

# Opening of new multi-million pound Inverness railway station

February 3, 2023



Inverness Airport railway station has been officially opened. Transport Minister Jenny Gilruth was joined by local school children to mark the opening, with passenger services starting on the Friday (February 3).

The new station is part of a wider £42 million Scottish Government investment in Scotland's Railway which has seen the addition of a new 950 metre passing loop which will allow trains on the single line to pass in the opposite direction, renewal of 7 kilometre of track, and installation of an innovative signalling system. This will add capacity to this route, build resilience, and enable future freight growth encouraging removal of HGVs from the roads.

It provides another route to the airport in addition to the existing regular bus service and, following work by Hitrans, includes an upgraded active travel path linking with the airport terminal.

The station will improve transport links to the new town of Tornagrain and to the growing Inverness Airport Business Park, acting as a catalyst for further investment and sustainable economic development in the region.

Jenny Gilruth, Minister for Transport said: “I am delighted that Inverness Airport station is now complete and that services will start calling at the station for the first time this Friday (3 February). The site was one of my earliest visits as Transport Minister and gives me a first-hand opportunity to see the significant progress that has been made in a short space of time.

“The £42 million package provided by the Scottish Government, including the station and wider rail network infrastructure investment will build resilience and additional capacity. By making rail a more attractive option, we can encourage more people to choose this sustainable transport option as an alternative to the car.

“By providing easy access for nearby communities to the key cities of Aberdeen and Inverness, we can encourage inward investment and housing growth, which will both support the local and wider economies.

“I’d like to thank everyone involved for the collaborative working that has delivered this fantastic new station.”

Alex Hynes, managing director of Scotland’s Railway said: “It is part of our commitment, alongside the Scottish Government, to expand the rail network and open-up Scotland’s Railway to new communities.

“The opening of the station at Inverness Airport is an exciting development that has the potential to transform the area by improving transport connectivity and triggering further investment and economic growth around the site.

“We look forward to services calling at, and passengers using, Inverness Airport and to seeing the positive impact the station will have in the area in years to come.”

Chris Taylor, VisitScotland Destination Development Director, said: “The opening of Inverness Airport Railway Station is fantastic news for the region as it will not only improve accessibility but also help deliver economic and social benefit to the area.

“Our aim for Scotland to be recognised as a globally recognised responsible destination includes a long-term commitment to increase promotion of public transport and active travel.

“This new station will enable visitors to easily transfer from the airport to the station by bus, walking or cycling and then into the city by train – or onwards to further explore this beautiful region.”

Inglis Lyon, Managing Director, Highlands & Islands Airports Limited (HIAL) said: “HIAL has a long-standing commitment to work closely with Transport Scotland, airline operators, partner agencies and local communities to ensure the long-term sustainability and connectivity for the Highlands and Islands.

“The last 12 months have brought a mixture of both optimism and challenge for HIAL, and the opening of this airport railway link is a major step forward in terms of recovery for the airport and surrounding business park.

“It is important we do all we can to support our customers and partners by working together to build back

confidence in air travel, and the new rail link will be a significant factor in that process for Inverness.

“Inverness Airport plays a key role in opening the Highlands to the rest of the world, and it is huge for the area that we join major airports around the world in having a designated rail link. My congratulations to all involved in making this happen.”

HITRANS Chair Uisdean Robertson said: “We are delighted to see this project come to fruition, providing connectivity for airport staff and users, Inverness Airport Business Park visitors and employees, and residents of Tornagrain and the wider East Inverness area. It is the first new rail station for a Green Freeport, and it’s a station for the islands too – HITRANS Board Members and officers used the train today to access the airport to fly to Stornoway for a HITRANS Board meeting.”

The first train to call at Inverness Airport was piped onto the platform and Minister was welcomed by pupils from Croy Primary school who joined with Ms Gilruth to plant a tree and bury a timescale as of celebrations to mark the official opening of the new station.

The Minister then joined with guests including representatives from the local community, Highland Council, HITRANS and Inverness Airport to unveil a plaque to mark the opening of the new Highland station.

*Photo credit: Transport Scotland*