



The Planning Act 2008

Application for Development Consent for the Portishead Branch Line – MetroWest Phase 1

Case Ref: TR040011

The Examining Authority's Note of an Unaccompanied Site Inspection

Background

The Examining Authority ('the ExA') undertook an unaccompanied site inspection to support the examination of an application for development consent for the proposed Portishead Branch Line ('the application') on Tuesday 29 September 2020.

In the interest of efficiency, the ExA carried out its unaccompanied site inspection from publicly accessible land (roads, footpaths and bridleways). No inspections were undertaken on private land, advance permission to enter land was not required and so these inspections could be undertaken on an unaccompanied basis.

The site inspection was undertaken in order to view the route of the existing railway line and the proposed scheme, roads and the surrounding area.

Particulars of the Site Visit

The visit was undertaken by: Jo Dowling and Susan Hunt and they were accompanied by the Case Manager, Bart Bartkowiak and Case Officer, Lily Robbins.

The visit was undertaken by bicycle and by foot. Weather conditions were dry and sunny with a temperature circa sixteen degrees centigrade. Weather conditions were at all times adequate to appreciate long range views.

The Inspections commenced at approximately 09:30 and finished at approximately 17:00. A list of the locations visited is attached in Annex A.



Annex A: List of locations visited on the Unaccompanied Site Inspection on Tuesday 29 September 2020

The ExA undertook a site inspection at the following locations.

The ExA left Bristol and cycled along national cycle network (NCN) routes 41 and 26 through the Avon Gorge, Ham Green, Pill, alongside Royal Portbury Dock exiting onto Sheepway and onto Station Road.

At Station Road the ExA observed the junction with the Portbury Hundred; the proposed location of Works Nos 12A (temporary construction compound); 12B (pond and associated ecological works) and the two proposed access points from Station Road/Sheepway. The ExA looked at Station Bridge, the disused railway track and the location of a number of residential properties in the vicinity of the proposed compound and railway track. The ExA also noted the location of Elm Tree Farm.

The ExA then re-joined NCN 26 and cycled around the perimeter of Royal Portbury Dock noting the location of Drove Rhyne. In addition to cycling under the Royal Portbury Dock Road, the ExA left NCN 26 and followed the route of the public bridleway crossing Royal Portbury Dock Road observing the location of Work Nos 14 (improvement of bridleway); 14A (improvement of bridleway) and 14B (realignment of cycle path). The ExA also viewed the route of the disused railway line from the bridge.

Continuing along NCN 26 the ExA observed the banksman in operation as cars were moved from a smaller satellite car storage area to the main port area. At Marsh Lane the ExA then noted the proposed location of Work Nos 15 (temporary path) and 16 (re-alignment of cycle route). The ExA visited the M5 Avonmouth Bridge and observed the location of an existing compound and the proposed location of Work Nos 16A (temporary construction compound); 16C (road rail access point); 19 (installation of railway signalling equipment) and 18 (bridleway).

The ExA joined NCN 41 and cycled towards Pill where the route of the proposed temporary diversion of NCN 41 (Work No 20) was noted. At Avon Road the ExA observed the garages that would be the location of a temporary construction compound (Work No 20B). The ExA then cycled under the existing railway line and looked at Hardwick Road/Lodway Close including a view from the public footpath out over the fields to the rear of Lodway Close which is the proposed location of Work No 17 (construction compound). The Site Inspection continued along Severn Road which is



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the proposed location for Work Nos 21 (car park) and 21A (road/rail access point, railway maintenance compound and principal supply point building). At Station Road the location of the proposed railway station (Work No 22) was observed. The ExA then visited the Pill and District Memorial Club (Work No 22B – temporary construction compound), the location of Work No 22A (improved bus facility) and the zebra crossing by Newavon Arms/Lodway Service Station.

The ExA then continued on to Work No 23 (temporary construction compound) by Pill viaduct. The ExA cycled through Victoria Park. At the end of Hart Close the ExA observed the location of Work No 24A (temporary construction compound), returning to NCN 41 the ExA then noted the location of Work No 24 (permanent vehicle compound and emergency access) and the location of the Penny Brohn cancer centre.

The ExA cycled along NCN 41 through Leigh Woods and the Avon Gorge. The ExA noted that the Forestry Commission were undertaking clear felling of trees in Leigh Woods. The ExA observed the location of Work No 25 (reconstruction of bridge, temporary construction compound and temporary ramp). The rockfaces that would be subject to netting were also noted. The ExA viewed the Clifton Suspension Bridge and its relationship with the proposed route.

The ExA exited NCN 41 over the Rownham Hill bridge onto Rownham Hill/Clanage Road where they observed the proposed location for a temporary construction compound and permanent vehicular accesses (Work Nos 26/26A/26B). They then proceeded to Ashton Road where they noted the location of Work No 27 (public foot and cycle ramp) before visiting the Ashton Vale Industrial Estate/Cala Trading Estate where the location of the existing level crossing, Babcock Integrated Technology Ltd and Manheim Auctions Ltd were observed.