

## LOCAL RAIL DEVELOPMENT FUND – APPLICATION FORM

Applications to this fund should be completed and returned to [Rail.Infrastructure.Strategy@transport.gov.scot](mailto:Rail.Infrastructure.Strategy@transport.gov.scot) no later than 28 June 2019.

Please refer to the guide (available separately) on how applications will be assessed before completing the application.

### Project Applicant

<b>Project Name:</b>	<b>Aberdeen South Stations Appraisal</b>
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<b>Project Applicant:</b>	Nestrans
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<b>Position:</b>	Transport Strategy Manager
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<b>Type of Organisation:</b>	Regional Transport Partnership
<b>Registered Number:</b>	Company or Charity Registration number.
<b>VAT Number:</b>	VAT number if applicable
<b>Website:</b>	www.nestrans.org.uk

<b>Total Project Cost (£):</b>	121,000
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<b>Funding Requested (£):</b>	<b>80,000</b>
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<b>Start Date:</b>	October 2019
<b>Completion Date:</b>	October 20

## **Criterion 1 Alignment with STAG.**

- a) Please provide a **brief** description of the transport problem you are seeking to resolve.
- b) Explain the approach you intend to take to providing the supporting evidence for the transport problem(s) in line with [Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance \(STAG\)](#). (STAG is required in all cases where it is likely that Scottish Government funding, support or approval will be sought for any further development work and construction associated with the proposal).

*(300 word limit for this criterion)*

### **a) Transport Problem**

Between Aberdeen and Laurencekirk on the East Coast mainline, is a stretch of approximately 32 miles. The population of the area is around 69,000 people (42,000 in Kincardine & Mearns and a further 27,000 in south Aberdeen), yet only three stations (in addition to Aberdeen itself) serve the area.

In 2017/18, Aberdeen station had a total of 2.95 million passengers; Portlethen 43,000; Stonehaven 523,000 and Laurencekirk almost 96,000. Laurencekirk station was reopened in May 2009 and its patronage now exceeds projections by almost 200%.

The Strategic Development Plan and Local Development Plans identify the area as a Strategic Growth Corridor and over 8,000 houses and over 100 hectares of industrial land additional development is proposed for the study area over the next 20 years. One of the determining factors in identifying Strategic Growth Corridors is their good communication links, including rail lines.

There is an identified potential to increase access to the railway and to improve connectivity, enable a modal shift away from car dependency and enhance transport links in and around the Aberdeen area.

Nestrans and the local authorities of Aberdeenshire and Aberdeen City Council have had long-standing plans to develop better rail services, including a cross-Aberdeen local service. The recent introduction of "Revolution in Rail" separating long distance from local services as well as the ongoing investment in dualling the line between Inverurie and Aberdeen, provides the opportunity for this local service which will operate from December 2019 and enables consideration of whether further rail stations would enhance the viability and operation of such a service.

### **b) Supporting Evidence**

Objective supporting evidence will be completed from a range of sources. We will use information from existing strategic transport model (ASAM 14), and this will be augmented from proposed survey information collected during Autumn 2019 as part of the post-AWPR upgrade. We anticipate this to include platform surveys.

We will use information from the recently completed cumulative transport appraisal undertaken in support of the Strategic Development Plan and Local Development Plans. However, there will also be primary research with key stakeholders. Experienced rail engineers will be used to assess feasible opportunities. This combination of evidence is fully in compliance with STAG.

## **Criterion 2 Tackling local issues and promoting economic growth in communities.**

Please show clearly how the transport appraisal work will be focussed on a local transport issue, where rail may be one of the potential solutions, and how this may contribute to inclusive growth (local economic and social benefits) in communities. Please also provide any evidence of how the proposal fits with local development plans, local/regional transport strategies and relevant community planning (300 word limit).

The Strategic Transport Appraisal, funded through the Aberdeen City Region Deal, noted that key transport issues are changing the car dependency in the area, as well as supporting the realisation of the Aberdeen City Centre Masterplan. Improving public transport connections from growing residential areas on the periphery of Aberdeen, to the City Centre (offering educational, employment and wider leisure opportunities) is entirely consistent with national policy, regional transport and land use plans, and local transport and land use plans. The local cross rail opportunity also enables better cross-city connections to employment hubs at Dyce.

The north east of Scotland has seen economic growth exceeding that of most of Scotland. 64% of the population are economically active (higher than national average), with over 78% employment rate (again, above the national average). Gross Value Added (GVA) per head of population is one of the highest in the UK, some 65% above the Scottish average and 53% above UK.

Between 2012 and 2017, the population of Kincardine & Mearns grew by 4.7%, making it one of the fastest growing areas in Aberdeenshire.

By 2037, it is projected that the population will grow by a further 13,500 (6,400 in Kincardine & Mearns and 7,100 in South Aberdeen) – critical to the North East's Regional Economic Strategy's aim of developing the people and skills necessary to deliver the economic development of the region and ensure that there is access for all employers to qualified labour.

The RES is a 20-year vision shared by local authorities and the private sector for the well-being of our place and our people. The North East remains a major economic driver of the Scotland and UK economies, and improving transport infrastructure is a key requirement to anchoring that economic base.

Enabling development in the right places with the appropriate choice of transport options to access jobs and services is a key element of the Regional Transport Strategy and Development Plans.

Facilitating access to the rail network will help to meet these objectives, whilst ensuring transport choice, encouraging mode shift away from dependence on private cars and therefore contributing to carbon reduction and environmental considerations.

### **Criterion 3 – Alignment with Scottish Government priorities for transport.**

Although your proposal will be focussed on local issues it should also fit with the strategic priorities for transport set out in the [National Transport Strategy](#), the [Rail Enhancements and Capital Investment Strategy](#), the Scottish Ministers' [High Level Output Specification](#) and/or complementary strategies such as the [Rail Freight Strategy](#). Please demonstrate how your project does this (300 word limit).

The proposed project seeks to improve access to the rail network, thus enabling modal shift from road to rail, with economic and environmental benefits.

The project therefore supports the NTS vision of 'An accessible Scotland' with a transport system that 'provides opportunities for all and is easy to use' and which 'meets everyone's needs'. It contributes directly towards achieving three of the five High Level Objectives:

- Promote social inclusion by... increasing the accessibility of the transport network;
- Protect our environment and improve health by...investing in public transport; and
- Improve integration by making journey planning and ticketing easier....

Furthermore, accessibility improvements are key to meeting the following Strategic Outcome:

- Improved quality, accessibility and affordability, to give choice of public transport, better quality services and value for money, or alternative to car.

The Rail Enhancement and Capital Investment Strategy states that investment will only be made where projects represent value for money in terms of economic, social and environmental outcomes, and will be targeted towards reducing inequality and increasing inclusive economic growth. This project aligns well with the Strategy in that the option appraisal aims to identify the solution which best meets the needs of users and represents value for money, while the ultimate aim is to resolve a currently inequitable situation, empowering all members of the community to access jobs, services and social opportunities, and thus contribute to, and benefit from, the continued economic prosperity of the region.

#### Criterion 4 – Unique proposal

Please confirm with Network Rail and the relevant local authority/regional transport partnership that your proposal is unique and the transport appraisal is not being addressed by other development works, either through rail industry processes or wider transport planning.

Network Rail can be contacted at - [SystemoperatorsScotland@networkrail.co.uk](mailto:SystemoperatorsScotland@networkrail.co.uk)

Nestrans regularly meets with rail colleagues in Transport Scotland, Network Rail and ScotRail. This proposal has been discussed at various times, and it has been confirmed that this proposal is complementary to the ongoing work of our rail partners. It also fits with recently completed work assessing local rail station options to the north of Aberdeen undertaken by Nestrans, which fully involved the Scottish rail industry. This work was conducted at a cost to Nestrans of £41,000 and is regarded as an initial contribution to the overall cross-Aberdeen local rail service of which this proposal consists the second part.

Nestrans is currently undertaking a review of its Regional Transport Strategy. To complement that, as part of the Scottish Government's funding aligned to the Aberdeen City Region Deal, a Strategic Transport Assessment has been developed by partners with support from Jacob's consultants.

A study to identify potential station sites and to better understand the potential for a local rail service and costs:benefits associated with that would aid strategy development and feed into Transport Scotland's ongoing work to develop a National Transport Strategy review and Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR2).

The proposal is to use the funding to prepare the Preliminary Appraisal – The Case for Change; and thereafter Initial Options Appraisal, subject to successful gateway approval. Gateways will be established within the work programme between the different stages of STAG.

#### Criterion 5 – Governance

Please provide details that demonstrate that your organisation's governance is in line with best practice in the private, public or third sectors. **(Please refer to Annex A before completing this section)**

Nestrans is the statutory Regional Transport Partnership for Aberdeen City & Shire. We will work in partnership with Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council and in close association with the rail industry, including Abellio ScotRail, Network Rail and Transport Scotland's Rail Division. Already, the partners have regular liaison meetings, summaries of which are reported to the Nestrans Board.

The Nestrans Board is a properly constituted public sector body with open and accountable practices, audited accounts and full disclosure of interests.

## **Criterion 6 – Funding Required**

Please give details of the estimated cost of the planned appraisal work including any matched funding you are able to provide. (Matched funding is not an essential criterion, but proposals which include a degree of matched funding may be looked upon favourably).

The proposed study will accord with STAG, with different stages considering the Preliminary appraisal (Case for Change), Initial Options Appraisal and Detailed Options Appraisal.

It is suggested that this should be undertaken by an experienced consultant in Transportation Planning and is estimated that this would necessitate a further budget in the region of £80,000. Nestrans Board has previously committed £41,000 to consider the potential for new stations north of Aberdeen, in the area between Aberdeen and Dyce. This bid for Local Rail Development Funding is therefore for the sum required to add to the existing evidence – i.e. a contribution of £80,000, representing 66% of the total cost of £121,000.

An assessment of potential demand and feasibility/suitability of possible station sites in the study area between Aberdeen and Laurencekirk, along with an options appraisal and assessment of the needs and optimum operating conditions for a local cross-Aberdeen rail service (between Montrose and Inverurie), is likely to necessitate the following stages.

### **Preliminary Appraisal:**

Evidence-based analysis of problems and opportunities, involving consultation with user groups and rail industry, considering current issues, and potential future issues with regard to planned changes on the route. Transport Planning Objectives will be established and a long list of potential options for fulfilling these objectives generated and sifted. This will provide the basis and rationale for the Case for Change for considering options for intervention.

### **Initial Options Appraisal:**

Options should consider potential new station sites (both “origin” sites focussed on residential demand and “destination” sites, based on likely employment or service centres), taking account of rail industry technical criteria for suitability, considering planning status and possible future allocations, and indicate preferred sites, with high level consideration of “footprint” giving thought to requirements for platforms, overbridges, car parking, access and other facilities.

This should also include consideration of possible timetable for a local rail service, including optimum running times so as to ascertain and inform the likely number of stations, balancing the needs for connectivity with running times and operational aspects. Options will be assessed on a qualitative basis against the TPOs and STAG appraisal criteria.

### **Detailed Options Appraisal:**

This stage of work will provide further detail on station option sites identified in the Initial Appraisal, by considering projected demand, an optimum timetable for a Local Rail Service. This should also identify any infrastructure requirements necessary to optimise the operation of the services and feasibility issues. It should also provide high level demand projections by station site and produce costs:benefits analysis for the package, split by individual elements.

The emerging options would be appropriately assessed against established STAG appraisal criteria and the appraisal specific Transport Planning Objectives. The appraisal report would summarise the potential costs, benefits, and feasibility issues associated with each option, with a clear recommendation and action plan for the next stages of taking the proposal forward.

## Supporting information required for Criterion 5

To assess this criterion, we need to be clear on roles and responsibilities and how the organisation is funded.

As such, we will carry out some basic financial checks and may request company accounts, or other relevant financial documents to determine the organisation's financial status. Smaller community groups **must** provide a copy of the organisation's constitution.

We also need to confirm that internal control systems are in place to provide confidence that the organisation can effectively safeguard any monies granted. The organisation should present a case that demonstrates robust internal controls, for example, audit arrangements, budget monitoring, risk management and in detecting and monitoring fraud.

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## Answering Criterion 5

### Funding

Please advise how is the organisation funded, for example, from donations, fees, subscriptions or grant funding.

### Budget Monitoring

Please confirm and provide evidence to show that regular budget monitoring is carried out. Evidence should show that policies and procedures are in place to deal with variances between actual and budgeted expenditure and that any funds awarded can be separately identified from other grant funding.

### Internal Controls

Please provide evidence to confirm that internal controls are robust and free from error and that internal audit arrangements are independent from management. If there is no internal audit function, please confirm what representations have been made by management to ensure that internal control systems are sufficiently robust.

### Fraud

Please confirm that there are effective procedures set up to prevent and detect fraud, bribery and corruption. If there is not a formal policy on fraud, please advise what informal arrangements are in place.

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## Help and Advice

If you need help with understanding what information is required to satisfy this criteria for your particular organisation, please contact Transport Scotland at [rail.infrastructure.strategy@transport.gov.scot](mailto:rail.infrastructure.strategy@transport.gov.scot)