



Transboundary screening undertaken by the Planning Inspectorate (the Inspectorate) on behalf of the Secretary of State (SoS) for the purposes of Regulation 24 of The Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2009 (the 2009 EIA Regulations) and Regulation 32 of The Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (the 2017 EIA Regulations)	
Project name:	Portishead Branch Line – MetroWest Phase 1
Address/Location:	North Somerset/Bristol
Planning Inspectorate Ref:	TR040011
Date(s) screening undertaken:	First screening – 28 August 2015 following the applicant’s request for a scoping opinion Second screening – 4 February 2020 following submission of the application documents
EEA States identified for notification:	First screening: None identified Second screening: None identified

FIRST TRANSBOUNDARY SCREENING UNDERTAKEN BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE - for the purposes of Regulation 24 of the 2009 EIA Regulations	
Document(s) used for transboundary Screening:	Portishead Branch Line (MetroWest Phase 1) Project Scoping Report, June 2015
Date	28 August 2015
Screening Criteria:	Secretary of State Comments:
Characteristics of the Development	<p>The proposed development comprises works associated with the delivery of a new passenger train service between Portishead, Pill and Bristol Temple Meads. The main components are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replacement of the existing 5km of disused railway track and signalling assets between Portishead and Pill with new railway track and signalling assets, rebuilding the disused Portishead to Pill line (5km). • Closure of historic and permissive crossings across the railway line and, where appropriate, provision of alternative access arrangements. • Subject to consultation, a fully accessible pedestrian bridge near Trinity Primary School in Portishead. • New station at Portishead including station building, car park (for up to 200 cars, on two sites), pedestrian and cycle link to the town centre and highway alterations to Quays

	<p>Avenue/Harbour Road/Phoenix Way. The platform is to be approximately 100 metres which is sufficient to accommodate a four car train.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-opening of the former station at Pill and new fully accessible pedestrian bridge and car park (approximately 50 spaces). • Double track works through installation of a new track parallel to the existing railway through Pill (including widening of the Avon Road bridge underpass). • Improvements to access for emergency and maintenance purposes. <p>The following other works are required to deliver the proposed service but are likely to be delivered using the permitted development rights of Network Rail and will not form part of the DCO application:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installation of a second track along the existing Portbury Freight Line between Clifton No. 1 Tunnel and Ashton Gate; • Partial reinstatement of the Bedminster Down Relief Line; • Additional signals near Avonmouth/Severn Beach; and • A turnback facility for trains at Bathampton. <p>The development forms part of a wider MetroWest programme being promoted by the West of England Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). This is a series of projects aimed at increasing the capacity and accessibility of the local rail network.</p>
Geographical area	<p>The proposals will not extend into any area of another EEA State. The extent of the likely area under the jurisdiction of another EEA State which may be affected is not described in the Scoping Report.</p>
Location of Development (including existing use)	<p>The proposed development is located between Portishead and Bristol in the south-west of England, as illustrated on Figure A.1 of the Scoping Report. The works will be predominantly along the existing horizontal and vertical alignment of the dis-used track, although some alterations to the vertical or horizontal alignments and/or width of the line will be necessary in places.</p> <p>The area surrounding the proposed route is varied. It is urban fringe in character at Portishead, before becoming flat and pastoral around Sheepway until the route goes under the M5. The area around Portbury is predominantly industrial in character, whilst Pill is an historic village. To the east of Pill the route passes through farmland and grassland, then through the wooded Avon Gorge. The route then continues through the urban areas of Ashton Gate and Ashton Vale before joining the main line at Parson Street junction where the area is primarily dense urban residential, although there are also some industrial and commercial uses near the route.</p> <p>The distance from the site to the nearest EEA State is not described in the Scoping Report.</p>

Cumulative impacts	The Scoping Report acknowledges that the EIA will need to consider the potential cumulative effects of the proposed development. The other developments to be included in this assessment are not described however, nor is consideration given to the potential for cumulative effects on other EEA States.
Carrier	<p>The most likely carrier of transboundary effects is via impacts to air or water quality and which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adversely affect designated features of the European Sites within the vicinity (see above); and • Are important to other EEA states.
Environmental Importance	<p>The proposed development passes through the Avon Gorge (parts of which are designated as a Special Area of Conservation and Site of Special Scientific Interest) and the Leigh Woods National Nature Reserve.</p> <p>Other features identified on or in proximity to the site include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locally designated sites for nature conservation interest; • Areas of flood risk; • Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs); • Registered Historic Park and Garden; • National Character Area and areas designated locally for their landscape value; • Public Rights of Way (PRoW) and National Cycle Routes; • Motorway, road and rail crossings; • Livestock crossings; • A major oil pipeline serving Portbury Dock; • Ponds, land drains/culverts and watercourses; • Railway verge comprising a mix of hedgerow, trees and grass embankment; • The existing platform at the disused Pill railway station and an adjacent goods yard. <p>Ecological surveys have identified records of, or the potential for, various protected species to be present along or around the proposed rail re-instatement route. Species include bats, amphibians (including great crested newt), water vole, reptiles, dormice, breeding birds, badgers, slow worms and invertebrates. There is also evidence of invasive species of vegetation.</p>
Extent	No impacts are identified in the Scoping Report which would be likely to have significant effects on the environment in another EEA State.
Magnitude	No impacts are identified in the Scoping Report which would be likely to have significant effects on the environment in another EEA State.

Probability	No impacts are identified in the Scoping Report which would be likely to have significant effects on the environment in another EEA State.
Duration	No impacts are identified in the Scoping Report which would be likely to have significant effects on the environment in another EEA State.
Frequency	No impacts are identified in the Scoping Report which would be likely to have significant effects on the environment in another EEA State.
Reversibility	No impacts are identified in the Scoping Report which would be likely to have significant effects on the environment in another EEA State.

Transboundary screening undertaken by the Inspectorate on behalf of the SoS

Under Regulation 24 of the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2009 (as amended) (the EIA Regulations) and on the basis of the current information available from the Applicant, the Secretary of State is of the view that the Proposed Development **is not likely** to have a significant effect on the environment in another EEA State.

In reaching this view the Secretary of State has applied the precautionary approach (as explained in the Planning Inspectorate’s Advice Note 12: Transboundary Impacts Consultation), and taken into account the information currently supplied by the Applicant.

Action:

No further action required at this stage.

Date:

28 August 2015

Note: The Secretary of State’s duty under Regulation 24 of the 2009 EIA Regulations continues throughout the application process.

SECOND TRANSBOUNDARY SCREENING – for the purposes of Regulation 32 of the 2017 EIA Regulations

Document(s) used for transboundary Screening:	Portishead Branch Line (MetroWest Phase 1) Environmental Statement (November 2019) (ES) and Report to Inform Habitats Regulations Assessment (November 2019) (HRA Report)
Date screening undertaken:	Re-screened on 4 February 2020 following submission of the application documents on 15 November 2019

Transboundary re-screening undertaken by the Inspectorate on behalf of the SoS

Following submission of the DCO application which included the Environmental Statement and the Applicant’s HRA report, the Inspectorate has reconsidered the transboundary screening decision made on 28 August 2015.

The first transboundary screening dated 28 August 2015 was completed under Regulation 24 of the 2009 EIA Regulations. On 16 May 2017 the 2017 EIA Regulations came into force. Although the Applicant requested the SoS to adopt a scoping opinion in respect of the development to which the screening relates prior to 16 May 2017, it opted to prepare its ES in accordance with the requirements of the 2017 EIA Regulations. The 2017 EIA Regulations are therefore considered to be applicable for the purposes of this transboundary screening.

The Inspectorate notes that changes have been made to the Proposed Development that is the subject of the DCO application since the previous transboundary screening decision was made on 28 August 2015. However, the Inspectorate considers that the changes will not result in significant effects on the environment in another EEA State, and therefore the conclusion remains unchanged from that in the previous transboundary screening decision.

Conclusion:

Under Regulation 32 of the 2017 EIA Regulations and on the basis of the current information available from the Applicant, there is no change to the previous conclusion, and the Inspectorate remains of the view that the Proposed Development **is not likely** to have a significant effect on the environment in another EEA State.

In reaching this view the Inspectorate has applied the precautionary approach (as explained in its Advice Note twelve: Transboundary Impacts); and taken into account the information currently supplied by the Applicant.

Action:

No further action required at this stage.

Date: 4 February 2020

Note: The SoS' duty under Regulation 32 of the 2017 EIA Regulations continues throughout the application process.

Note:

The Inspectorate's screening of transboundary issues is based on the relevant considerations specified in the Annex to its Advice Note Twelve, available on our website at <http://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/legislation-and-advice/advice-notes/>