

National Planning Framework 3 - National Developments Proposal Form	
Proposer	Royal Burgh of St Andrews Community Council
Contact details	c/o Dr I B J Goudie (Vice-Chair) 10 Windsor Gardens, St Andrews, Fife KY16 8XL
Date	13 December 2012
Title of development	St Andrews Rail Link
Elements to be covered by national development status (list)	<p>We seek the construction of a rail link to provide <i>direct</i> services to Edinburgh and Dundee. Specifically:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • approximately 4.9 miles of single track from St Andrews to Seggie, as recommended by the high-level concept report (May 2012) by Tata Steel (see attachment); • south-facing and north-facing chords at Seggiehill and Moonzie respectively to link with the East Coast Main Line; • route alignment to enable maximum speed of 90 m.p.h.; • new hourly service to Edinburgh, perhaps via Dunfermline; • new hourly or half-hourly service to Dundee; • a new station in St Andrews, just short of the former station site, but close enough to form an integrated transport interchange with the adjacent bus station; • single platform station with passive provision for a run-round loop and a second platform for charter trains.
Fit with criteria and statement of more than regional importance (guide - 500 words)	<p>Reinstating the rail link to St Andrews is a project of national significance. St Andrews itself is of international importance given the status of the University of St Andrews and the role of the town as the Home of Golf. Its key place in the leisure market is recognised by VisitScotland and Scottish Enterprise. Yet the development of all of these facets of the town, with all their implications for the Scottish economy, is hindered by transport links that are far from world class. NPF2 (National Planning Framework) says, “There is potential for building on the international profile of St. Andrews as a leisure destination and centre of excellence in academic endeavour and scientific research.” That potential will not be realised without addressing the town’s connectivity.</p> <p>The St Andrews rail link also ticks several boxes of current concern. Specifically it will contribute to (i) The target of an 80% reduction in emissions by 2050. Despite an improved bus service from St Andrews, the overflowing car-park at Leuchars Station tells its own tale, confirming the reluctance of car-drivers to use buses instead. Evidence from elsewhere (e.g. Alloa), however, suggests that motorists are more willing to transfer to rail.</p> <p>Once in their cars, many residents will drive not just to Leuchars, but rather to their final destinations, Edinburgh, Dundee, Glasgow, England So, although Tata Steel envisaged construction of just 4.9 miles of track, carbon savings are likely to be much greater than this length would usually imply. By attracting people back to public transport, a St Andrews railhead will yield reductions in carbon emissions over much longer journeys than the length of the rail link.</p>

(ii) Reducing unemployment and job creation.

Although the rail link itself, which Tata Steel have calculated will operate at a profit, will provide a small number of new jobs, the indirect implications are much greater. St Andrews is currently one of only a handful of university towns in Britain without a direct rail service. The University, already much the largest employer in the town, will be strengthened in many ways. In particular, there will be increased potential for industrial and commercial research spin-offs, currently hindered by geography.

St Andrews is also a top tourist destination. N.E. Fife recorded 2.8 million tourist days in 2010, with St Andrews accounting for 47% of the total visitor days and 60% of the tourism revenue. Easier access to the town will boost the hotel trade, particularly in the low season, and increase usage of golf facilities.

The rail link will open up the St Andrews employment market to job-seekers from Dundee and the less affluent areas of Fife, and provide new options for St Andreans.

(iii) Strengthening Scotland's links with the rest of the world.

In deciding whether or not to come to Scotland, the ease of access to the destination of interest determines many visitors' decisions. For St Andrews, the last five miles from Leuchars act as a major psychological disincentive, making the venue appear remote. Overseas academics, and other visitors, see no problem in flying into Edinburgh, but the link from there is less obvious, and many resort to a 100 mile round trip by taxi. The Tata Steel study envisages a service with a stop at Edinburgh Gateway, thus providing a direct link to the airport interchange.

(iv) Improving our transport networks

Preliminary analysis by Tata Steel suggests this improvement to the rail network will yield annual travel time savings of £214k - £269k at 2011 prices. Additionally, based on a 30% modal shift, they project annual reductions of £69k - £166k in the "external costs of cars", which covers congestion reduction, infrastructure cost savings, reductions in accidents, air pollution, noise and greenhouse gas emissions, offset by lower indirect taxation.

Another concomitant of the project is the long-overdue upgrading of the signalling north of Ladybank, increasing capacity on that portion of the East Coast Main Line. The project would also intermesh well with the proposed electrification of Edinburgh-Dundee, providing a twenty-first century solution.

Importantly, the benefits extend to users of other modes and to those elsewhere in North East Fife. Easing the inexorable rise in vehicle movements will help relieve congestion not only in St Andrews, but also in Guardbridge and Cupar, where summer tail-backs are all too frequent.

(v) Adapting to or mitigating the effects of climate change.

With the urgent need to address the problem of climate change, the transport policies of the last 50 years are no longer viable. Reconnection of St Andrews to the rail network will need to happen sooner or later. In view of the development pressures on the town, the sooner the nettle is grasped the easier the job will be.

Location (description, map reference, or map)	A small-scale map is given in Figure 4 of the Tata Steel report.
Public Engagement to date (guide - 100 words)	<p>Members of the Community Council's Rail Committee have met or emailed a number of stakeholder organisations. Reactions from the University of St Andrews and the Community Councils of Guardbridge and Strathkinness have been generally favourable. Guardbridge were attracted by the implied possibility of reduced traffic flow through their village, whilst Strathkinness welcomed one of two later amendments by Tata Steel (see attachment). The other amendment by Tata Steel is aimed at addressing the concerns of the Old Course Hotel about its entrance. The University is assisting with data collection and the 9000-strong student body, including the 200 who commute to St Andrews daily, was also supportive. St Andrews Partnership has not yet taken a stance, but facilitated consultation by inviting FaceBook and Twitter followers to submit responses.</p> <p>It is not surprising that a project of this size does not find favour with all, particularly those who favour other funding priorities and those with vested interests. St Andrews Merchants' Association and Stayinstandrews welcome investment in infrastructure but prefer other projects. The Links Trust has expressed opposition to the Tata Steel proposal: some route modification may be necessary to accommodate their position.</p> <p>North East Fife SNP and Fife Council Liberal Democrats have been briefed on the Tata Steel report. A range of individual submissions has also been received, an overwhelming majority being in favour. Scotrail has been very supportive, and Fife Council's Head of Transportation is proposing that SESTRAN be approached to carry out the STAG (Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance) exercise.</p>
Environmental Study / Assessment available? (yes / no)	No
<i>If yes, what significant effects were identified</i>	N/A
Delivery timescale	Based on experience of Airdrie-Bathgate, Scotrail regards 7 years as realistic.
Development lifespan	At least a century. The previous line lasted 117 years before BR's shortsighted decision to close it.
Consents required	<p>The administrative requirements include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short-term route-safeguarding; • STAG; • Planning consent; • Land purchase; • Scottish Parliament approval for new rail line.
Visual representation of the development available? <i>If yes, please list and state if provided</i>	A detailed plan of Tata Steel's updated optimised alignment (August 2012) is attached.