

TAYSIDE AND CENTRAL SCOTLAND TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP

12 SEPTEMBER 2023

LOCAL RAIL DEVELOPMENT FUND UPDATE

REPORT BY SENIOR PARTNERSHIP MANAGER

Purpose

This report updates the Partnership on progress on the Stirling Strategic Park & Ride Strategy, Bridge of Earn Transport Appraisal and Tay Cities Park and Choose Strategy being funded by Transport Scotland's Local Rail Development Fund.

Summary

There are 3 LRDF funded studies:

- Stirling Strategic Park & Ride Study has completed the Detailed Appraisal and is to be considered by Stirling Council Committee prior to submitting to Transport Scotland with recommendations.
- Bridge of Earn Transport Appraisal has completed a draft Detailed Appraisal and is awaiting comments from Transport Scotland.
- Tay Cities Park and Choose Study has completed the Preliminary Appraisal and is progressing the Detailed Appraisal for completion by March 2024.

1 RECOMMENDATIONS

1.1 That the Partnership:

- (i) notes progress against the three Local Rail Development Fund studies funded by Transport Scotland.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 On 19 March 2018 Transport Scotland published information on a £2m Scottish Government fund to develop options to improve local rail connections. The LRDF aims to assist in funding appraisal work and to potentially bring forward proposals aimed at tackling specific rail connectivity issues.

2.2 At its meeting on 25 September 2018 the Partnership noted and welcomed the award of grants from Transport Scotland for two LRDF transport appraisal projects: Stirling Strategic Park & Ride Strategy and Bridge of Earn Transport Appraisal. Each of these applications had been submitted in partnership with the relevant Local Authority and both appraisal contracts were subsequently awarded to Systra.

- 2.3 On 28 February 2019 the Local Rail Development Fund (LRDF) re-opened for further applications and Tactran was successful in being awarded funding for the Tay Cities Park & Choose Strategy considering transport opportunities along the Montrose to Perth Transport Corridor. The application was submitted in partnership with Angus, Dundee City and Perth & Kinross Councils, with this contract being awarded to Stantec.
- 2.4 A Local Rail Development Update report was provided at the Partnership meeting at its meeting on 14 December 2021 and updates have been provided quarterly through Budget and Monitoring Reports at each Partnership meeting. Most Recently an update was provided within the Director's Report to the Partnership meeting on 13 June 2023, with the Partnership remitting officers to provide a report at its next meeting.
- 2.5 Depending on the outcome of the appraisal work, Transport Scotland will then consider whether any rail recommendations should be taken forward in their Rail Enhancements pipeline. Any projects considered in the Pipeline will be subject to detailed business cases undertaken by Network Rail prior to any final decision by Transport Scotland.

3 DISCUSSION

Stirling Strategic Park and Ride Study

- 3.1 The study arose from the transport appraisal undertaken to inform Stirling Local Transport Strategy and Local Development Plan. This work identified that approximately 40% of car trips in the City had either a destination or origin outside the City area. Accordingly, the LTS recommended investigation of strategic park and ride opportunities (i.e. for park and ride trips into and out of the City).
- 3.2 Transport Scotland endorsed both the [Case for Change](#) and the [Preliminary Options Appraisal](#) for this study, accepting that there was a problem that rail could provide a solution for. The draft Detailed Appraisal stage of the study, which included seeking public opinion on strategic park and ride options around the City, was completed and submitted to Transport Scotland in February 2022. Transport Scotland provided comments on the draft report in November 2022 and the report was finalised in March 2023.
- 3.3 Discussions are ongoing with Stirling Council officers prior to reporting to the appropriate Stirling Council Committee, which will consider the report before determining the recommendation to be presented to Transport Scotland.

Bridge of Earn Transport Appraisal

- 3.4 The Bridge of Earn Transport Appraisal is a multi-modal appraisal considering public transport options and includes the new development proposed at Oudenarde, with existing provision to create a new Park & Ride station. Consideration has also been given to the impacts and benefits a new station in this location would have on the wider Perth to Edinburgh rail travel demands and connectivity.
- 3.5 Transport Scotland endorsed both the [Case for Change](#) and the [Preliminary Options Appraisal](#) for this study, accepting that there was a problem that rail could provide a solution for. A draft Detailed Appraisal was submitted to Transport Scotland in June 2022 providing an appraisal of 4 main options:
- Option 1 – Improve local bus services from Bridge of Earn to destinations in Perth
 - Option 2 – Improve strategic bus and coach services on the Perth to Edinburgh corridor
 - Option 3 – New bus-based Park & Ride
 - Option 4 – New railway station at Oudenarde
- 3.6 Tactran officers have regularly sought comments from Transport Scotland on the draft report, however, at the time of writing Tactran has yet to receive comments on the draft.

Tay Cities Park and Choose Study

- 3.7 The Tay Cities Park & Choose Strategy is a multimodal transport appraisal that is considering Park & Ride opportunities (both rail and bus) along the Montrose to Perth transport corridor. In 2019, Tactran was awarded £147,000 from the LRDF to undertake the study.
- 3.8 Transport Scotland has endorsed the [Case for Change](#). The draft Preliminary Appraisal was submitted to Transport Scotland in July 2022, with comments received from Transport Scotland in November 2022 and these were responded to in January 2023. Following a meeting in May 2023, where changes required were agreed, the Preliminary Appraisal was endorsed by Transport Scotland.
- 3.9 The cost for completing the Case for Change and Preliminary Appraisal was £98,467, leaving a balance of £48,553 from the original £147,000 grant award to undertake the Detailed Appraisal. On 31 July 2023, Transport Scotland formally agreed to extend the balance £48,553 of the grant award into 2023/24 financial year.
- 3.10 However, when the consultants Stantec tendered for the project it was programmed to be completed in 2021, now due to the extended programme, which was beyond Stantec's control, the cost of the Detailed Appraisal has increased from £44,553 to £62,197. The additional costs because of the delay being: an increase in person-hour rates between 2021 and 2023; new

consultancy project team members requiring to familiarise themselves with the project; an additional Inception meeting and further sensitivity testing required. Tactran requested that Transport Scotland increase the grant award to cover the additional costs, but has received a response confirming no additional funds are available for LRDF projects. Alternative funding arrangements are being considered regarding the shortfall.

3.11 An inception meeting for the Detailed Appraisal is scheduled for 8 September 2023, with the Detailed Appraisal programmed to be completed by March 2024.

3.12 Appendix A details of the options recommended and not recommended for Detailed Appraisal.

4 CONSULTATIONS

4.1 Officers from relevant Local Authorities, RTPs, Transport Scotland and the rail industry have been consulted on the various rail initiatives reported.

5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

5.1 All the work is funded by Transport Scotland's Local Rail Development Fund. Tactran received an initial award of £125,000 and a further £3,800 for Stirling Strategic Park & Ride and an initial award of £97,000 and a further £26,100 for Bridge of Earn Transport Appraisal and £147,000, for Tay Cities Park & Choose Strategy.

6 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The three studies are being undertaken in line with the Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG). Equalities impact work will be or has been undertaken as part of the respective studies.

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NOTE

The following background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (and not containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to a material extent in preparing this Report.

Report to Executive Committee RTP/18/15, Local Rail Development Fund, 18 May 2018

Report to Partnership RTP/19/08, Local Rail Development Fund Update, 19 March 2019

Report to Partnership RTP/21/30, Local Rail Development Fund, 14 December 2021

Report to Partnership RTP/23/15, Director's Report, 13 June 2023

Tay Cities LRDF

Multi-Modal Transport Options Recommended for Detailed Appraisal

Option Ref.	Type	Description
1	Active Travel	Increase active travel links to nearest Public Transport Hub from hinterland settlements and to Perth and Dundee, including enhanced provision around key services and public transport interchanges
2 & 3 combined	Bus & DRT	Improve direct bus services from hinterland settlements to Perth and Dundee, and rail stations along transport corridor Increase DRT public transport to serve hinterland settlements
4	Park and Ride / Choose	Implement new Park and Ride / Choose sites for all modes at key locations around Perth and Dundee, including associated bus priority measures, and at key strategic regional locations
5	Integration	Improve existing bus-to-bus and bus-to-rail interchanges along the transport corridor
7	Rail	Relocate Invergowrie rail station to Dundee West, including construction of bus-to-rail interchange. Invergowrie would close
8	Rail	Proposed new rail station between Perth and Dundee at Errol, St Madoes or Walnut Grove, including construction of bus-to-rail interchange
9	Rail	Increase the number of calls and upgrade station facilities at existing, underused, rail stations at Balmossie, Barry Links and Golf Street
10	Rail	Increase rail station car parking capacity at intermediate stations along the transport corridor (outside Perth and Dundee)

Multi-Modal Transport Options Not Recommended for Detailed Appraisal

Option Ref.	Type	Description
6	Rail	Proposed new rail station north of Perth at Luncarty on the Highland Main Line, including construction of a Park and Ride / Choose site

Option 6 recommendation

Option 6 could generate benefits for the Luncarty area, particularly in relation to improving accessibility to key destinations [e.g. Perth, Edinburgh and Glasgow] for employment, further education, healthcare and social activities. These benefits would be limited to a relatively small user walk-in population and a further, small population a short drive away at Stanley. Overall, there does not appear to be a strong demand for a new rail station and associated Park and Ride / Choose facility at Luncarty. There is no obvious destination and the existing bus services (Stagecoach services 23, 27 and 34) to Perth would be more competitive than the rail offer, particularly in terms of frequency. Furthermore, the HML rail services are too infrequent for a Park and Ride site. In addition, travelling to Perth offers a much wider range of onward service options making Luncarty unattractive for large parts of the day for destinations further afield. The train service, if Transport Scotland permits the calls and the timetable allows, would be relatively sparse for Park and Ride / Choose. Furthermore, the addition of more calls on Highland Main Line services, if it is possible, is contrary to Transport Scotland's policy to speed up journey times on long distance routes. This option is unlikely to meet the TPOs in a cost-effective manner.

For these reasons it is recommended that Option 6 is not taken forward to detailed appraisal.