



# MetroWest<sup>+</sup>

## Portishead Branch Line (MetroWest Phase 1)

TR040011

**Applicant: North Somerset District Council**

**6.25, Environmental Statement, Volume 4, Appendix 11.1 and 11.2 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment**

**The Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure)**

**Regulations 2009, regulation 5(2)(a)**

**Planning Act 2008**

**Author: CH2M**

**Date: November 2019**



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## Document history

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<b>Lead Author</b>	AL at CH2M

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## Portishead Branch Line (MetroWest Phase 1)

TR040011

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View 1: View east of the Sheepway construction compound from the existing path with the existing discussed line off to the right of view and the Sheepway Bridge embankment in the right of view. The compound and rail access point are set low in the landscape. The access point to the National Grid works and the permanent parking area are centre of the view. [See ES Volume 3 Book of Figures, Figure 11.3 for the location of photographs, DCO Document Reference 6.24.]





View 2: View east from Sheepway bridge towards the proposed site compound in the fields in the right of the image. Much of the existing track side vegetation to the right of the view would be retained with the haul road in the field beyond. Existing vegetation to the left of the view would be lost during construction but replaced with trees and hedgerows.





View 3: View north-west from the edge of Lodway Close over the site of the proposed Lodway Farm construction compound. The field boundary hedge would be retained in parts with some lost opening up views to the track and passing trains. The trees on the M5 embankment, beyond the hedge, would be retained. The replacement hedge planting would provide screening when it becomes established.





View 4: View south from Jenny's meadow on the west edge of Pill with the freight line bridge just visible to the right of centre. The existing trees to the left of view (behind and to the right of the house) on the railway embankment would be lost opening up views to the embankment, fencing, passing trains and possibly the houses behind on Lodway Close. There would be the footway and cycle path temporary diversion crossing the existing grass in this view.





View 5: View east from the cycleway/footpath towards Avon Road bridge and the end of the garages. All of the existing trees on the railway embankment on the right of image would be lost opening up views to the embankment, new fencing and passing trains. Engineering constraints prevent replacement trees and scrub planting with a grass embankment proposed resulting in open views to the embankment with passing trains above from adjacent properties.





View 6: View east from the footway/cycleway with the mast just visible within the existing vegetation. Most of the existing vegetation would be lost opening up views of the new fencing, the embankment and passing trains. A replacement hedge is proposed.





View 7: View north-west along Monmouth Court with the existing hedge forming the boundary to the Pill Station car park. It is the intention that this planting is retained to maintain screening of the car park behind the vegetation, but proposed car park lighting would be visible over the hedge.





View 8: View north-west along Monmouth Road towards the proposed car park. The existing vegetation in the left of view would be retained partially screening views down towards the re-opened station.





View 9: View north west along the existing track at Pill Station from the existing bridge. The vegetation on the left of view would be cleared for the rebuilt platform, reinforced cutting slope and new access ramp with more open views to the back of gardens and houses on Sambourne Lane and Hardwick Road. Existing vegetation to the right of the view to Monmouth Road would be retained.





View 10. View south from the Lamplighters over the River Avon towards Pill. The existing viaduct sits among the buildings and is just visible.





View 11: View south from Chapel Pill Lane of the entrance to the Pill Tunnel eastern portal emergency access point. The hedge in the foreground would be lost to create the lorry turning area, opening up views to the existing woodland alongside the track and by the lake. Proposed tree and hedge planting alongside the new access would provide screening once established.





View 12: View south west from Chapel Pill Lane by Rock Cottages to the Pill Tunnel eastern portal which is just visible above the wall to the left of the gate.





View 13: View south from the footpath on the edge of Shirehampton Park Golf Course over the River Avon. The line of trees in the middle distance marks the line of the existing railway line set within cutting.



View 14 - summer: View south-west from The Downs over the Portway and the River Avon with the Clifton Suspension bridge in the distance. The existing railway line is marked by a dark line within the trees at the base of the cliff to the right of the river in summer views. In winter views, as seen on the following view, the tracks can be seen through intervening vegetation. The loss of some vegetation to install the new fencing may mean the opening up of views to the track and passing trains in places.





View 14 - winter: View south-west from The Downs over the Portway and the River Avon with the Clifton Suspension Bridge in the distance. The existing railway line is visible through the existing vegetation, particularly when (as in this view) the view is along the line of the track.





View 15: View north from the northern edge of Clifton Down Camp along the Avon Gorge with cliff face of The Downs right of centre. The existing railway line is visible as a darker line within the existing vegetation at the base of the cliff on the left hand side of the River Avon. Some of the vegetation between the railway line and tow path may be lost or reduced due to the construction of the new fencing opening up views to the track and passing trains.





View 16: View south from the northern end of Clifton Down Camp to the Suspension Bridge. The grass of Bedminster Cricket Club is visible in the distance just above the suspension chains of the bridge with the proposed Clanage Road construction compound at that location barely visible. The vegetation between the railway line and tow path may be reduced due to the construction of the new fencing opening up views to the track and passing trains. Rock catch fencing and works to stabilise the rock face would also be visible below the Suspension Bridge.





View 17a: View south from the eastern abutment to the Suspension Bridge over the River Avon. The grass of the Bedminster Cricket Club is visible mid view. The edge of the Clanage Road construction compound would just be visible above the trees on the edge of the grass. The area of the access point would be screened by the existing trees. The vegetation between the railway line and tow path may be reduced due to the construction of the new fencing opening up views to the track and passing trains.





View 17b: View south from the eastern abutment to the Clifton Suspension Bridge over the River Avon in winter. Various stretches of the track are revealed at different locations along the bridge due to the varying levels of screening offered by intervening vegetation.





View 17c: View south from centre of the Clifton Suspension Bridge over the River Avon in winter. Various stretches of the track are revealed at different locations along the bridge due to the varying levels of screening offered by intervening vegetation.





View 18: View south from the pedestrian bridge by the former Police Horse and Dog Training Centre down towards Bedminster Cricket Club. The rough grass in the right of the image forms part of the Police grounds with the hedge in the middle of the view forming the northern boundary to the Clanage Road construction compound and access site. The existing planting in this hedge is being retained and reinforced with new planting.





View 19: View north from the footpath on the north side of the Clanage Road compound to the Clifton Suspension Bridge and properties on Wellington Terrace. The existing trees at the base of Rownham Hill and alongside the Avon Gorge provide screening of the cliffs and most of the Clifton Suspension Bridge.





View 20: View north from the entrance track into Bedminster Cricket Club car park over the playing fields towards Clifton. The construction compound and access site would occupy the far end of the playing field. The existing hedge would be retained to form the northern boundary and new trees and hedge planted to form the southern boundary.





View 21. View north west from the footbridge over the MetroBus route at the end of the Ashton Gate Swing Bridge over the open space to the elevated Brunel Way. The existing railway line is within the existing vegetation in the view behind Brunel Way. This vegetation would be retained.





View 22: View west from the access road to the west end of the Create Centre in close proximity to Brunel Way over the River Avon. The existing railway line is barely visible under the road and screened by the existing vegetation.





View 23: View north along Winterstoke Road towards the MetroBus 'skew bridge' over the junction with Ashton Vale Road. The footpath to the centre left of the photo would be partly occupied by the extended left turn lane into Ashton Vale Road.





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SECTION 1

# General Summer and Winter Views

- 1.1.1 This Appendix describes a number of general views of the landscape along the railway line and views towards it. The aim is to illustrate the landscape character as described in general terms, some of the views of the DCO Scheme in the landscape, and how the landscape character changes between the winter and summer months and what effect this has on the visibility of the DCO Scheme. The views are described in relation to the winter and summer month photographs taken from the same point.
- 1.1.2 The photographs were taken in August 2015 and the end of September 2015. It should be noted that vegetation clearance for the topographical survey of the line was being undertaken at the same time so in some views the low lying vegetation has been removed. In addition some of the tree felling was also being carried out. Where relevant this has been described in the text below.
- 1.1.3 The locations of the photographs are shown on Figure 11.3 Sheets 1 to 5 in the ES Volume 3 Book of Figures (DCO Document Reference 6.24).

## Tansy Lane, Portishead

- 1.1.4 Figure SWV-A shows the view south towards the disused railway line from the north side of the open space on Tansy Lane close to Trinity School, visible to the left. The view varies noticeably between summer and winter. In the winter, gaps in the vegetation and under the trees allow occasional, glimpsed views of the railway line and long views beyond. In the summer, the vegetation is in leaf and comparatively lush in character. The railway line is screened from this view point with the longer views also screened by the trees. The proposed pedestrian and cycle bridge would be most noticeable in the winter months visible through the existing trees. Passing trains would also be visible from this location.





- 1.1.5 Figure SWV-B shows the view eastwards from Tansy Lane towards Trinity School. In the winter, gaps in the vegetation allow occasional, glimpsed views of the railway line, whilst in the summer, the railway line is screened. It should be noted that some of the larger trees by the disused railway line have since been removed, and that the low lying vegetation adjacent to the line would be removed. This view would be dominated by the proposed footbridge which sits parallel to the railway line on the grass area, and its associated footpaths and footpath lighting. Site constraints limit the space available for replacement trees and other landscaping so screening of the proposed pedestrian and cycle bridge and railway line would be limited.



- 1.1.6 Figure SWV-C shows the direct view looking south from Tansy Lane towards the disused railway line and vegetated corridor to properties beyond in Galingale Way. Summer and winter views vary. In winter, views in close proximity to railway line are direct and open. A number of young, small trees along the railway line are not large or dense enough to provide any screening. In the summer months, trees are in leaf and low lying summer vegetation covers the railway line resulting in glimpsed views to the line and beyond. The vegetation in the foreground between the grass and disused railway would be removed as part of the DCO Scheme, with open views to the railway line, end of the platform and fencing. The proposed tree planting would offer limited screening even once established.





## Galingale Way, Portishead

- 1.1.7 Figure SWV-D shows the view south from Galingale Way towards the disused line. It is an enclosed view towards existing vegetation and the car garage. In winter, the gap through the vegetation along the fence line allows glimpsed view towards the disused railway line and Tansy Lane beyond. In summer months, the disused railway line is completely screened by vegetation from this view point. There would be glimpsed views to the new pedestrian and cycle bridge from this location along with views to slow moving trains. The bridge lighting would be visible in the winter months.



## The Vale Park, Portishead

- 1.1.8 Figure SWV-E shows the view northeast towards vegetation on the bank of The Vale Park Lake and properties beyond. The houses are heavily screened by vegetation, particularly in the summer months. There would be limited views through the tops of this vegetation to the top of the proposed pedestrian and cycle bridge in the winter months. New footpath lighting is proposed alongside the paths.





- 1.1.10 Figure SWV-F shows the view from the seating area on the south side of The Vale Park Lake northwards towards the properties beyond which are adjacent to the disused railway line. The disused line forms a small and distant component of the overall view, and is heavily screened by vegetation, particularly in summer months when the trees, shrubs and pond plants are in full leaf. There would be views through the existing vegetation to the new pedestrian and cycle bridge with its lighting in the winter, screened in the summer.



## Railway corridor adjacent to Trinity Anglican Methodist Primary, Portishead

- 1.1.11 Figure SWV-G is the view looking east along the railway corridor, with an oblique view of the school play area to the left and properties on Tarragon Place beyond. In the summer, low lying vegetation including grasses and ruderals currently covers the railway line. In the winter the railway line is exposed and visible. The two tracks would be replaced by a single line. The larger trees adjacent to the school would be removed along with some of the larger poplar trees on the right of the view. The hedge and lower trees would be retained. A new hedge is proposed along the school boundary.





## Railway corridor backing on to Tarragon Place and Fennel Road, Portishead

- 1.1.12 Figure SWV-H shows the long view looking east along the disused railway corridor, with view of the properties on Tarragon Place set a slightly higher level. Trees edging the railway line create a tunnel directing views along the railway line which is broadly retained during summer and winter months. Some of the larger trees both sides of the disused line would be removed, in particular the larger poplar trees to the right of view (south side). The view would be more open generally without the larger trees, with more open views to the houses.



### Footpath backing on to Holmlea and Tydeman Road, Portishead

- 1.1.13 Figure SWV-I is the view looking along the path with oblique view of houses on Tydeman Road on the right and disused railway line to the left with its associated vegetated corridor. Views looking along and down onto the railway line are partially screened by vegetation. The level of screening is increased in summer when the trees are in leaf. This view is unlikely to change significantly except that the large poplar in the distance would be removed.





## Sheepway

- 1.1.14 Figure SWV-J shows the view from Sheepway Bridge across open fields to the south, with distant views of the M5 motorway and Portbury Hundred, which is screened by vegetation in summer. This open landscape retains the same general character between summer and winter.



- 1.1.16 Figure SWV-K is a long, elevated view from Sheepway Bridge looking west along the disused line. Trees edging the disused railway line create a tunnel directing views along the railway line. Summer and winter views vary. In the summer, low lying vegetation including grasses and ruderals currently covers the railway line. In the winter the railway line is more exposed and visible. The vegetation to the left of view (south side) would be retained with that on the north side lost during construction. A replacement hedge on the north side would reinstate the lost vegetation and screen the line once established.





## Pill

- 1.1.17 Figure SWV-L is the view from Station Road overbridge looking down from an elevated position towards the railway line and the station platforms. The current view to the railway line is similar for winter and summer months, although the bank is more vegetated in the summer. This is the location of the new station with its extensive retaining walls, ramps and steps and the resultant loss of all the vegetation on the bank.



- 1.1.18 Figure SWV-M shows the view along Monmouth Road with the operational railway line in the view to the left side. The winter view is fairly open, with partial screening from the fence and vegetation. In the summer, the vegetation is in leaf and denser, and the railway line is screened from this viewpoint, with limited, glimpsed views through gaps. There would be views through this vegetation to the upper portion of the new station and its lighting from these houses in the winter months.





## Watchhouse Hill, Pill

- 1.1.19 Figure SWV-N shows the view looking from Watchhouse Hill towards the fencing alongside the freight railway line. Winter and summer views vary. In the winter months, there are near, glimpsed views of the railway line and its associated fencing, and to the houses beyond. In the summer months, the view is heavily screened by trees in leaf and tall grasses and ruderals along the edge of the open space. Some of these larger trees have been removed resulting in a more open view across the valley. There are more open views to passing trains in the winter months.



## Shirehampton

- 1.1.20 Figure SWV-O shows a long distance view taken from Grove Leaze looking south west towards the Avon Valley, with distant views of the operational railway line, which is screened by vegetation. The general character of the landscape in the summer and winter views from this location do not significantly vary. In winter, there are glimpsed views of the railway line just possible between the houses. In summer, with the vegetation in leaf, the level of screening is increased. There would be no significant change in view as a result of the DCO Scheme.





- 1.1.22 Figure SWV-P shows the view from the top of Nibley Road towards with the operational railway line beyond the river in the distance. In winter, distant, glimpsed views of the railway line are just possible through the vegetation along the railway line. In summer months, the railway line is completely screened by vegetation from this viewpoint. The railway line does not make up a significant proportion of the view.



- 1.1.23 Figure SWV-Q shows the view from Lamplighters open space in Shirehampton southwards towards Pill. In the winter, gaps in the vegetation allow occasional, glimpsed views of the viaduct. In the summer, the vegetation is in leaf and the operational railway line is mostly screened from this viewpoint. There would be no significant change in view as a result of the DCO Scheme.





- 1.1.24 Figure SWV-R is also towards Pill from the Lamplighters open space, Shirehampton, showing there is little difference between winter and summer views, as there is limited deciduous vegetation in the area. There will be a slight increase in movement in the landscape with the increase in trains passing over the viaduct.



## Clifton Down

- 1.1.25 Figure SWV-S shows the open, panoramic view across the Avon Gorge towards Bristol looking south from an elevated position at the edge of The Downs. The railway line snakes through the landscape at the bottom of the gorge visible as a linear gap in the trees and makes up a small proportion of the overall view. Views looking along and down onto the railway line are partially screened by vegetation. The level of screening is increased in summer when the trees are in leaf, although the gap is still visible. There would be some loss of trees adjacent to the freight line to provide clearance for trains and also to be able to install new fencing. There would be some further loss of vegetation associated with the rock stabilisation works. There would be increased movement in the landscape with the passing passenger trains.





- 1.1.26 Figure SWV-T of the open, panoramic view across the Avon Gorge looking northwest from the same location as an elevated position also looking across the River Avon to Leigh Woods. The railway line is visible as a linear gap in the vegetation, which is emphasised slightly by shadow in the summer view.



## Portway

- 1.1.27 Figure SWV-U shows the view looking across the River Avon from Portway with glimpsed views of the railway line which is partially screened by vegetation. The level of screening is increased in summer when the trees are in leaf. The character is broadly the same between winter and summer months. There would be some loss of trees adjacent to the freight line to provide clearance for trains and also to be able to install new fencing. There would be increased movement in the landscape with the passing passenger trains.





## Clifton Observatory

- 1.1.28 Figure SWV-V shows the elevated, open view looking from the open space at Clifton Observatory towards Bristol and the Avon Gorge. The railway line is visible in the distance as a small proportion of the view behind the Clifton Suspension Bridge, snaking along the base of the valley next to the river. Vegetation partially screens the railway line, allowing glimpsed views, particularly in winter months when the vegetation is not in leaf. The line in the base of the gorge is not visible from this location. It would just be possible to make out trains moving in the landscape behind the Clifton Suspension Bridge.



## Clifton Suspension Bridge

- 1.1.29 Figure SWV-W shows the view down to the freight line from the east side bridge pier. The limited space between the track and river bank means there is little vegetation to screen the line with the wooded cliff slopes behind are relatively consistent in the views. There would be some loss of vegetation adjacent to the line resulting in a slightly more open view. There would be further loss of vegetation associated with the rock face stabilisation works. There would be increased movement with the passing passenger trains.



- 1.1.30 Figure SWV-X shows the open, panoramic view south across Ashton Vale from the east side bridge pier. The line is clearly visible adjacent to the river bank with the narrow strip of vegetation between the tow path and the line. The open character and wooded slopes are broadly consistent between winter and summer. There would be some loss of trees adjacent to the freight line to provide clearance for trains and also between the track and tow path to be able to install new fencing which itself would be more visible. There would be increased movement in the landscape with the passing passenger trains.





- 1.1.31 Figure SWV-Y is also from the east bridge pier looking downstream with Leigh Woods and Nightingale Valley central to the view. The railway line is similarly visible adjacent to the river bank with the narrow strip of vegetation between the tow path and the line. There would be some loss of vegetation as described above.



## Ashton Court

- 1.1.32 Figures SWVZ shows the view looking from Ashton Court car park eastwards towards Bristol. There are glimpsed views of freight line railway line beyond the open sloping grassland in the middle distance. The level of screening is increased in summer when the trees are in leaf. The railway line does not make up a significant proportion of the view.



