



Scottish  
Forestry  
Coilltearachd  
na h-Alba

# Strategic Timber Transport Scheme: Preparatory Project Grant Guidance and Application Form (2024-25)

Scottish Forestry is the Scottish Government agency responsible for  
forestry policy, support and regulation

S e Coilltearachd na h-Alba a' bhuidheann-ghnìomha aig Riaghaltas  
na h-Alba a tha an urra ri poileasaidh, taic agus riaghladh do choilltearachd



Scottish Government  
Riaghaltas na h-Alba  
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**NAME OF PROJECT:**

STTS Reference No: Prep ..... /2024-25

*(internal use only)*

Aim: To enable initial planning, negotiations, and outline costing work to be carried out which will enable a full application for STTS support to be submitted:

- for local authority road strengthening and enhancement works linked to timber transport needs and opportunities, or
- to enable “in-principle” agreements to be reached for complex in-forest or combined in-forest & public road projects, as well as those achieving modal shift.

Preparatory Project funding cannot be used for the preparation of felling licences, long term forest plans, EIA determinations and associated works, or any other formal or legal requirements for licencing of tree felling operations.

Proposed projects must not provide advantage or exclusive benefit to individual owners or companies. The terms and conditions and key rules of the STTS Scheme still apply, namely that projects proposed must provide social and/or environmental benefits to local communities and reduce damage/ disruption by timber haulage to weak public roads.

***NB: the award of Preparatory project funding does NOT in itself give any guarantee of support for a subsequent full application.***

**Application checklist:** Please confirm the following are included:

	YES
Letter of support from RTTG	
Location details & maps	
Completed agents mandate form from owner	

**Lead Applicant**

Who will lead the preparation project? The lead applicant is normally the person taking responsibility for delivering the project.

Organisation/Company	
Contact person:	
Address:	
E-mail address:	
Telephone no:	

Our communication with you will predominantly be by email.

## Tell us about the Preparatory project you want to work on

\*\*\*When completing the form please refer to the Guidance Notes given at Appendix 1\*\*\*

### Location of Project

Maps can be generated using the [Agreed Routes Map Browser](#)

OR:

Please give a six-figure grid reference spanning the start and end points of the proposed work, if appropriate, and indicate the nearest reasonably sized settlement.

### Budget Estimate for Preparatory Project

Budget Estimate:	£
Strategic Timber Transport Scheme (@ %*):	£
Other Funding:	£

### Outline of Preparatory project (please **briefly** cover the following issues)

1. Who will do this work?
2. What are the proposed start and completion dates?
3. Give also:
  - a. *How many & which partners are involved (forest owners, agents & local authorities)?*
  - b. *Does the woodland currently have a felling licence or long-term forest plan in place?*
  - c. *What are you hoping to do in this preparatory stage?*
  - d. *Why is the preparatory work required?*
  - e. *What are the anticipated community, social and/or environmental benefits of the work being investigated?*
  - f. *What is the anticipated potential cost of the full project works?*

**NB: You must confirm that the project (both the preparatory and a potential full project) will not provide an advantage or exclusive benefit to an individual owners or company).**

## Preparatory Project Expenditure and STTS Grant Required

Eligible items/ activities e.g.	April 2023 - March 2024 (TOTALS)	
	Expenditure	STTS Grant requested @ .....%
Staff Costs		
Consultancy costs		
Travel		
Administration		
Other		
<b>Total Costs</b>		

## Sources of funding

	Cash	In kind	Total: 2024/25
STTS		N/A	
Partner 1*			
Partner 2			
Partner 3			
<b>TOTAL</b>			

\*Insert name of each funding partner and use a separate line for cash and in-kind contributions and provide details of any in-kind contribution *below* (Co-finance must be provided in that year).

## Detail of in-kind contributions

*e.g. the quantity, the unit cost & a justification for that cost.*

## Details of the other funding partners

Organisation / Company	Contact name	Address	Email

Details of all parties must be entered.

## Tell us briefly about the FULL PROJECT you are hoping to deliver

**Outline** (see Appendix 2 for further guidance)

From the information provided above, please cover the following issues:

- a. What are you hoping to do/build?
- b. What is the indicative scale and cost of the full project?
- c. When do you intend to carry out the work?
- d. Why is it required?
- e. What will it achieve/deliver?
- f. Outline the consistency with relevant national & regional strategies.
- g. Give an indicative timber volume likely to be extracted over the proposed infrastructure over a 10-year period.

## Declaration and signature

### Please read and sign the declaration below:

I/We agree to any disclosure and exchange of information about my/our participation in the Scheme with other organisations or consultants which Scottish Forestry considers necessary for the administration, monitoring, and evaluation of the Strategic Timber Transport Scheme (STTS) Preparatory Project.

I/We agree that information about my/our participation in the Scheme, including that contained in the application, contract or undertakings, and any other relevant documentation including amounts of contributions and grant may in particular circumstances, be made available to the public.

I/We have read and understood the contents of the relevant Guidance and accept full responsibility for the answers given in this Application Form. I/We further confirm that to the best of my knowledge there are no legal or other restrictions affecting the land proposals that would prevent the work or maintenance from being completed.

I/We have not claimed, nor intend to claim payment under any other funding mechanism administered by the Scottish Government Rural Payments and Inspections Division or under any other statutory provision or by the European Union for any of the same purposes as the carrying out of any proposed activities.

I/We affirm that no grant assistance from another public body or bodies is being sought or has been approved in relation to the proposed activities.

The carrying out of the activities for which a full application bid is being prepared will not frustrate the assistance given or to be given out of money provided by or under any statutory provision or by the European Union. I/We have complied with all or any applicable state aid regulations in respect of the proposed activities.

**The project (both the preparatory and any subsequent full project) will not provide advantage or exclusive benefit to individual owners or companies.**

**I confirm that I am authorised to complete and sign the application form and any subsequent contract, and I am able to ensure delivery of any contracted outputs, on behalf of all of the members of the group or business.**

*(If applying as an agent please also submit a completed and signed [Mandate Form](#))*

Signature .....

BLOCK CAPITALS: ..... Date:.....

For and on behalf of Lead applicant



# Preparatory Project Grant Application Form

**LOCATION AND DETAIL MAP SHOULD BE PLACED HERE**



## Appendix 1

### STTS PREPARATORY PROJECT GRANT – APPLICATION GUIDANCE

#### Aim:

To enable initial planning, negotiations, and outline costing work to be carried out which will inform and enable a full application for STTS support to be submitted:

- for local authority road strengthening and enhancement works linked to timber transport needs and opportunities, or
- to enable “in-principle” agreements to be reached for complex in-forest or combined in-forest & public road projects, as well as those achieving modal shift.

Preparatory Project funding cannot be used in preparation of felling licences, long term forest plans, EIA determinations and associated works or any other formal or legal requirements for licencing of tree felling operations.

Proposed projects must not provide advantage or exclusive benefit to individual owners or companies.

The terms and conditions and key rules of the STTS still apply, namely that projects proposed must provide social and/or environmental benefits to local communities and reduce damage / disruption by timber haulage to weak public roads.

It is anticipated that projects will be seeking to create new infrastructure. An award of grant is to enable the initial planning, consultation, negotiations, and outline costing work to be conducted.

#### Number of parties & scale:

To be considered a potentially large scale or complex project the preparatory project should be expecting to lead to a full application which meets the following criteria:

- For local authority-only infrastructure projects only one local authority is required but multi-actor projects are welcomed. A large-scale local authority road strengthening and enhancement programme of works linked to timber transport needs and opportunities are likely to cost over **£250,000** in total. Where work on a number of separate roads or sections of road is grouped together in an application, the need for the relevant strengthening etc work and the value of the road for timber transport must be confirmed by the Regional Timber Transport Group **for each** road or section of road.
- For in-forest, combined in-forest/local authority infrastructure projects and those achieving modal shift there must be a **minimum of three** parties represented by a separate forest management company or agent, plus the local authority if appropriate. The project value is likely to be at least **£200,000** in total.

#### What an award can cover:

- Costs of meetings and negotiations which enable agreement to be reached up to and including agreement on outline heads of terms regarding access rights and maintenance charges;
- the costs of an initial review of the technical aspects of a project to allow **indicative** costs to be brought to the table e.g. for in-forest roads an **indicative on-site** road line survey looking at peat depth, major rock outcrop and slope issues, archaeological issues, water crossings and access point to public roads;
- determining timber volumes likely to be moved;

- exploring and quantifying the community and environmental benefits delivered;
- initial negotiations to set up &/or identify areas where more in-depth exploration of infrastructure options is required to achieve modal shift e.g. new rail or shipping projects

[Note: full, detailed road line or environmental surveys are not supportable at this stage.]

### **What an award cannot cover:**

Any work which:

- subsidises normal forest planning operations;
- subsidises normal public road maintenance and repair;
- contravenes subsidy control regulations e.g. confers a competitive advantage to individual beneficiaries.

Costs incurred in delivering an approved preparatory project cannot be included in any subsequent full project bid.

Value Added Tax cannot be included as eligible expenditure unless you can demonstrate that it was not possible to reclaim the tax paid from HM Revenue & Customs.

### **Intervention rate:**

- **60%** for complex in-forest or combined in-forest & public road projects;
- **80%** for local authority led wholly public road strengthening and enhancement works linked to timber transport needs, as well as those achieving modal shift.

**What is the maximum award:** Awards will be a contribution towards total preparatory costs up to maximum of £12,000 i.e. an STTS contribution of £7200 @ 60% or £9600 @80%, depending on whether it is a largely in-forest, wholly public road works or a modal shift project as indicated in the previous paragraph. Exceptionally, and only with significant additional justification, a higher award may be offered (to a maximum total project cost of £20,000) at the relevant standard intervention rate. Please note therefore that additional costs incurred above the agreed budget are not eligible for any support unless approved in advance.

**Availability of funds:** The sum allocated each year for support for Preparatory projects will be reviewed in light of the quantity and quality of Preparatory applications being received.

**NB: The availability of Preparatory Grant funding after 30th September cannot be guaranteed.**

**Co-finance, consultancy and professional fees:** Can be comprised of both cash and time in lieu, but note that for staff time, charge out rates cannot be applied, and evidence of actual daily rates will be required. As per the main fund, there is a threshold of up to £80/hour for non-tendered consultancy fees and evidence of payment must be presented alongside invoices. All other eligible costs must demonstrate value for money through a quick quote or tendering process.

**Key initial pass/fail criteria:** it will be essential to demonstrate that delivery of either the preparatory or full STTS funded projects will not provide advantage or exclusive financial benefit to individual owners or companies, should either or both go ahead.

**Criteria for assessment:** the underpinning aims and requirements of the main STTS are still applicable. Each Preparatory project will be given a score out of 20 as follows:

- 10 = potential benefits (especially environmental, community/social benefits & reduced damage / disruption to public roads, including from modal shift),
- 7 = complexity and scale of project proposed
- 3 = proven ability of lead partner to deliver the Preparatory project, and potentially a subsequent full project.

Overarching processes are managed by Scottish Forestry's Forestry Transport and Innovation Advisor.

Preparatory project grant applications are independently assessed by a team of three comprising the Scottish Forestry's **Forestry Transport and Innovation Advisor**, and **Head of Business Development and Transport Scotland's Freight Grant Officer**. An additional person can be asked to score projects as deemed appropriate by Scottish Forestry who would add specific knowledge to the decision-making process. Each assessor will score against the criteria above and an average total score calculated.

Funding will be allocated on a first come first served basis to projects that score greater than 10 out of 20 and awards made up to the value of the fund available. Project proposals getting a score of 10 or less will not be funded. The decision will be a simple award or no award.

A decision on the award will be shared with the applicants, and grants awarded will be reported annually alongside other STTS funding.

### **Process and timescales**

Preparatory project applications must be on the relevant form and should be supported by a letter of **support** for the project being prepared from the relevant RTTG.

Applications can be submitted at any time **after the annual awards are complete (May)**.

Applications should be submitted by email to [stts@forestry.gov.scot](mailto:stts@forestry.gov.scot).

The intention is to review, reach and communicate a decision within a period of 4 weeks from the date of receipt, though it is expected to be much shorter. Applicants will be informed of the decision by email from Scottish Forestry's Forestry Transport and Innovation Advisor and, if successful, an offer of grant will be issued within 2 weeks.

Right of appeal - If you believe your application has not been treated appropriately then you may appeal to the **Head of Forest Sector Development at Scottish Forestry**, giving a clear explanation of why you believe this to be the case.

### **Preparatory Project Outcome**

#### **Final output & payment**

Each Preparatory award is expected to result in submission of a full STTS application.

***NB: The award of an STTS Preparatory Project Grant does NOT in itself give any guarantee of support for a subsequent full application.***

Grant claims, supported by relevant invoices, should be submitted along with the full STTS application(s) before the cut-off date advertised on the [Strategic Timber Transport Scheme webpage](#).

If the work does not result in a full application, then a detailed report explaining why this was the case must be submitted to Scottish Forestry's Forestry Transport and Innovation Advisor.

If insurmountable difficulties arise during the Preparatory Project phase then, after discussion with and the agreement of Scottish Forestry's Forestry Transport and Innovation Advisor, the Preparatory Project can be stopped early by the applicant. Scottish Forestry reserves the right to consider whether payment of relevant STTS support up to that point should be withheld.

If the funding offered is spent before the work is completed the partners are expected to ensure that additional finance is available to ensure completion and subsequent submission of the full STTS application.

## Appendix 2

### Working towards submission of a full STTS application

As a full application would require you to address the following issues it may be appropriate to give them consideration during a preparatory project.

- *What agreements are required to ensure all relevant parties can access, use and maintain the infrastructure for at least the 10-year period of the project and ideally into the future?*
- *What work is proposed (lengths, widths, numbers and/or areas of proposed outputs)?*
- *The design specification for the proposed works.*
- *Who will specify the design and what qualifications do they have?*
- *Timescales for delivery with milestones and a completion date(s).*
- *Who will oversee construction, how often and how will this be recorded?*
- *How will infrastructure subsequently be maintained to deliver the benefits into the future?*
- *Who has overall responsibility for ensuring the project is delivered on time and on budget?*
- *How will you reduce the risk of delay due to e.g. poor weather?*
- *For longer and more complex projects a GANTT Chart is required.*
- *What felling permissions and other agreements/permissions/approvals are required to conduct the works, are these in place, and if not, when will these agreements be made?*
- *Who is authorised to sign such agreements?*
- *How you will acknowledge STTS support - what is proposed in the way of signage e.g. wording, size, materials, and location?*
- *Once delivered, how the project will remain viable, and any infrastructure be maintained?*