additional work have been fully considered.

I recognise the importance of improving connectivity across the North East and welcome the continued engagement of stakeholders as this work develops. Officials will continue to engage with relevant partners as work progresses. Thank you again for writing and for your continued commitment to improving transport connectivity across the North East.

Yours sincerely



TOM ARTHUR

Scottish Ministers, special advisers and the Permanent Secretary are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See www.lobbying.scot

Tha Ministearanna h-Alba, an luchd-comhairleachaidh sònraichte agus Rùnaire Maireannach fo chumhachan Achd Coiteachaidh (Alba) 2016. Faicibh www.lobbying.scot

St Andrew's House, Regent Road, Edinburgh EH1
3DG
www.gov.scot



INVESTORS IN PEOPLE
We invest in people Silver

