



Department
for Transport

NetworkRail



Restoring Your Railway: Ideas Fund Application Form



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Confidentiality and data protection

This application, and the processing of personal data that it entails, is necessary for the exercise of our functions as a government department. If your answers contain any information that allows you to be identified, DfT will, under data protection law, be the Controller for this information.

As part of this application process we are asking for your name and email address. This is in case we need to ask you follow-up questions about your application. You do not have to give us this personal information. If you do provide it, we will use it only for the purpose of asking follow-up questions.

DfT's privacy policy has more information about your rights in relation to your personal data, how to complain and how to contact the Data Protection Officer. You can view it at <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-transport/about/personal-information-charter>.

To receive this information by telephone or post, contact us on 0300 330 3000 or write to Data Protection Officer, Department for Transport, Ashdown House, Sedlescombe Road North, St Leonards-on-Sea, TN37 7GA.

Your information will be kept securely by the Restoring Your Railway team and destroyed within 12 months after the deadline has expired.

1. Explanatory notes

The Ideas Fund (IF) is part of the Restoring your Railway (RYR) Programme. The Department for Transport (DfT) will fund 75% of costs, up to £50,000, of successful bids to help fund transport and economic studies and create a business case. Bids to expand access to the rail network can include the reopening of closed lines as well as the restoration of passenger services on routes which are currently freight-only.

This application form includes questions designed to help you provide the relevant information so we can assess your bid, but it is not exhaustive. Please make sure you include detailed information about the socio-economic benefits of the bid, the services that would be provided, and details of any known anticipated infrastructure and operating costs.

We ask that you do not use other formats. We recommend the response be between 15 - 20 pages in total. All key information should be included through responding to the questions below, however supporting evidence can be referenced and submitted as supplementary documentation. Please do not enter personal information within these boxes which would make an individual identifiable.

If you are submitting more than one bid, please indicate the priority order for your proposals.

If you have any queries, please contact the Restoring Your Railway team at restoringyourrailway@dft.gov.uk.

2. Key details

Please provide the following information:

Lead promoter (name, organisation and email address)	<div style="background-color: black; width: 100%; height: 1em; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> Stroud District Council <div style="background-color: black; width: 100%; height: 1em; margin-top: 5px;"></div>
Sponsoring MP(s) (name, constituency and email address)	Siobhan Baillie MP, Stroud Siobhan.baillie.mp@parliament.uk (Supporting letter attached)..
*Impacted line/ Location	Gloucester to Bristol line, Stonehouse, Gloucestershire
Amount of track reopened to passenger rail services, if applicable (to the nearest mile)	N/A
Number of new stations proposed, if applicable (include site postcodes where possible)	One new station on site of former Bristol Road Station, Stonehouse, Gloucestershire, GL10 3RB

*to be used in the publication of Ideas Fund bid detail on gov.uk

3. Bid summary

Provide a description of the proposed project; defining the intervention, service levels and/or infrastructure requirements. Where details (such as service frequencies) form part of the feasibility work required, please identify this in your response.

Please write your answer here [max 500 words]

Local context

The proposal is to re-open a station on the existing Gloucester to Bristol line, in Stroud District, at the site of Stonehouse (Bristol Road), closed by Beeching in 1965. We refer to it as **Stroudwater** to recognise its location within the Stroudwater Corridor, the third largest urban area in Gloucestershire, running along the canal between Stroud and Stonehouse. The Stroudwater Corridor, has a rail catchment population of 55,000, defined in a previous feasibility study, the Halcrow Report, 2002 (see Map 4 and Figure 1).

With a concentration of employment sites next to the station, Stonehouse is a major employment area for Stroud District. Around 12,000 live within a mile, and 22,000 within 2 miles of the station site. Stroud town, with 18,593 residents (Census, 2011) and significant retail and cultural attractions, is 3 miles away. Stroud's largest employer is Ecotricity (750 jobs) a green energy supplier with significant development plans. Planned growth will take the catchment population to 64,000 and a further 29 hectares of employment land is planned within two miles of the site.

The Stroudwater Corridor is the largest urban area on the NE/SW main line, between Sheffield and Plymouth, without a direct rail link to its regional capital, Bristol, 25-30 miles away. Consequently, the Stroud District generates only half of its rail potential, thus contributing to Gloucestershire being the poorest generator in the South West. Map 2 shows the rail network in Gloucestershire.

It is a mile from the M5 (J13) which attracts demand to Bristol creating congestion and pollution at both ends. Stroud District has high levels of out commuting with 83% of journeys to work, both inbound and outbound, made in a private car ([Gloucestershire's Draft Local Transport Plan \(2015-2041\) Connecting Places Strategy](#), para 7.1.6, p.66). The development of the station is part of Stroud District's climate change objective of carbon neutrality by 2030, which includes plans to maximise use of active travel, public transport and a target to increase rail use in the District to 50% up on the 2010/11 baseline ([Stroud District Council Draft 2030 Strategy Master Plan, Autumn 2020](#), Target T14, p.22).

Service requirements

As detailed later the assessed demand is between 400,000 and 500,000 exits and entrances p.a., thus requiring an hourly service. Once post-Covid demand patterns evolve and stabilise, a need for an increased frequency at certain times or with some extra stops on other services may appear. A capacity and timetabling study is required.

Infrastructure

This would be a new station on an existing line requiring passenger amenities, ramped footbridge and possibly a booking office. The Halcrow Report (2002), a detailed feasibility study, concluded station construction was practical with direct access from the A419. Recently, there have been track and signalling improvements between Bristol and Gloucester. Assessment of the latest operating implications of a new station is a priority to progress this proposal.

Parking at the proposed station has been given careful thought, and it would be inappropriate to regard it as a Parkway. Generally, parking rarely exceeds 15% of overall demand but every effort will be made to encourage a limit of 10%. Apart from some parking in front of the station, there are various suitable areas close to the station, including parking a short walk away for around 55 cars owned by Stonehouse Town Council

Is the project already within the remit of Network Rail's management and control process for enhancements? If so, what stage is the project at? Has there been any other previous assessments of this proposal? What was the outcome? What has changed since previous reviews?

Please write your answer here [max 500 words]

Network Rail engagement

There has been good engagement with Network Rail; most recently, at a meeting with Network Rail regional planners in October 2020. The proposal is not currently within the remit of Network Rail's management and control process. They have advised that the scheme should be embedded in local transport plans and strategies. On Network Rail's advice, Stonehouse Town Council took advice from Wellington and Cullompton Station Group on promoting the proposal. The proposed station is now embedded in Stroud District Council's Local Plan and wider strategy, and pending a successful feasibility study is expected to be part of the Local Transport Plan.

Previous assessments

Halcrow Study, 2002

The first steps for re-opening were made 25 years ago, leading to Halcrow Group Ltd's bespoke Study for Gloucestershire County Council, 2002. It identified the core catchment area along the Stroudwater Valley to Stroud (see Map 3). The population of 46,000 was surveyed. The cluster of businesses with 3000+ workers adjacent to the station were also surveyed for their journey origins. Nearly 70% were in Manufacturing, Precision Engineering, Electronics, Automotive & Aerospace, Over 65% were not local and had to drive to work.

The study found that *'provision of a station was practical'* at a cost of £2.0m.

The basic 'Station only' NPV was £370-578m with a B/CR of 3.00 – 4.13. A staffed station and any extra rolling stock would reduce these figures accordingly.

Passenger numbers were assessed as between 130k & 200k entrances and exits p.a.. Over 50% of journeys were to the south. Since 2001 journeys within the County have increased by 150%, equivalent today to 325k to 500k. With the final adoption of the new Stroud District Local Plan (due to be submitted for examination in April 2021), minimum future population growth would lift this to between 390k and 600k journeys – ignoring a 130% growth in business employment to 7000+.

At the time Network Rail and GWR were reluctant to accept a new station as an additional stop on the single local service might prejudice their aspired timetable of the two through trains each hour. The station proposal was put in abeyance by GCC.

Gloucestershire Rail Study, Amey, 2015

In 2015, GCC published a Rail Study reviewing four new stations between Gloucester and Bristol. It was prepared by Amey Consultants, using the coarse-grained TEMPRO model. This Study was sent to West of England Combined Authority (WECA), who were 'leading' in respect of Charfield Station and the MetroWest project.

Metrowest Phase 2 Gloucestershire Extension Study, CH2M, 2016

WECA's own consultants (CH2M HILL) reviewed the GCC Study. They warned the model only provided a quick check, not accounting for trip destination or any 'atypical local factors' (sports stadia, tourism etc) and should be considered alongside expert local knowledge of a station site. Their detailed review of data excluded education or leisure demand. New stations at Charfield and Stonehouse (Stroudwater) together generated the highest BCR of 4.72.

4. Financial overview of the proposal

Please provide details of the potential third party contribution for the work you are seeking to fund through the Ideas Fund. This should include the amount, the terms and percentage of the total costs. Please include any other relevant financial considerations, for example information on potential third party funding for the delivery of the project as a whole.

Please write your answer here [max 500 words]

Contributions to work towards Business Case:

Funder	Amount
Ecotocity, the Stroud based green energy supplier and developer of the Football stadium and proposed Eco Park at Junction 13 of the M5 (2.2km from station site), have offered match funding towards the cost of further feasibility work on the proposal, subject to the bid to the Restoring Your Railway Fund being successful.	£10,000
Stonehouse Town Council funding towards studies	£5,000
Gloucestershire Community Rail Partnership (GCRP): in kind expert support with transport planning and social research.	£5,000
Total	£20,000
Dunmore Developments (landowner of station site)	Amount to be confirmed.

Potential third party funding for project delivery:

GFirst LEP: In February 2021, Stonehouse Town Council drafted an Expression of Interest for GFirst LEP's Capital Infrastructure Pipeline which Stroud District Council have agreed to sponsor. Inclusion in the Capital Investment Pipeline document does not guarantee funding support but ensures that the Stroudwater Bristol Road Station proposal will be considered as appropriate funding opportunities arise.

Developers: Contributions could be sought from the developers of two major housing developments planned close to the station site:

Name/location	Proposed development	Distance from station site	Planning stage reached
North of Stonehouse	650 dwellings for 2,000 residents, 5 ha of employment land	1km	Pre application public consultation Draft site allocation PS19a in Stroud District Local Plan (2019) (Final draft Local Plan to be approved by District Council April 2021)
Whitminster	2,500 dwellings, 14 ha of employment land, primary school	3km	Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping Opinion issued. Additional housing option for Stroud District Local Plan (2020)

What will the funding will pay for? For example, to support further research to investigate potential benefits for local tourism or carry out a feasibility study on infrastructure changes to help support a subsequent SOBC.

Please write your answer here [max 500 words]

We are seeking funding of £35,000 towards £55,000 for GRIP 2 studies to deliver a current business case for the proposal. We have secured £20,000 match funding. The current priorities are:

Priority	Study/work area	Estimated cost
1	A capacity and timetabling study for the proposal to include examination of the impact of different scenarios for additional stations on the Bristol to Gloucester line.	£5,000
2	An updated demand forecast study.	£10,000
3	An updated estimate of infrastructure requirements and their costs and confirm constructability.	£10,000
4	Strategic Outline Business Case and working towards rail industry work pipelines and seeking funding to design and deliver station.	£15,000
	Project management Development of project plan, liaison with stakeholders and alignment with policies and plans including West of England Combined Authority's MetroWest and Network Rail's Bristol to Birmingham line study.	£15,000
	Total	£55,000

Are there any financial dependencies or risks in delivery of the work proposed to be funded through the Ideas Fund?

Please write your answer here [max 500 words]

We have confirmed that the match funding totalling £20,000 is available. Stroud District Council is now the promoter for this bid to the Ideas Fund whereas Stonehouse Town Council (with Rail Future) was the promoter for the bid to Round 1. As the local planning authority, Stroud District Council is better placed than the Town Council to sponsor this proposal and take it forward.

5. Strategic overview of the proposal

Rationale for Intervention

Provide a high-level explanation of what your project aims to achieve, including a summary of the problems/opportunities the project looks to address, providing supporting evidence where appropriate. This should include consideration of how the project aligns with local and national policy. What is the transport problem? Have you considered other transport modes to deliver the outcomes and if so, why is rail the appropriate solution?

Please write your answer here [max 500 words]

The proposal to re-open Stroudwater Station, Bristol Road, Stonehouse is an economic, sustainable and deliverable project to provide a rail link with their regional capital, Bristol, for 55,000 people in the Stroud Valleys. The Stroudwater Corridor is England's largest urban area without a direct link to its regional capital; it can be quicker to travel to London by train than to Bristol. The area immediately around the station location will see very significant housing, employment and leisure growth within the next 5-10 years. The proposal would deliver a much-needed new rail station for Gloucestershire to fill a missing rail infrastructure link to the rest of the Western Gateway area.

The proposal contributes to many national, regional and local strategic objectives:

- Reduction in congestion and pollution on M5, within Bristol and in Stroud Valleys.
- Reduction in carbon emissions in line with targets set by national and local government.
- Contribution to economic development by providing better, greener access for jobs, education, leisure and tourism opportunities in Gloucestershire and Bristol.
- Linking transport and land use planning by meeting the demands of development in an increasingly densely populated area where further major housing and employment sites are planned.
- Increasing rail use by 30% (County draft Local Transport Plan), or by 50% (Stroud District 2030 Masterplan)
- Tackling deprivation and levelling up by giving better access to jobs, training and education for residents of an area close to the station which is amongst the 30% most deprived neighbourhoods in England.
- Maximising the opportunities for economic development with the Stroud Canal Corridor Masterplan area

The key transport problems addressed by the proposal are:

- Gloucestershire's low level of rail use;
- a need to improve direct rail services to Bristol and rail connectivity along the M5 corridor.

Both issues are clearly evidenced in the Gloucestershire Rail Investment Strategy 2020, the draft Gloucestershire Local Transport Plan 2020-2041, GFirst LEP's Strategic Economic Plan 2, 2018 and the Western Gateway Transport Strategy 2020/25. The Gloucestershire Rail Investment Strategy, March 2020 found that an enhanced regional service between Bristol and Birmingham would deliver "substantial economic benefits and improve connectivity along the M5 corridor" (p.6).

The site location would provide an accessible and sustainable station being in a densely populated area, close to the town centre and major industrial estates, with excellent road, cycle and pedestrian access. Stonehouse Burdett Road, on the Cheltenham to London line is also close. See Map 5 for a locality map for the existing Stonehouse Burdett Road station (GCRP 2020) which also clearly places the proposed station site in context.

Other modes of transport, such as bus services, could contribute to the aim of increased connectivity with Bristol but would not provide equivalent benefits of reducing pressure on highway capacity, reducing journey times, improving air quality and reducing carbon emissions. Additional bus services would be a less attractive option to commuters and less likely to encourage modal shift away from the private car. Therefore, a new station would be the best solution to this identified transport problem.

Gloucestershire's draft Local Transport Plan supports the provision of a new station South of Gloucester. Stroud District Council's adopted Local Plan (2015) reserves land for the

station and supports the provision of an additional station on the Bristol to Birmingham line; the new Final Draft Local Plan (to be approved April 2021) is likely to further support the provision of a new station at this site, which fits with the Plan's carbon reduction measures and ensuring new housing is supported by sustainable transport measures.

What impact might the project have on levelling up outcomes?

Please write your answer here [max 500 words]

A station with fast, direct access to Bristol would give people a much wider choice of job, training and educational opportunities.

The station site is close to Stroud 005D Lower Super Output Area (LSOA) which is amongst the 30% most deprived neighbourhoods in the country; only three areas in total within Stroud District are ranked this highly. Deprivation levels for income, employment, education, skills and training are particularly high, ranking within the 20% most deprived areas for these measures (see Map 6). Around 1,400 people live in Stroud 005D LSOA (ONS, Mid-2019 Population Estimates).

There are lower rates of participation in higher education in areas of the station's catchment area nearest to the station. The POLAR measure of participation in higher education by Middle Layer Super Output Area (MSOA) ([Office for Students](#)) assigns a quintile to an area based on participation by 18-year-olds in higher education: quintile one shows the lowest rates of participation and quintile five shows the highest. The following table shows participation rates in higher education in areas neighbouring the site of Stroudwater Bristol Road Station using POLAR data. See Map 7:

Area	MSOA ref	POLAR4 Quintile	POLAR4 Participation rate in Higher Education
Stonehouse	Stroud 005	Quintile One	21.3%
Cainscross	Stroud 004	Quintile Two	27.7%
Stroud Town	Stroud 006	Quintile Three	34.8%

The station would enable greater youth mobility and enhance educational opportunities by connecting to schools and colleges within Stonehouse and Stroud and to further education opportunities in Bristol. Both students and staff would benefit from access to rail transport. In particular, the station would provide a good rail connection between the Stroud and Filton campuses of Stroud and South Gloucestershire College, a major regional further education provider which offers a wide range of vocational training, apprenticeships and qualifications. The Filton campus is close to Bristol Parkway station as is University of the West of England.

What would be the impact if this project was not taken forward?

Please write your answer here [max 500 words]

The project is urgently needed. Impacts would be as follows if it is not taken forward:

- Continued poor uptake of rail. Failure to meet Gloucestershire County Council's target of a 30% increase in rail use. Failure to meet Stroud District Council's target of a 50% increase in rail use.
- Continued reliance on single car transport and motorway network in an area with growing population.
- Need for very significant spend on upgrading Junctions 12 and 13 of the M5
- Failure to decarbonise transport and meet local and national carbon reduction targets.
- Failure to encourage a mode shift towards rail because no alternative where routes via Gloucester or Swindon are unattractive propositions by rail
- A barrier to improved educational attainment, training and employment, the lack of direct rail link to Bristol, would continue.
- The demands of housing and employment development which have taken place over the last 20 years would not be met. Since 2001, the Stroudwater station catchment area population has been growing at almost twice the rate (19% increase) of the population in the District (10%) and County (12%) (Census 2001, ONS Population Estimates, 2018).
- The demands of future planned housing and employment development would not be met with new residents again failing to 'think rail' in their journey planning
- The full economic and social benefits of projects such as the Cotswold Canals restoration, and the Forest Green Rovers football stadium and Eco employment park at Junction 13 of the M5 and the Stroud District Canal Corridor Strategic Economic Plan would not be realised.
- Failure to capitalise on the advancement of the Charfield Station proposal; it has been demonstrated that there is a very strong business case for opening both stations together and there may also be a case for further stations on the line.

Project Dependencies & Risks

Confirm project constraints and/or dependencies. These could include planning restrictions, stakeholder support, construction and capacity constraints.

Please write your answer here [max 500 words]

Site ownership and planning considerations

The immediate site is owned by Network Rail as it is on an existing line.

The adjacent site is owned by Dunmore Developments and has planning permission (APP/C1265/A/13/2195656/S.12/2538/OUT) for a housing development. The planning permission reserves some parking for station users and includes a requirement for a roundabout to allow buses to turn close to the station access. See Map 8 for site map of permitted development. Dunmore Developments support a new station on the site but have been waiting some years for progress towards its construction.

The site is within the Stroud Industrial Heritage Conservation Area.

Stakeholder support

Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) support the provision of a station south of Gloucester on the Bristol to Birmingham line but their draft Local Transport Plan does not commit to supporting a particular site as they intend to complete further studies to assess the demands of development over the next decades. GCC have recently confirmed that they view the proposal for Stroudwater Bristol Road as a local station to be delivered in the

short to medium term which is not in conflict with their much longer term project to find a sustainable transport solution to future growth in the south of Gloucester area.

Further engagement is needed with Network Rail now that GCC have clarified their position on the Stroudwater Bristol Road proposal.

Stonehouse Town Council has not recently engaged with GWR as firstly, this did not seem worthwhile until GCC’s position was more clearly understood; and secondly, meaningful engagement may have been hampered by the fact that local councils are not in a position to develop stations. It is hoped that productive engagement can begin now that Stroud District Council is promoting this bid. GCRP will also be happy to facilitate as a strategic thinking CRP but with sound local knowledge of the issues and opportunities in the local area.

Construction and capacity constraints

Further studies are needed on construction and capacity constraints.

The following details may be relevant to the level of construction costs.

- the station site is on brownfield site within the safeguarded footprint of the original station
- there is a good, short access from the main road
- only the construction of up platform (to Gloucester) would be likely to affect trains, depending on the time of day or night when the work is scheduled
- the construction of the station buildings and the down platform should have little effect on train operations with suitable planning.
- it is assumed that an accessible footbridge will be needed to span the two lines.
- studies will be needed to assess requirements for signalling adjustments in respect of the level crossing.

Network Rail are carrying out a Strategic Study on the Bristol to Birmingham corridor and they have advised that this will help to provide relevant background information for our proposals; the findings should be available to share by early Summer 2021.

What are the key risks and issues faced by the proposed project and how can these be mitigated?

Please write your answer here [max 500 words]

Risk	Potential mitigation
There are a number of proposed sites for a new station on Bristol to Gloucester line.	Recent studies show that the Bristol Road Stonehouse site produces greater economic benefits compared with other sites. There is longer term scope for additional stations to strengthen the local network synergy of benefit to all other stations. Gloucester, Stroudwater, Charfield, Yate and Filton could create and reinforce strong economic links. The impact on existing levels of connectivity and service frequency to stations such as Cam and Dursley must be assessed carefully. Work needs to be done on current line capacity and timetabling to compare options.

Gloucestershire County Council's developing long term rail strategy	Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) support the provision of a new rail station south of Gloucester but have not confirmed a site for this. They have advised that all proposals for a new station in this area must be supported by a strong business case. We are applying for funding to build the Business Case. GCC have advised that they are looking at provision of a station in the longer term and view Stroudwater Bristol Road as a short to medium term project. Stroudwater Bristol Road Station is a deliverable project urgently needed to address well evidenced transport problems and reduce carbon emissions.
Managing demand and impact on area around station.	Can be addressed by station design, finding additional sites for parking, designing station as a transport hub.
Timetabling sufficient services to meet demand.	Need for line capacity and timetabling study. The end of the rail franchising system is an opportunity for a different approach to timetabling, with the potential for greater flexibility.

Stakeholder Management

Please Identify the key stakeholders for your bid, their interest in the bid and how you plan to work with them. What train operator(s) might be involved in delivering the proposed services? Have you engaged with them at this stage? Do you have their support?

Please write your answer here [max 500 words]

Gloucestershire County Council	<p>As the County's transport authority GCC's interest in the proposal is clear.</p> <p>All key stakeholders were invited to an event by Stonehouse Town Council promoting the proposal in early March 2020.</p> <p>With the MP's assistance, we have worked to promote the bid to GCC.</p> <p>As a result GCC modified wording in the draft Local Transport Plan to allow for the development of third party proposals for a station south of Gloucester, subject to a strong business case. This application is for funds to help build that case.</p> <p>For further detail on GCC's position please see the Project Dependencies section of this bid.</p>
Stroud District Council	<p>Stroud District Council is the planning authority and long-term supporter of this proposal.</p> <p>The Council's Environment Committee passed a unanimous resolution of support in September 2020. The site is reserved in the current adopted Local Plan as a future station site and the new Final Draft Local Plan for the period 2020-2040 (to be approved April 2021) is likely to increase that commitment. The Council is promoting the current bid in addition to the support from</p>

	Stonehouse Town Council who promoted the bid to Round 1 of the Ideas Fund.
MP and local politicians	There is strong and long-standing cross-party support for the proposal.
GFirstLEP	GFirstLEP have attended a stakeholder event and meeting with GCC on the proposal which fits well with their Strategic Economic Plan and Local Industrial Strategy. An Expression of Interest to GFirstLEP's Capital Investment Pipeline has been submitted on the advice of the LEP.
Network Rail	Initial positive engagement was made with Network Rail who gave helpful advice and contacts to help progress the proposal.
GWR	GWR would be the main train operator for the station; they have not been contacted recently about the proposal as the focus has been on clarifying GCC's position as transport authority. For see further information see Project Dependencies section.
Gloucestershire Community Rail Partnership (GCRP)	GCRP is supported by all Districts, the LEP, the County Council and community sector organisations. The proposal is included in GCRP's current Activity Plan for support in developing a business case. GCRP has gathered key evidence which can be used to support the business case and have pledged time in kind towards further social, travel planning and walking/cycling/accessibility research.
Landowner: Dunmore Developments	Landowner strongly supports proposal but is concerned about lack of progress. Note the land is safeguarded in local plan.

What other support is there for the bid and how do you plan to maintain this? Are local communities supportive of the bid and can you provide any evidence of this support?

Please write your answer here [max 500 words]

Supporter	Evidence
Local people	<p>The proposal was the most requested infrastructure improvement during consultation for the Stonehouse Neighbourhood Development Plan and has long been an aspiration for the community as evidenced in previous community plan documents.</p> <p>In 2020 a Stroudwater Station supporters campaign was established with a website, social media and an e-petition to Gloucestershire County Council which has been signed by 1161 supporters to date, despite COVID 19 preventing wider public promotion/engagement in person.</p>
Stonehouse Town Council	<p>Stonehouse Town Council and Rail Future made the bid to Round 1 of the Ideas Fund and have assisted with the current bid.</p> <p>They have promote the proposal intensively since March 2020, particularly with the County and District Councils.</p>

	They have publicised the proposal in the past year with articles in the Stroud News and Journal, on TV with BBC Points West and by presentations to local groups such as the Stonehouse Community Climate Action Forum and Stroud Youth Forum.
Local Councils	As well as continuing support from Stonehouse Town Council, in 2020, nine other local councils in the station's catchment area passed resolutions in support of the new station proposal: Stroud Town, Cainscross Town and the parishes of Frampton on Severn, Haresfield, Harescombe, Kings Stanley, Leonard Stanley, Standish and Whiteshill & Ruscombe. Together these councils cover an area with a population of almost 35,000.
Cotswold Canals Trust	The Board of Trustees passed a unanimous resolution in support of the station proposal in October 2020. The Trust is a key partner in the Cotswold Canals restoration project to connect the Stroudwater Canal to the Severn and Thames. Activity plans to be delivered over the next 3 years relate to local economic development, tourism, education and biodiversity.
Stroudwater Navigation Company	Owns the Stroudwater Canal. The Directors passed a unanimous resolution of support for the new station in October 2020.
Business West Gloucestershire	The Director has written several supportive articles in his local newspaper column.
Ecotricity	Ecotricity have consistently supported the Stroudwater Bristol Road station and have pledged £10,000 towards feasibility studies which is offered as match funding for this bid. They are a successful green energy and technology business and the owner of the local Forest Green Rovers Football Club. They have major developments planned close to the station site: Football Stadium: Permission granted for a new Carbon Zero 5,000-seater stadium 2.2 km from station site. Eco-park: draft site allocation in draft Local Plan for a carbon zero Green Technology Cluster adjacent to stadium to provide 4,000 jobs.
Stonehouse Court Hotel	Local sustainable hospitality business. Owner spoke at stakeholder event 2020.
Stroud Chamber of Commerce	Have confirmed support for proposal.
Forest Green Rovers FC	Have confirmed support for proposal and publicised to supporters.
Rail Future	Have actively promoted proposal with a stakeholder event in 2019; continued assistance with researching and writing funding bids and promotional material.

Friends of Bristol Suburban Railways (FOSBR)	Support the campaign with an informative web page .
Wycliffe College	Large private school next to station site. Message from Headteacher confirming support received October 2020.
Transition Stroud	Supports proposal and have promoted Supporters campaign on their social media.
VisitGlos	Gloucestershire's partnership destination management organisation working with LEP and GCC. Welcomes the business case proposal for a further rail station at Stroudwater to service the canal corridor and Stroud Valleys.

What opposition is there to the bid (if any)? How do you plan to overcome this?

Please write your answer here [max 500 words]

There is no evidence of opposition to the proposals from the public or other stakeholder groups.

The feasibility study will be critical in identifying and mitigating specific issues which could become sensitive at a detailed stage and should therefore be addressed at the earliest stage. These issues are:

- The size of the proposed station car park and the potential for car-based travel to lead to parking in residential areas or other inappropriate locations
- The level of sustainable travel to/from the station in terms of neighbour impact
- How active developers will be in proactive promotion of the use of rail as a key 'selling point' and maintaining mode shift through long term residential travel plans
- Ensuring that the Stroudwater station would not impact adversely on capacity for further station provision and existing footfall levels (e.g. Charfield, Cam and Dursley, Hunts Grove)

6. Socio-economic benefits of the project

In presenting the socio-economic benefits of the project please provide information on the population, employment and gross weekly earnings statistics for the local authority district(s) impacted by the project and the geographic area of the project's origin and destination to help make the case for your bid, where available.

Please write your answer here [max 500 words]

Stroudwater Bristol Road station would serve a catchment area of 55,000 in the Stroud Valleys. See Map 4 and Figure 1. Stroud District has a population of 120,000 with 66,300 economically active residents. Gross weekly pay of full-time workers is £559.80 in Stroud (lower than the national average, £587.10). The resident population of a key destination for the station, Bristol, is 463,400.

The key socio-economic benefits of the proposal are as follows.

Economy and jobs:

Stroudwater Station would improve rail connectivity along the M5 corridor and provide a good link to North and central Bristol for people to commute in either direction. Economic testing shows additional regional rail services via Gloucester had “a very strong impact” generating over £9m GVA pa ([Gloucestershire Rail Investment Strategy 2020](#), p.37).

Stroudwater Station would be close to some of the District’s major employment sites. Stonehouse is the only net importer of workers in the Stroud District, with 7,000 jobs, 3000 more jobs than working residents ([Stroud District Settlement Role and Function Study](#), Update 2018, May 2019, para. 4.23, p.45).

Stonehouse is in and adjacent to growth areas for employment ([Gloucestershire Rail Investment Strategy 2020](#), Figure 18, p34,). A further 29 hectares of employment sites are planned within 3km of the station, including 4000 jobs at the 10-hectare Eco Park proposed by Ecotricity at Junction 13 of the M5, 2.25km from the site.

A direct link to Bristol would help the area pull its weight in the Western Gateway region. The Stroudwater Corridor’s business strengths include the hi tech, manufacturing and green sectors. There is potential for greater synergy with these business sectors in Bristol.

Demands of development:

The population in the catchment area has become increasingly densely populated over the last two decades and is a current focus for housing development in the Stroud District. Current and proposed major developments are:

- **Permission granted:**
 - **Great Oldbury** (1,350 dwellings, 10ha of employment land) is under construction, 1km from station site.
 - **Forest Green Rovers FC Stadium:** 5000 seat zero carbon football stadium, 2.2km from station site.
- **Draft site allocations and additional housing options** in new Local Plan:
 - **North of Stonehouse** (700 dwellings, 5ha of employment land), 1 km from station site.
 - **Whitminster** (2,500 dwellings, 14ha of employment land), 3 km from station site.
 - **Eco-Park:** (Employment site,10ha, 4000 jobs), 2.2 km from station site

Youth mobility and education:

The station would enhance educational opportunities by giving students and staff rail access to schools and colleges within Stonehouse, Stroud, Bristol and beyond.

Leisure economy and wellbeing:

The station would enhance the social, cultural, tourism, sport and shopping opportunities for residents of the Stroudwater Corridor and the Bristol region. Over a quarter of train journeys are now made for leisure and shopping (Rail Factsheet, December 2020, Department for Transport).

The site is 400m from the Cotswold Canals restoration project, which is predicted to attract 250,000 informal visitors, 76,000 overnight visitors per year with an associated increase of £3m GVA pa. Stroud District Council are currently developing a Strategic Economic Strategy for the Canal Corridor Strategic Plan area. The project was recently awarded an £8.9 million Heritage Lottery Fund grant.

The new Forest Green Rovers stadium (Junction 13, M5), Stroud Valleys and Cotswold Way are all nearby.

The station would allow direct access to Bristol's hospitals for medical appointments

Transport benefits

Please provide an overview of the transport benefits that the project could deliver, with consideration of expected levels of demand (including assessments of population catchment areas), journey time savings and new journey opportunities created by the project. Please also outline how your project will integrate with other modes of transport such as cycle routes, local bus services and adequate station car parking facilities.

(Note: at this stage the expected transport benefits may only be qualitative, and if development of this is part of the feasibility/ideas work needed, please state this).

Please write your answer here [max 500 words]

Pre-Covid **studies and analyses** indicate demand would be between **400,000 and 500,000** entrances+exits a year from a population supporting a full range of journey purposes. Clearly at least one service an hour is required for what would become the busiest station between Gloucester and Bristol Parkway. It will serve a population of 55,000 (Map 4 and figure 1), rising to 64,000 in 4/5 years, and employment of 7,000, with a further 29ha of employment sites planned within 2 miles of the station.

There is unmet demand for rail travel in Gloucestershire where people take around half the average train journeys per year (9) compared to the national average (21) ([Estimates of Station usage 2018](#), Office of Rail and Road). Gloucestershire has just nine stations with only three offering direct service to Bristol.

Pre-Covid **journey times** to Bristol from Stonehouse and Stroud were up to **1hr 40mins**, with a change at Swindon, Gloucester or Cheltenham (direct trains to London can be quicker!). A direct service to Bristol T.M. would take around **40mins**. As stated earlier a whole range of destinations to/from the south and west of Bristol would become attractively feasible for those with or without cars.

The addition of a station of Stroudwater's potential demand and growth will automatically enhance and 'compound' the connectivity of the local regional network in future years

Accessibility to the station can be termed '*oven ready*'. Coming from beyond Stroud are a Sustrans National cycle route (NCR 45), a canal towpath, an urban road with footpath and the A419 all converging at the station approach. Within a mile of the station is a 'web' of footpaths leading to the station.

The Station is located close to the route of an every 20 minute bus service from Stroud and every 40 minutes to Gloucester; new services are planned to serve the major Great Oldbury development just west of the station, which could then benefit from planned connections. A planning condition for the nearby Forest Green Rovers FC stadium is the provision of a bus service for away fans from and to the nearest railway stations.

The station is located on National Cycle Route (NCR) 45 from Stroud to Gloucester. This is being upgraded with further improvements planned in 2021 by Stroud District Council via

CILS funding and further upgrades via developer's contributions from the Forest Green Rovers football stadium development and the proposed Eco-Park, both of which lie on NCR 45.

As detailed in the infrastructure section, any suggestion of a Parkway would be incompatible with the District's carbon neutrality objectives and the active furtherance of walk/cycle facilities. Nevertheless, parking for c.10% of trips is being progressed, as opposed to the 'norm' of the 15% who park at the station.

GCRP is currently refreshing a network of station travel plans for Cam and Dursley, Stroud, Stonehouse, and the new Stroudwater location these in 2021 with the aim of reducing car access to local stations within Bristol and the Stroud Valleys.

An updated demand assessment and timetabling and capacity study are part of the feasibility work needed to progress the proposal.

Wider benefits

Please provide an overview of the wider economic benefits that the project could deliver, with consideration of additional job opportunities, improving access to key services and facilitating new development. Please also outline the anticipated environmental impact and/or benefits of the project. For example, does the project serve an area covered by an Air Quality Management Area.

(Note: at this stage the expected wider economic benefits may only be qualitative, and if development of these forms part of the feasibility/ideas work needed please state this).

Please write your answer here [max 500 words]

Environmental impact

Stroud District is already a pioneer in sustainability and action to mitigate climate change. It sees the station as an important way to reduce car traffic within and beyond the District. The reopening of the station will not have any adverse environmental impacts on the natural world.

Stroudwater Station would make a significant contribution to reducing carbon emissions in line with targets set by national and local government by reducing car journeys and congestion on A419, M5 and Bristol. Road use leads to almost half the annual carbon emissions in the Stroud District: Road use is a major contribution to carbon emissions; it is calculated to produce 48% of annual carbon emissions in the Stroud District ([Contextual Evidence Report](#) informing Strategy to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030, Stroud District Council, 2020). Stroud District has high levels of out commuting, with 50% of people leaving the district to work of which 20% travel to Bristol ([Stroud Sustainable Transport Strategy 2019](#), AECOM for Stroud District Council): carbon reduction targets can only be met by a modal shift away from the car.

The site is on cycle route 45 and easily accessible by cycle, foot and public transport. It lies within the route of an every 20 minute bus route and less than 1km from Stonehouse Burdett Road station on the Cheltenham to London line.

Regional economic development

Stroudwater has significant employment in a growing 'green' industry together with a major cluster of large precision engineers and SME hi-tech research and development companies. Stroudwater station will boost these complementary threads of sustainability and advanced new technical developments through direct links to Filton, Bristol and other such technical centres,

Apart from the specific benefits from direct connections with Bristol Parkway, Filton and Bristol Temple Meads, there are other connections within the wider Bristol Urban Area (population 760,000) and to all elements of the business-led Western Gateway of which Bristol is the primary hub. Stroudwater is already larger than many currently connected 'Gateway' areas and could make a useful contribution.

Bristol is also the rail hub of the South West for all journey purposes, and the inclusion of Stroudwater as an origin and a destination would bring two-way work related benefits, and also serve the substantial leisure and tourism industries within Somerset, Wiltshire, Devon and Cornwall.

Finally, it should be noted that the synergy within any local Regional Network is stronger the more nodal interconnections that are available. It has already been established, for example, that the addition of both Stroudwater and Charfield stations would notably increase social benefits. To this can be added the fact that connections towards Gloucester, Cheltenham and Birmingham have the potential to increase benefits to the North, within an appropriate service strategy.

Covid Recovery

The pandemic and the various lockdowns have demonstrated clearly that whilst 'working from home' has kept many office related businesses alive, the national social, leisure, hospitality, tourism and education industries have suffered – almost terminally – with serious repercussions on the South West's biggest economic sectors. The addition of Stroudwater on the rail network can only be of benefit to our future wealth and well-being.

GCRP have carried out detailed research across all of Gloucestershire's communities served by rail and evidence of 'return to rail' and future sustainable travel patterns will be available to support the business case.

7. Project deliverability

What will be the impact of the project on the existing railway infrastructure and operations? Please set out the impact both during the construction phase and 'business as usual' once the work is completed.

Please write your answer here [max 500 words]

The proposals are not expected to require the acquisition of any land, and based on previous studies the construction works required are expected to be relatively simple in nature and typical as at other locations across the rail network. Normal construction access would be from the A419 along the existing access road. Precise details have yet to be confirmed by Network Rail, but their conclusions should be similar to the Halcrow Report (2002). Any detailed effects on signalling and potential impacts on train services have also yet to be assessed, particularly in respect of Strategic Regional Service Studies

under consideration. Logically the size and throughput of Stroudwater station should be included as a part of longer term intra- and inter-regional studies.

The impacts of car commuting to existing Gloucestershire stations in a ‘steady state’ situation, including Stonehouse (very limited at-station parking), Stroud (larger scale but often full) and Cam and Dursley (saturated) are being examined holistically by the Community Rail Partnership through its station travel refresh programme with GWR.

Note that the only time-attractive option for rail use to Bristol is use of Cam and Dursley, but due to the nature of the country lanes, driver behaviour and other factors, the strong trend is to drive (Cam and Dursley Station Travel Plan 2015/16).

Therefore provision of Stroudwater also needs to be seen as a valve to allow new trips (i.e. from expanding housing areas in Cam and Dursley, Sharpness, Berkeley) to switch to rail. As of Winter 2019/20 (pre- pandemic), Cam and Dursley station was experiencing parking saturation and fly parking on the pavement and verges surrounding the station.

Please provide an estimate of the proposed capital costs to deliver and operate this project?

Please write your answer here [max 500 words]

Estimated total capital construction cost for a new station at Bristol Road Stonehouse was £9.5m (Gloucestershire Rail Study, Amey, 2015). The main budget elements would include:

- Site preparation/enabling works
- Signalling
- Platforms (2@100m)
- Footbridge (steel, ramped)
- Shelters/security/information/signage
- Car park/lighting/landscaping
- Access road improvements
- Track possessions
- Contingency/design and project management

Please provide an outline programme for the delivery of the SOBC, including estimated timescale from start to delivery. If the development of an outline programme is an aspect of the proposed feasibility work, please state this.

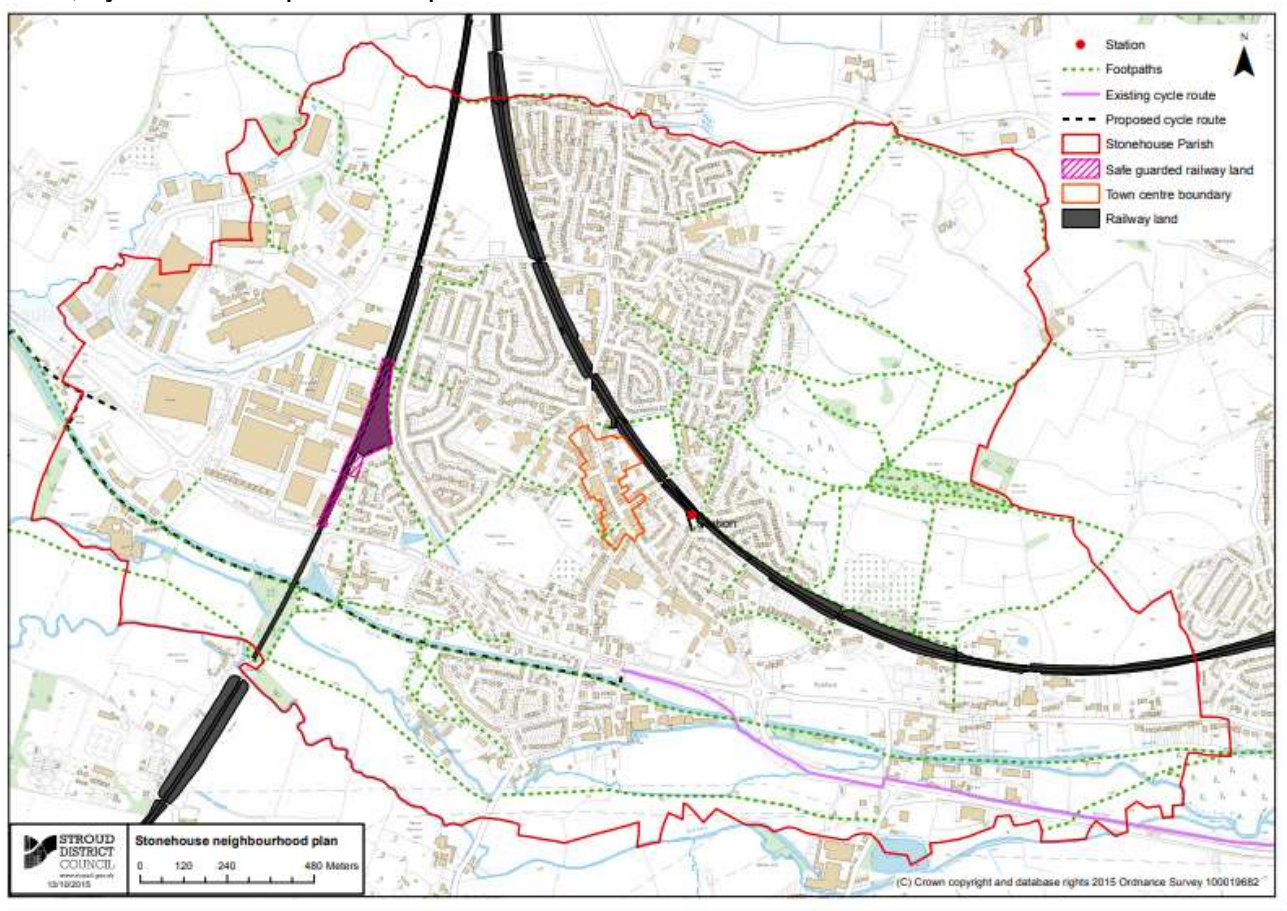
Please write your answer here [max 500 words]

Priority	Study/work area	Timescale
1	A capacity and timetabling study for the proposal to include examination of the impact of different scenarios for additional stations on the Bristol to Gloucester line.	December 2021
2	An updated demand forecast study.	March 2022
3	An updated estimate of infrastructure requirements and their costs and confirm constructability.	June 2022
4	Strategic Outline Business Case and working towards rail industry work pipelines and seeking funding to design and deliver station.	December 2023
	Project management Development of project plan, liaison with stakeholders and alignment with regional and local policies and plans.	December 2023

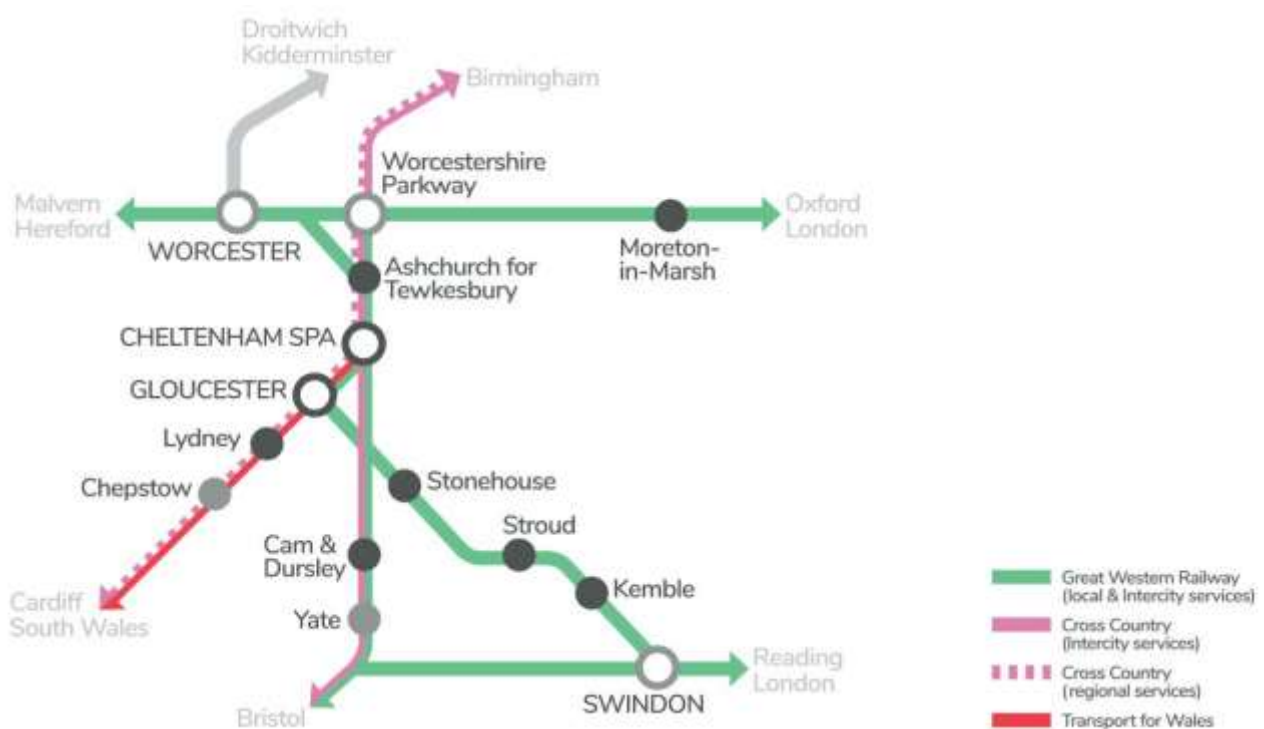
8. Maps of your proposed project

Please use this section to provide any maps relevant to your project.

Map 1: Safeguarded land at site of Stroudwater Bristol Road station, Stonehouse and road, cycle and footpath transport links.

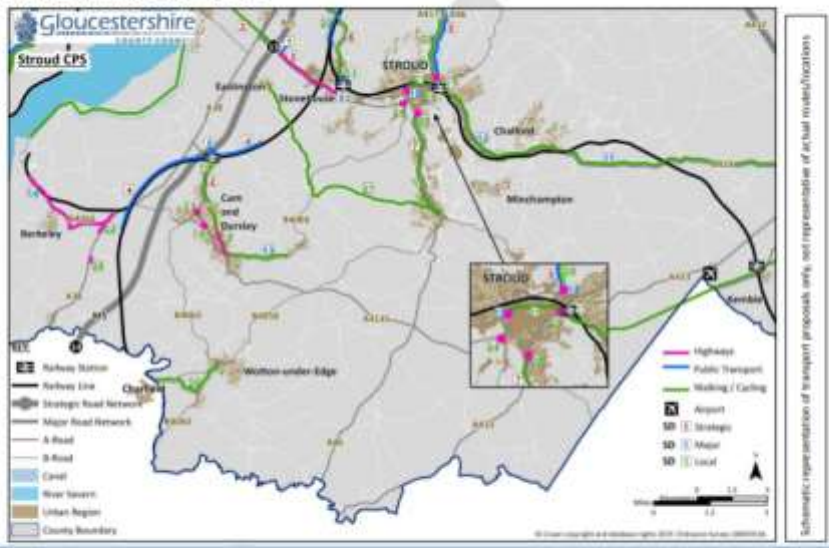


Map 2: Rail network, Gloucestershire (GCRP, 2020)



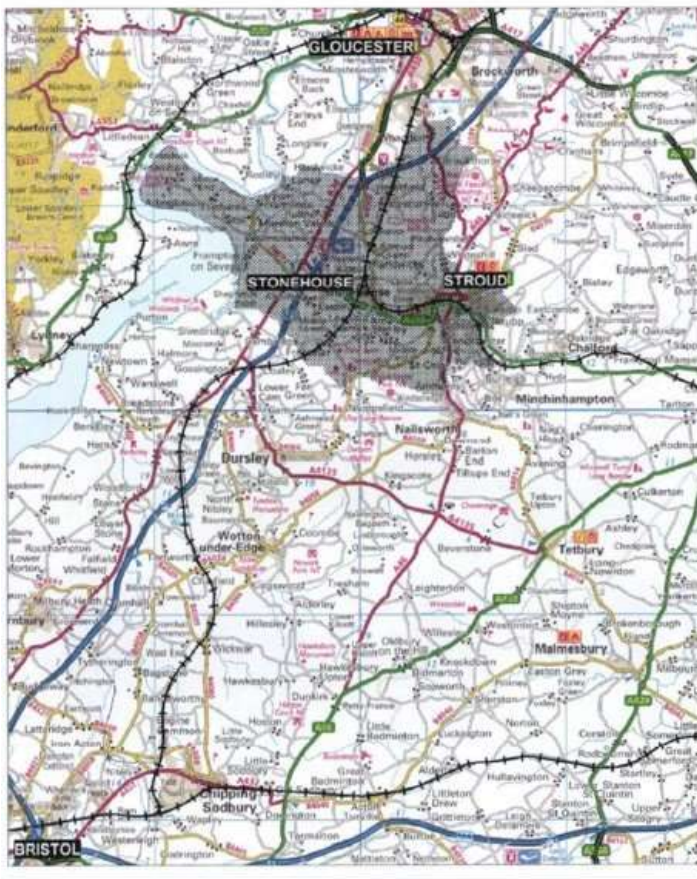
Map 3: Stroud District transport context (from GCC draft Local Transport Plan

Figure T: Stroud CP55 area scheme Map



©Gloucestershire County Council 2019

Map 4: Catchment area for Stroudwater station (Halcrow Report, 2002)



Assumed catchment area

Figure 1: Stroudwater corridor catchment area population 2018.

(<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationprojections/bulletins/subnationalpopulationprojectionsforengland/2018based/relateddata>)

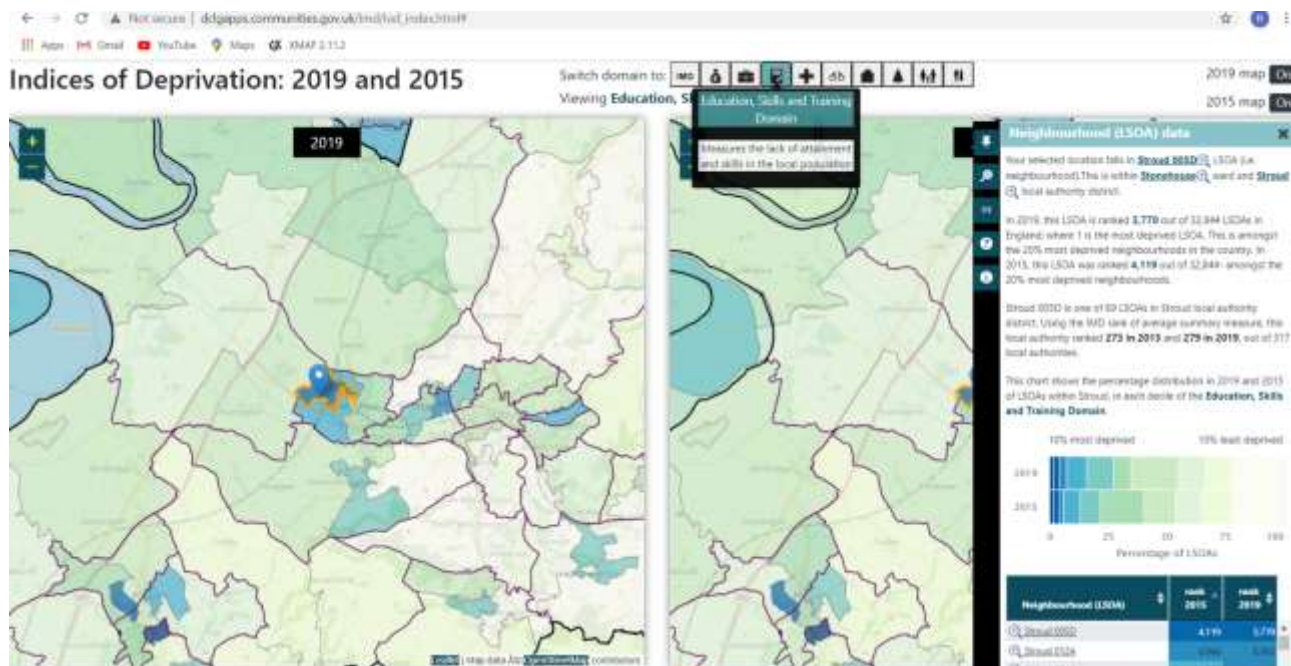
Table to show population Stroudwater Corridor, 2018¹⁰

Stroudwater Corridor wards	Population 2018
Cainscross	8,288
Stroud Central	2,144
The Stanleys	4,381
Hardwicke	7,278
Randwick, Whiteshill and Ruscombe	2,050
Rodborough	4,520
Severn	5,146
Stonehouse	7,416
Trinity	2,170
Uplands	2,120
Stroud Farmhill and Paganhill	2,519
Stroud Slade	2,589
Stroud Valley	2,198
Amberley & Woodchester	2,137
Total	54,956

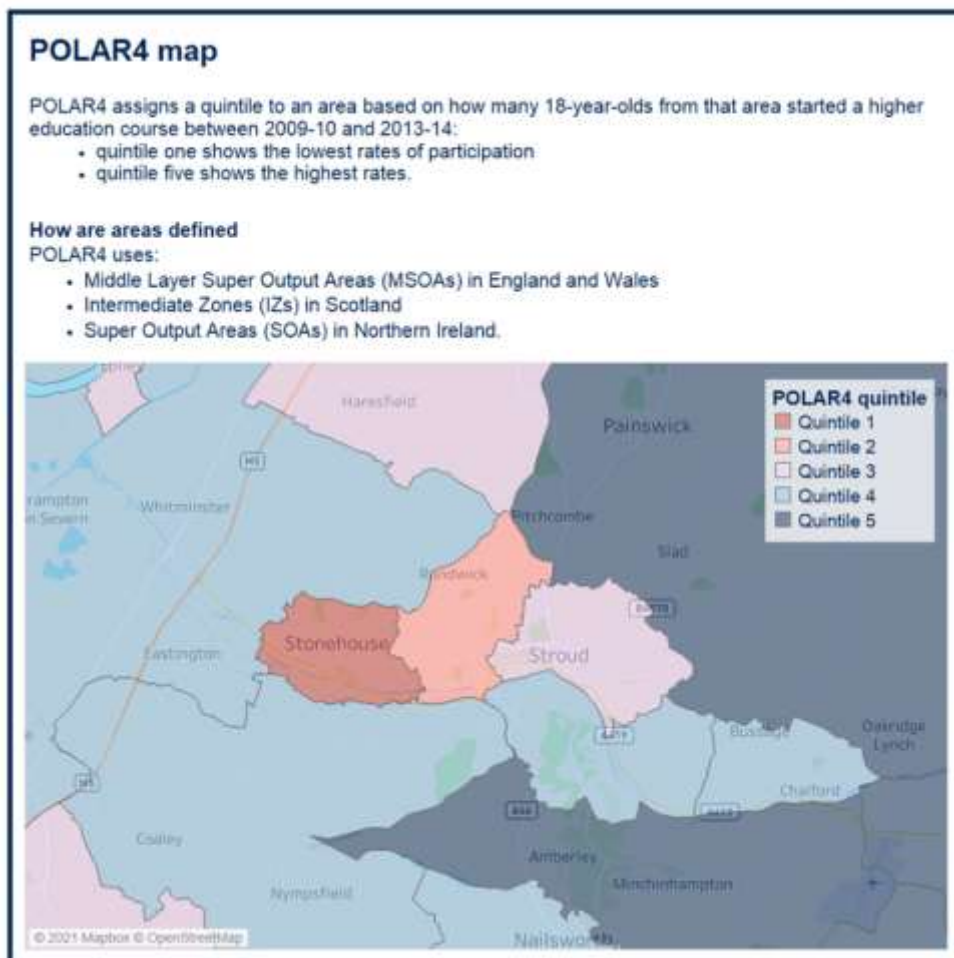
Map 5: Locality map for the existing Stonehouse Burdett Road station (GCRP, 2020)



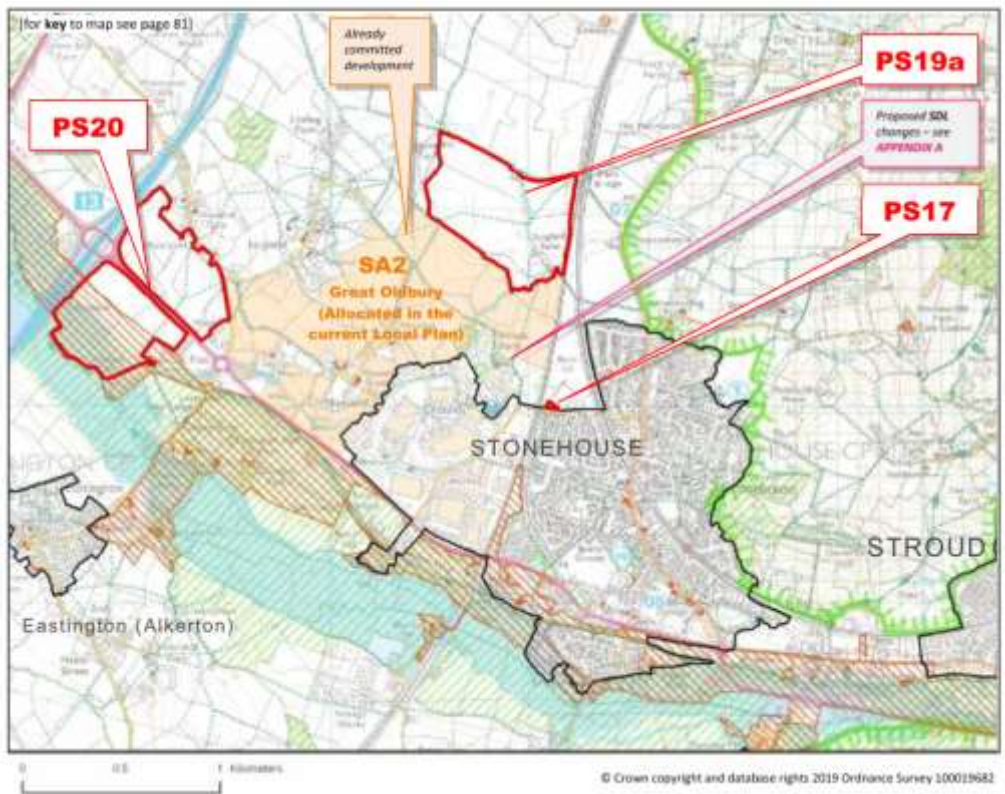
Map 6: Indices of Multiple Deprivation: Education Skills and Training for Stroud LSOA005D, Stonehouse



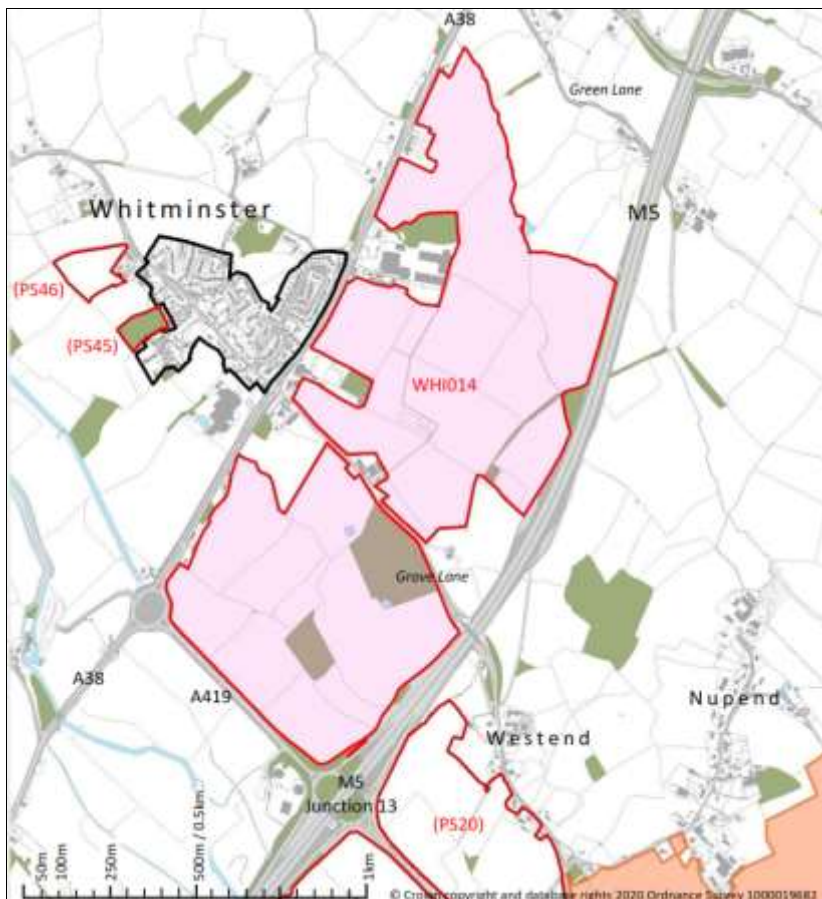
Map 7: Participation in Higher Education (POLAR4) in proximity of site of Stroudwater Bristol Road station, Stonehouse



Map 9: Allocated site (Great Oldbury) and draft site allocations within the vicinity of the site (Draft Stroud District Local Plan (2019))



Map 10: Additional housing options within the vicinity of the site (Additional Housing Options (2020))



9. Additional information request

Are you happy for DfT and its advisers to use the attached contact details to request further information regarding the application if necessary?	Yes
Do you consent to your contact details being added to a communications distribution list that would mean you are kept up to date on new developments related to this subject area?	Yes
Do you consent to the outline details of this proposal being published as part of communicating about the Restoring Your Railway Fund to stakeholders and the wider public?	Yes
Do you consent to the details of this proposal being shared internally and with approved third parties to facilitate the review and assessment of the proposal?	Yes

10. Checklist

Please ensure that all submissions to the Ideas Fund contain;

- ✓ A completed Ideas Fund application form
- ✓ A completed 'Additional information request' (Section 9)
- ✓ An email or letter from the MP(s) confirming bid sponsorship