

# DETAILED OPTIONS APPRAISAL EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



## Introduction

SYSTRA Limited (SYSTRA) has been commissioned by the South East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SEStran), the Newburgh Train Station Group (NTSG) and Fife Council to undertake a transport appraisal of Newburgh with a particular focus on improving movements to Perth, Edinburgh and Fife by sustainable modes.

The work is being undertaken in accordance with the Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG) and builds on the Newburgh and Area North Fife STAG Pre-appraisal Transport Study, carried out by the NTSG in 2018.

This Executive Summary outlines the key findings of the Detailed Options Appraisal stage of the Newburgh Transport Appraisal. It follows the Pre-Appraisal (Initial Appraisal: Case for Change) and the Initial Options Appraisal stages of the project. The full Detailed Options Appraisal Report can be obtained through the following link:

[newburghsustainabletransport.co.uk](http://newburghsustainabletransport.co.uk)

## The Case for Change and Preliminary Options

The Pre-Appraisal (Initial Appraisal: Case for Change) stage collated relevant socio-demographic and transport information for the study area, identified the key transport related problems, opportunities, issues and constraints for Newburgh and set out three Transport Planning Objectives (TPOs) for the study:

- **TPO1** – Improve transport access to key services and markets (including employment, training, education, health and leisure opportunities) for Newburgh residents;
- **TPO2** – Improve public transport connectivity and journey times to and from Newburgh for residents, businesses and visitors;
- **TPO3** – Increase sustainable travel to and from Newburgh.

The Case for Change recommended six potential options that could help address the identified problems and opportunities and the work was informed by an extensive stakeholder and public consultation. The subsequent Preliminary Options Appraisal qualitatively assessed the identified six options against the TPOs, five STAG criteria, Established Policy Directives and factors concerning feasibility, affordability and public acceptability, to ensure they were likely to fulfil the study's requirements. The work was informed by another round of stakeholder consultation, which resulted in some 233 responses received from local residents, businesses, a campaign group, transport providers and operators; as well as Newburgh visitors.

## Detailed Options Appraisal

The Detailed Options Appraisal represents the final stage of the STAG process and the study first refined the final set options for Detailed Appraisal as follows:

- Option 1 – Improved (existing) bus services to/from Newburgh;
- Option 2 – (New) Express bus service through Newburgh;
- Option 3a – New permanent train station in Newburgh on Abernethy Road;
- Option 3c – New permanent train station in Newburgh at the East of Town;
- Option 3d – New permanent train station in Newburgh at Clatchard Quarry;
- Option 3e – New modular “temporary” train station in at one of the above locations;
- Option 4 – Car sharing

Each of the identified options have been qualitatively and quantitatively assessed the identified options against the TPOs, five STAG criteria, Established Policy Directives and factors concerning feasibility, affordability and public acceptability, to ensure they are likely to fulfil the study's requirements and again this was informed by another round of stakeholder consultation. Figure 1 summarises how the identified problems in the study area, such as poor access to services and markets by public transport, lengthy journeys by public transport and lack of public transport options in Newburgh led to the identification of the TPOs for the study. It then shows how each Option scored in the detailed appraisal against these TPOS and STAG criteria.

Problems	Appraisal Criteria	Options						
		OPTION 1: Improved (existing) bus services	OPTION 2: (New) Express bus service	OPTION 3: New Train Station in Newburgh				OPTION 4: Car Sharing
Access to services and markets by public transport	Transport Planning Objectives			3a: Abernethy Rd	3c: East of Town	3d: Clatchard Quarry	3e: Modular Station	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No evening bus services</li> <li>Bus timetable does not allow efficient commuting to/from work, place of study, hospitals and social/leisure destinations</li> <li>Poor public transport integration</li> <li>Lack of bus service frequency</li> <li>Limited weekend public transport services</li> <li>Small bus vehicles do not meet demand</li> </ul>	<b>TPO 1:</b> Improve transport access to key services and markets for Newburgh residents	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓✓ /	-
	<b>TPO 2:</b> Improve public transport connectivity and journey times to and from Newburgh	✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓✓ /	-
	<b>TPO 3:</b> Increase sustainable travel to and from Newburgh	✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓✓ /	✓
Lengthy journeys								
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Long commuting distances</li> <li>Lengthy public transport journeys to key commuting destinations e.g. Cupar, Dundee, Kirkcaldy and Edinburgh</li> </ul>								
Lack of transport modal choice to/from Newburgh	STAG Criteria							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited public transport options</li> <li>Limited active travel options</li> </ul>	Safety	✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	-
High public transport fares	Environment	✓	✓	✓	-	-	- /	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Compared to car travel</li> </ul>	Economy	£13.0m	£77.7m	£82.2m	£81.2m	£81.2m	£81.2m	£2.4m
Attracting inward investment	Integration	✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓✓ /	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Poor connectivity</li> </ul>	Accessibility & Social Inclusion	✓	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓✓ /	-
	Cost to Government (BCR)	<b>2.1</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>8.2</b>	<b>5.9</b>	<b>5.9</b>	<b>16.8 to 78.8</b>	<b>n/a</b>

Figure 1: Summary of key problems, set TPOs, and Detailed Appraisal Summary

## Study Conclusions

On consideration of all appraisal criteria, Option 3a (new rail station at Abernethy Road) is the best performing option, providing the highest BCR and appraisal scores against the TPOs and STAG criteria. It is also considered the most feasible of all rail options from a construction and accessibility perspective.

If a modular platform was constructed as an alternative at the Abernethy Road site, this Option (3e) would realise the same benefits as 3a but at significantly lower costs. A short modular station platform would represent a deviation from standard platform design and would require further feasibility assessment should it be decided to progress with it. Recent short-length station reopenings in Scotland do show however that such an option is possible.

Option 3c (new rail station at east of Town) also achieves a positive BCR and generally performs well against the TPOs and STAG criteria. However, while overall positive, the strengths of these benefits is lower than Option 3a. Crucially, the construction of a station at this site is likely to be significantly more challenging than Option 3a and cost therefore may be higher than those indicated in the BCR calculations, including the high-cost uncertainty analysis. A similar outcome is seen in Option 3d (new station at Clatchard Quarry), however the option does not perform as well as Options 3a or 3c against the TPOs or STAG criteria, particularly Integration and Accessibility and Social Inclusion given its less convenient location. Any modular station at these locations would again realise the same benefits and disbenefits at the permanent options, albeit at significantly lower cost.

Following detailed appraisal of three possible locations for a new permanent or modular train station in Newburgh, it can be reasonably concluded that Option 3c and Option 3d should not be progressed in favour of Option 3a at Abernethy Road.

Option 1 is a relatively low cost option which has generated a positive BCR and overall is considered to bring minor positive benefits against STAG criteria and TPOs. Further discussions could be undertaken with local bus operators to discuss the feasibility of this option going forward whilst recognising the challenging situation for bus operators and local government finance currently. Crucially however, discussions with Fife Council highlighted that there is no additional funding presently available from the Council to subsidise the enhancement of any existing services. While it may be desirable to further consider this option and explore other funding mechanism, the feasibility of realising this option for comparatively lower benefits means it is unlikely to merit further consideration.

Option 2 is the highest cost option, with capital costs anticipated to be significantly higher than the other options under consideration in this appraisal due to the requirement for regular bus fleet renewal. In order to be successful, the option will require close coordination with bus operators, Fife Council and potentially subsidies to support any services. Fife Council however have advised that any new service competing with existing supported services would be highly likely to mean existing funding resource was directed elsewhere, as the existing gap in service / service provision would no longer exist in Newburgh. There is also the possibility of abstraction from commercial services by the new, supported service. As in Option 1, discussions with Fife Council highlight that there is no additional funding presently available from the Council to subsidise any new service. The option is therefore only likely to be realised if alternative funding sources can be identified (e.g. the operator Stagecoach commercially funds the option). While it may be desirable to further consider this option and explore other funding mechanisms, particularly following high appraisal performance in this report, the significant cost and associated risk of the option need to be taken into account by decision-makers.

There are no costs associated with Option 4 where a car sharing scheme in Newburgh would be informal, likely organised by the community and will have no capital costs or additional ongoing operating or maintenance costs. Although the costs are negligible, there are very few benefits associated with this option, and its feasibility would be challenging (absence of critical mass of users to make it attractive, and reliance on community volunteers to manage it). For these reasons, it is not recommended that this option is considered further.

**It can be concluded therefore that Option 3a is the most suitable solution to meet all of the study objectives and therefore meet the needs of people and business in Newburgh and the surrounding areas. It can also be concluded that if a 10m modular station is feasible following further exploration, Option 3e would represent the best value for money option, and it should be situated at the Abernethy Road site. It is therefore recommended that these two options are worthy of further consideration by Transport Scotland.**

## APPROVAL

Version	Name		Position	Date	Revision
1	Author:	Jana Haspicova; David Murtagh	Associate Associate	13/06/2022	Draft for client comment
	Checked:	Neill Birch	Director	13/06/2022	
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2	Author:	Jana Haspicova; David Murtagh	Associate Associate	30/06/2022	Final Report
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