

**Attends**  
Dryness you can rely on

Attends Incontinence products available in Scotland. Order from your home, delivered to your door. Call 0845 601 3272 to order by phone or click here to order online

15 Dis Use Voi

Edinburgh 16.1°C

[Change location](#)



In Association with **BarrheadTravel**

**heraldscotland**  
The Herald | **sundayherald**

- hs
  - News
  - Politics
  - Sport
  - Business
  - Comment
  - Arts & Ents
  - Life & Style
  - Going
- 
- Crime & Courts
  - Health
  - Education
  - Transport
  - Environment
  - World News
  - Book an ad

TUESDAY 3 JULY 2012

TEXT SIZE

# Double-spend warning over high-speed rail link



**Damien Henderson**  
Transport Correspondent

**A HIGH-speed rail route from London should not end at Manchester as billions of pounds will need to be spent upgrading the network into Scotland anyway, Transport Minister Keith Brown has claimed.**



*VISIONARY: An artist's impression of what a next-generation train would look like on a high-speed rail route linking Scotland with England.*

Speaking ahead of a rail conference in Liverpool on Thursday, Mr Brown warned the West Coast Main Line, which carries passenger trains between London and Glasgow, would not be able to cope with the predicted increase in high-speed services by 2033.

Under UK Government plans, a £32.7 billion network of new railway lines would be built in two phases, from London to Birmingham in 2026 and onwards in a "Y" shape to Leeds and Manchester by 2033. Services would continue north to Scotland on existing track, but only at half the 250mph speeds they would be capable of on the dedicated high-speed route.

The Herald revealed in March that the plans could create a choke point north of Manchester, limiting the number of freight and passenger services that could transfer on to the West Coast line, according to a planning document written by track owner Network Rail.

However, Mr Brown's analysis goes significantly further, suggesting a "double spend" would be required if a high-speed rail route is not built all the way to Scotland early on.

"If the UK Government goes just as far as Manchester and that's left unattended to, you then have to look quite separately at how you improve the capacity of the West Coast Main Line, which is going to cost multi-billion pounds' worth of investment," Mr Brown said.

and, say in 10 years' time, you have high-speed rail all the way to Scotland, it's a further tranche of investment. It's double spending really."

He added: "In my mind it's better to do it as a whole right the way through, because high-speed rail gives you that capacity for freight and passenger (services) right from the start."

The consequence of the existing plans would be a negative impact on freight and passenger services to Scotland, Mr Brown added.

"It means that building high-speed rail to Manchester actually works to the disadvantage of Scotland. You've got a choke point created whereby you're going to have to start saying no to freight, it's going to have to start finding other modes; and also to passengers as well." His comments, which are expected to be echoed by Infrastructure Secretary Alex Neil when he shares a platform with UK Transport Secretary Justine Greening on Thursday, are the latest sign of the Scottish Government's commitment to a London to Scotland high-speed rail network, which it estimates to be worth £20bn to the Scottish economy.

Its stance has been welcomed by business leaders, although critics have pointed out that it is not yet clear where the £26bn required to extend a link from Manchester to Glasgow and Edinburgh would be found. A clearer idea of exact costs and route options is expected to be published later this year, and the SNP has committed to setting out a timeline for building the route by 2016.

A spokeswoman for the Department for Transport said it was continuing to have discussions with the Scottish Government about its high-speed rail plans. She said: "The Coalition agreement makes it clear that our vision is for a genuinely national network with high-speed services from London to the Midlands and the north, including Scotland. We see phases 1 and 2 of the High Speed 2 project as the best way to make progress towards that goal."

"We are in discussion with the Scottish Government about their aspirations for high-speed rail. It is imperative that the process we are developing is as thorough and rigorous as possible so that we end up with the best value solution, whether that be a full high-speed solution, upgrades to existing infrastructure to remove bottlenecks, or a combination of the two."

---

## Related Articles

[Demand may derail hopes of extra trains](#) Transport • Fri 23 Mar 2012

[New calls for high-speed rail link to run to Scotland](#)

Transport • Wed 11 Jan 2012

[Fast track to growth must extend north of the](#)

[Border](#) Herald View • Tue 3 Jul 2012

[The direct benefits of rail project](#) Transport • Tue 6

Dec 2011

[Network Rail admits guilt over fatal Grayrigg crash](#)

Crime & Courts • Thu 1 Mar 2012

---

## What do you think?

[Please sign in to comment on this article](#)

## Showing 2 comments

**Robert Wilson**

Don't worry about the double spend folks. They've no intention of taking it to Scotland. Everyone outside London is still waiting for the Eurostar to be coming to the promised station near them. This is about making it more feasible for a greater number of people to commute to London.

2 days ago

**Sandy Henderson, Dunblane**

Yep Robert it's all about London - again. The busiest airport in the north of England is Manchester, so linking it to the London area with a high speed rail is almost as good as another London airport. There appears to be real confusion between capacity ( for passenger and freight ) and high speed. In the real world where the faster vehicles move over the same route, the greater the safety gap ( known as headway) has to be, so the only way that capacity can be maintained over a given route is to make the individual trains bigger. This brings additional problems both in cost and the speeds these longer trains can safely maintain. Much of the cost of refurbishing the West coast main line was down the the inconvenience of doing it whilst keeping the line open most of the time. A new build fast surface transport system separate from the existing rail network would probably be cheaper for that reason. Given the falling cost of tunneling ( in real terms ), it could be argued that this is a great opportunity to invest in evacuated tube transport, which offers so much in comparison with what we have now, and meets many of the environmental aspirations

2 days ago in reply to Robert Wilson

---

**heraldscotland**

© Copyright 2012  
Herald & Times Group  
All rights reserved

**Our News Services**

Mobile  
Apps and Kindle  
Newspaper  
Digital Editions  
Back Issues  
Online Archive  
Email, Twitter, RSS  
Syndication

**Our Advertising Services**

Family Notices  
Book Your Newspaper  
Ad online  
Contact the Sales Team  
The Facts and Figures  
View Newspaper Ads  
Commercial Features

**Our Personal Services**

Help, Feedback &  
Contact  
Dating  
Travel Services  
Photo Sales  
Crosswords & Sudoku