

## **Portishead Branch Line – MetroWest Phase 1**

### **Bristol City Council Local Impact Report**

#### **BACKGROUND**

1. MetroWest is a programme of major projects being promoted to increase capacity and accessibility of the local railway network across the West of England. MetroWest is being delivered by the West of England Authorities (Bristol City Council, North Somerset Council, Bath & North East Somerset and South Gloucestershire Council), in partnership with Network Rail and Great Western Railway.
2. Portishead Branch Line – MetroWest Phase 1 ('the Project') forms the first in the programme of MetroWest projects. The Project comprises development associated with the proposed re-opening of the Portishead railway line between Parson Street Junction and the proposed Portishead railway station to passenger train services.
3. The Project is defined as a nationally significant infrastructure project (NSIP) under the Planning Act 2008 (as amended) ('the Act'). North Somerset Council ('the Applicant') is acting as scheme promoter on behalf of the West of England Authorities and has submitted an application for Development Consent ('the DCO application') to the Planning Inspectorate ('PINS') for the Project. North Somerset Council ('NSC') and Bristol City Council ('BCC') are the 'host' Local Planning Authorities for the Project.
4. Under Section 60 (2) (B) of the Act, BCC has been invited to submit a Local Impact Report (LIR), as a host authority of the Project, giving details of the likely impact of the Project within BCC's administrative area.
5. This LIR has been produced following engagement between the Applicant and BCC. Bristol City Council responded to the Applicant's pre-application consultation in June 2015, March 2016, November 2016 and August 2017 and has attended pre-application consultation meetings throughout the intervening period. Bristol City Council has also declared an interest in the examination of the application for Development Consent by submitting a relevant representation to PINS in February 2020.
6. This LIR contains BCC's objective response to the elements of the Project which are in BCC's administrative area and any cross-boundary effects that would have an impact upon BCC.

#### **SITE DESCRIPTION**

7. The Order Limits for the Project extend along the existing railway line from Parson Street Junction to the proposed Portishead railway station. Whilst much of the Project would be located within NSC, the proposed railway line would pass through urban areas of BCC including Ashton Gate, Bedminster and through designated sites including the Avon Gorge Woodlands Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Avon Gorge Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Ashton Court SSSI.
8. The land within the Order Limits within BCC includes the existing railway freight line which links Ashton Junction to Bristol Port. This section of the Project between Ashton Junction and the northern extent of Leigh Woods is approximately 5km long.

9. The southernmost point of the Project at Ashton Junction is of a mixed character. The land to the east of railway line is largely commercial and industrial; the Imperial Tobacco Limited's offices, and the East Court / Winterstoke Road and Marsh Road / Winterstoke designated industrial areas (PIWA) adjacent to Winterstoke Road.
10. The land to the west is a mix of residential and industrial, with the Ashton Rise development and the Alderman Moores Allotments to the south of the Ashton Vale industrial estate.
11. Moving north, the Project passes through the Bower Ashton area of the city, running adjacent to the Bower Ashton Conservation Area and an area of Green Belt which includes sports pitches and a former police and horse dog training centre.
12. The Project then passes the western end of the Cumberland Basin and intersects the administrative boundary between NSC and BCC through the Avon Gorge. To the north of the Clifton Suspension Bridge, BCC's administrative boundary extends further west to encompass a greater portion of the western bank of the Avon Gorge. This area is designated as SAC, Site of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI) and SSSI. The land to the west of the railway line consists of Leigh Woods, which is within NSC.
13. The railway then runs adjacent to BCC's administrative boundary to the northern extent Leigh Woods, where it turns west towards Ham Green and Pill. The remainder of the Project is within NSC.

## **APPLICATION**

14. It is BCC's understanding that the Project is comprised of the following development components within BCC's boundary, which are subject of the DCO application:
  - Railway line engineering works for 9km between Ashton Junction and Pill Junction;
  - Works to Ashton Vale Road including extension of left turn lane onto Winterstoke Road, optimisation of the traffic signals at Ashton Vale Road and the provision of a pedestrian/cycling ramp from Ashton Vale Road to Ashton Road;
  - Permanent maintenance compound on Clanage Road, Bower Ashton;
  - Installation of several maintenance access points for pedestrians along the railway line; and
  - A number of temporary construction compounds are also proposed along the route.
15. The following components of the Project would be subject of the DCO application but situated outside BCC's boundary.
  - Reinstatement of the 5.6km disused railway line from Pill Junction to Portishead;
  - Railway station works (a new Portishead railway station and new platform at Pill railway station); and
  - Other associated development.

## RELEVANT HISTORY

16. The Portishead Branch Line provided passenger services between Portishead and Bristol until 1964, when they closed due to the 'Beeching Axe'. Freight services were stopped in 1981, but the line reopened in 2002 to provide a link from Bristol to the Royal Portbury Dock.
17. The line has remained in use for freight trains throughout this time.

## RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

18. The development plan for BCC is comprised of:
- Core Strategy (adopted 2011);
  - Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Local Plan (adopted 2014); and
  - Bristol Central Area Plan (adopted 2015).
19. The Project is located outside of the defined 'Bristol Central Area', and as such, the policies within the Central Area Plan do not apply to the Project.
20. The following planning policies are considered relevant to the consideration of the DCO application:

<b>Core Strategy</b>	<b>Site Allocations and Development Management Policies</b>
Policy BCS4 – Avonmouth and Bristol Port	Policy DM1: Presumption in favour of sustainable development
Policy BCS6 – Green Belt	Policy DM14: The Health Impacts of Development
Policy BCS8 – Delivering a Thriving Economy	Policy DM15: Green Infrastructure Provision
Policy BCS9 – Green Infrastructure	Policy DM16: Open Space for Recreation
Policy BCS10 – Transport and Access Improvements	Policy DM17: Development Involving Existing Green Infrastructure
Policy BCS11 – Infrastructure and Developer Contributions	Policy DM19: Development and Nature Conservation
Policy BCS13 – Climate Change	Policy DM22: Development Adjacent to Waterways
Policy BCS15 – Sustainable Design and Construction	Policy DM23: Transport Development Management
Policy BCS16 – Flood Risk and Water Management	Policy DM24: Transport Schemes
Policy BCS20 – Effective and Efficient Use of Land	Policy DM25: Greenways
Policy BCS21 – Quality Urban Design	Policy DM26: Local Character and Distinctiveness
Policy BCS22 – Conservation and the Historic Environment	Policy DM27: Layout and Form
Policy BCS23 – Pollution	Policy DM28: Public Realm
	Policy DM31: Heritage Asset

Core Strategy	Site Allocations and Development Management Policies
	Policy DM33: Pollution Control, Air Quality and Water Quality
	Policy DM34: Contaminated Land
	Policy DM35: Noise Mitigation
	Policy DM37: Unstable Land

21. Whilst it is yet to be adopted, the policy direction given by the emerging Local Plan Review (March 2019) should be considered in the decision making process. Bristol City Council has published a guidance document 'Progressing Bristol's Development' (October 2020) which outlines the weight to be given to the various considerations when making decisions on a range of proposals following the withdrawal of the West of England Joint Spatial Plan and BCC's intent to progress and prepare a statutory local plan.

22. Other material considerations include:

- West of England Joint Local Transport Plan (JLTP4) (2020)
- Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (2012)
- Archaeology and Development SPD (2006)
- Conservation area character appraisals for:
  - Bower Ashton Conservation area enhancement statement (1993)
  - The Downs Conservation area enhancement statement (1993)
  - Sneyd Park Conservation area enhancement statement (1993)
  - City Docks Character Appraisal & Management Proposals (2011)

## RELEVANT PROPOSALS

23. There are a number of developments and development proposals which BCC request the Examining Authority consider in the context of the Project.

24. These have been arranged into three categories: committed development and development in construction; proposals under consideration by BCC; and, emerging proposals and allocated sites.

Committed development and development in construction:

Address	Proposal	Planning Reference	Status
Ashton Rise, former Alderman Moores Allotments, Silbury Road	Development of 133 no. dwellings (also allocated as BSA1001)	17/06559/FB	In construction

Address	Proposal	Planning Reference	Status
Teddies Nursery, Clanage Road	Erection of building for indoor recreation use	20/01909/F	Planning permission granted

Proposals under consideration by BCC as Local Planning Authority

Address	Proposal	Planning Reference	Status
Former Ashton Sidings, Clanage Road	Development of 118 no. dwellings and flexible retail/café space	20/01655/F	Pending consideration
Former Police Dog & Horse Training Centre, Clanage Road	Proposed change of use to touring caravan site consisting of 62 pitches	20/01930/F	Resolution to grant from Development Control Committee <sup>1</sup>

Emerging proposals and allocated sites:

Name	Proposal	Status
Site Allocation SA105 - Land and buildings south of Brunel Lock Road, including A-Bond Warehouse	Housing / offices	Allocated in the Bristol Central Area Plan
Western Harbour	Housing / offices	Aspiration identified within the draft Bristol Local Plan Review. Engagement undertaken in August / September 2019. Further engagement paused due to Covid-19
Ashton Gate Sporting Quarter	Mixed use / leisure inc. Sports & Convention Centre	Bristol Sport-led proposals announced in September 2018. Public consultation delayed due to Covid-19

## KEY ISSUES

25. The key issues outlined within the LIR are derived from BCC's Relevant Representation and the issues raised within the Applicant's Statement of Common Ground with BCC.

<sup>1</sup> This application to relocate the Caravan Club site from Baltic Wharf is currently being considered by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) due to the departure from the development plan (in relation to Green Belt) and an objection to the application from the Environment Agency due to the site's location in Flood Zone 3.

## **PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT**

26. The need for the Project has been demonstrated through the MetroWest Phase 1 Outline Business Case Report, which was produced by the Applicant. It would enhance rail capacity for the local rail network and provide a reliable and more frequent public transport service linking Bristol to Portishead and Pill.
27. The principle of development is supported by both the Core Strategy and the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies. Policy BCS10 describes the Project, referenced as the 'Greater Bristol Metro Rail Project', as a significant improvement to transport infrastructure. The rail improvements are one of the main elements of the transport strategy as detailed within Policy BCS10 and the Core Strategy 'Key Diagram'.
28. The Project would contribute to the delivery of an 'integrated transport system' by linking into the existing rail network and the MetroBus scheme and would accord with Policy BCS10 by making the best use of existing transport infrastructure and reusing the Portbury Freight Line.
29. The Project would accord with the transport user priorities set out in the JLTP4 and the Bristol Core Strategy by enhancing public transport and reducing the need to travel by private car.
30. The Project would support economic growth within Bristol and the wider West of England Region by enhancing transport links to Bristol city centre and the Temple Quarter Enterprise Zone.
31. It is estimated in the Applicant's application material that economic benefits of the Project include an increase of £264m of GVA to the local economy and 514 net new permanent jobs, as well as temporary jobs created during construction. The provision of enhanced transport links would help to address lack of accessibility by public transport and congestion as a barrier to employment in accordance with Policy BCS8.
32. The Project would support the economic performance of Bristol and would help to promote the city as a place to invest in accordance with Policy BCS8.
33. The Project is supported in principle by the development plan.

## **TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS**

34. Upon completion, the Project would provide overarching transport and accessibility benefits to support Policy BCS10 of the Core Strategy by providing a public transport route from Bristol to Portishead and Pill.
35. Within Bristol, there are a number of parts of the Project that would have an impact upon transport and highways. These would include works to Ashton Vale Road including the extension of the left turn lane onto Winterstoke Road, the provision of a pedestrian/cycling link from Ashton Vale Road to Ashton Road, and a compound for construction, and subsequently maintenance during operation, would be situated at Clanage Road in Bower Ashton.
36. Consultation has been undertaken with BCC's Transport Development Management Officers as representatives of the Local Highway Authority.
37. Bristol City Council has highlighted that construction impacts upon transport and highways are likely to be focussed at construction compounds, with construction traffic generation

cited as the main concern. The DCO application proposes that a Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) would be produced for each relevant stage of the Project, should it be granted. Bristol City Council is satisfied that this provides sufficient controls to the Local Highways Authority, which would include but would not be limited to, the use of dedicated construction routes, a framework for delivery of abnormal roads and a construction compound management framework. Subject to the provision of an acceptable CTMP, the Project would be in accordance with Policy DM23 and would not be expected to give rise to unacceptable traffic conditions.

38. Highway safety concerns have been raised regarding the use of the Clanage Road construction and maintenance compound. These concerns specifically relate to the visibility of the junction given the fast nature of Clanage Road. Through consultation with the Applicant, it has been agreed that traffic management and signage would need to be used during construction to ensure that this junction is safe. Bristol City Council notes that it retains sufficient control as LPA given that the detailed design of the Clanage Road compound and replacement access would be subject to approval pursuant to Requirement 4 of the DCO.
39. The Applicant has given sufficient consideration to the traffic impacts on Winterstoke Road and Ashton Vale Road. Provision of an extended left turn lane at this location, to mitigate potential impacts associated with the increased use of the Ashton Vale Level Crossing, is supported. It is noted within the traffic modelling results submitted by the Applicant that the hourly train service can be delivered without detriment to the highway at Winterstoke Road and Ashton Vale Road junction. Ongoing consultation with BCC's Network Management Team is encouraged and the detailed design for this aspect should be in accordance with BCC's Traffic Signals team.
40. Highway agreements would be required with the Local Highways Authority under the section 278 and section 38 Highways Act 1980 for the works at Clanage Road and Winterstoke Road/Ashton Vale Road. It is understood that these are being pursued separately to the DCO application.
41. The dedication of the new public right of way (PRoW) at Winterstoke Road/Ashton Vale Road would enhance walking and cycling connectivity in accordance with Policy BCS10.
42. Financial contributions would be required to implement the upgrade to MOVA on the signalised junction of Winterstoke Road / Ashton Vale Road and for a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) to enable the Ashton Road Pelican crossing to be replaced with a Toucan crossing.
43. The Project is acceptable to BCC in terms of transport and highways, subject to the provision and approval of further information via Requirements, separate approvals and planning obligations outlined above. Separate approvals would be required subject to relevant Highways legislation.

## **ECOLOGY AND BIODIVERSITY**

### **Ecology**

44. The Project would be situated within the Avon Gorge SAC and SSSI and Leigh Woods NNR and Ancient Woodland. It would be adjacent to the Severn Estuary, which is designated as a SPA, a Ramsar site and a SAC. The designated areas include the sub-tidal and inter-tidal areas of the Severn Estuary and the lower reaches of the River Avon.



45. The following nature conservation features have also been identified within survey work in the Environmental Statement: grassland, tall ruderal, reedbed/wetland, watercourses/ponds, great crested newts, badgers, bats, owls and nesting birds. The invasive plant species Japanese knotweed has been found in isolated patches along the railway corridor.
46. To assess whether the Project would have an adverse effect on the designated sites, the Applicant has submitted a Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) Report. It concludes that the Project has been designed to minimise habitat loss and a Vegetation Management Plan has been developed to provide preventative measures to reduce potential adverse impacts during construction. Bristol City Council's Ecologist has been consulted and the HRA Report is satisfactory.
47. There is potential for construction impacts such as disturbance, loss of habitat and habitat fragmentation. Bristol City Council is satisfied that sufficient measures to protect flora and fauna during construction are included in the overarching Code of Construction Practice (CoCP) and the Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP).
48. Lighting contour plans for the construction stage should be provided in accordance with Bat Conservation trust and Institute of Lighting Professionals guidance (2018). These details would need to be provided via a stage-specific CEMP.
49. Bristol City Council is satisfied that sufficient control would be retained through approval of applications pursuant to Requirements (Requirement 4 and Requirement 14) to secure stage-specific CEMPs and the Avon Gorge Vegetation Management Plan.

Trees

50. Policy DM17 requires that where tree loss or damage is essential to allow for appropriate development, replacement trees of an appropriate species should be provided in accordance with the BCC tree compensation standard. The tree compensation standard is detailed within Planning Obligations SPD (2012) and defined as the 'Bristol Tree Replacement Standard'.
51. The Applicant has produced a Tree Survey Report confirming the quantum, quality and type of trees within the Order Limits which are likely to be affected by the Project within BCC's administrative boundary. 7no. main locations were surveyed: at the proposed Clanage Road construction compound; adjacent to the railway line at Ashton Vale Road (where the proposed ramp is to be installed); and, at 5no. further locations where tree removal is proposed to accommodate the installation of fencing.
52. The Tree Survey Report confirms that approximately 130no. trees are to be coppiced within the Order Limits to facilitate construction of the Project. 7no. trees are proposed to be removed.
53. On the basis of the Policy DM17 tree compensation standard, the following replacements trees are required to mitigate the proposed tree removal in accordance with the Bristol Tree Replacement Standard:

Location	Number of Mature trees to be lost	Number of Replacement Trees to be planted in mitigation
27- and 28-Miles Dock Underbridge	6	30
19 and 20 Ch.6630 - Ch.6570m	1	5

Location	Number of Mature trees to be lost	Number of Replacement Trees to be planted in mitigation
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>35</b>

54. Tree loss replacement has been included in the Clanage Road Compound, Landscaping and Access Plan (DCO Document Reference 2.52). This is supported and has benefits in terms of landscape and visual impact by screening the site from important views from Ashton Court and the Clifton Suspension Bridge.
55. The Plan indicates that 35no. trees would be provided; however, it is considered by both the Applicant and BCC that there is insufficient space for the quantum of replacement trees to fully compensate for the losses outlined above.
56. In the case that the trees cannot be fully compensated, in accordance with the Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (2012) and Bristol Tree Replacement Standard, a financial contribution would be required, which would cover the cost of providing the tree pit (where appropriate), purchasing, planting, protecting, establishing and initially maintaining the new tree.
57. The metrics to calculate the financial contribution within the Bristol Tree Replacement Standard are as follows:
  - Tree in open ground (no tree pit required) - £765.21
  - Tree in hardstanding (tree pit required) - £3,318.88
58. Bristol City Council awaits confirmation of the proposed number of compensatory trees that cannot be accommodated within the Clanage Road Compound.
59. Subject to agreement on the number and location of compensatory trees, the Project is considered to be acceptable to BCC in terms of green infrastructure.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH - AIR QUALITY, NOISE AND VIBRATION**

### **Air Quality and Greenhouse Gases**

60. The Project has the potential to result in air quality impacts during construction and operation. Bristol City Council's Air Quality officer has been engaged in pre-application discussions with the Applicant concerning the Project.
61. An Air Quality and Construction Dust Plan is proposed during construction to mitigate temporary dust impacts and residual effects. Following implementation of the proposed mitigation measures, no significant effects are reported within the Applicant's Environmental Statement. The findings of the ES are accepted in relation to Air Quality, and no objection is raised by BCC, subject to the provision of these measures to be secured by Requirement 5 of the DCO.
62. During pre-application discussions, a number of issues were raised by BCC in relation to the methodology and results reported in 6.10 ES Chapter 7 Air Quality and Greenhouse Gases as submitted (November 2019). In response, the Applicant submitted a revised Air Quality Assessment to address BCC's concerns with the assessment methodology. These comments focus on the results of the revised air quality modelling at residential locations located close to the railway line near Parsons Street Station as this is where moderate air quality impacts were predicted in the November 2019 assessment.

63. Table 7-20 of the report shows the modelled air quality impacts for sensitive receptor locations between Parsons Street Junction and Parsons Street Station. The revised assessment applied more realistic baseline air pollution concentrations at residential locations closest to the railway line in this area. This has resulted in predicted increases in air pollution being considered less significant when using the Institute of Air Quality Managements impact descriptors. The impacts in this location are now described as negligible at all relevant locations.

#### Noise and Vibration

64. It is anticipated that potentially significant temporary noise impacts may arise during construction of the Project. This includes provision for night working which is likely to have the greatest impact upon residential amenity.
65. Bristol City Council's Environmental Health Officer has commented that the conclusions of the Environmental Statement are acceptable, subject to specific controls being put in place through stage-specific CEMPs, secured by Requirement 5 of the DCO. The Master CEMP submitted with the DCO application is considered to be acceptable and the Environmental Health Officer raised no issues to the approaches set out for managing air, noise or odour pollution. Bristol City Council supports securing further details on how noise from the construction phase would be addressed through the nuisance management plans and external communications plans, secured by Requirement 5 of the DCO.
66. The Project is acceptable to BCC in terms of noise and vibration, subject to sufficient measures being put in place through the CEMP.

### **WATER RESOURCES, DRAINAGE AND FLOOD RISK**

67. Within BCC, the Order Limits includes land within Flood Zones 2 and 3. Most notably, this includes the proposed Clanage Road construction compound (largely within Flood Zone 3), the Ashton Vale / Winterstoke Road junction (Flood Zone 2) and the area adjacent to the existing freight line along the Avon Gorge (Flood Zone 3).
68. Bristol City Council's Flood Risk Manager has been consulted on the DCO application as representative of the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA). The LLFA is satisfied with the approach taken for the Project and the conclusions of the Flood Risk Assessment submitted with the DCO application.
69. The Flood Risk Assessment addresses the requirement for flood plain compensation as a result of the Clanage Road construction compound. The height of the track in this location would remain unchanged, whilst the ground levels within the compound have been lowered to avoid flood risk to third parties. It is understood that a runoff collector and sump are proposed during the construction stage but during operation no positive drainage is proposed onsite with reliance on the water draining through the porous surface into the ground. Whilst concerns are raised by the Local Highway Authority that this may lead to surface run-off onto the highway, BCC is satisfied that this can be sufficiently addressed through the detailed design of the compound, secured by Requirement 4.
70. It is understood that the Applicant is continuing to engage with the Environment Agency in its role managing flood risk from main river and tidal sources at Bower Ashton and Longmoor and Colliter's Brooks.
71. The Project is considered acceptable to BCC in terms of flood risk and drainage.

## **LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT**

72. Bristol City Council's Landscape Officer was consulted on the DCO application and concurs with the assessment and the conclusions outlined within the Applicant's Environmental Statement.
73. During construction, the most likely landscape and visual impacts arising from the Project within the Avon Gorge character area are vegetation loss. In particular, trees which overhang the railway line, and the lighting of the track and construction compounds. Given that the character area has a high value, it is agreed that the magnitude of impact in this location is considered moderate adverse.
74. The temporary construction and permanent maintenance compound at Clanage Road would be relatively exposed in the landscape, with views possible from the Clifton Suspension Bridge. The temporary construction compound would have a temporary impact upon the landscape. The permanent maintenance compound is considered to have a slight adverse impact upon the landscape. The proposed replacement tree planting set out in Policy DM17 must be accorded with to mitigate the visual impact of the compound from key views.
75. The construction of modification for the left hand turn off Winterstoke Road and across the Ashton Vale Level Crossing would be localised. The area is mostly surrounded by large scale buildings and as such, is considered to be a slight adverse impact upon the landscape.
76. Construction impacts upon Conservation Areas are considered to be neutral to slight adverse, with the exception of Bower Ashton Conservation Area, which is considered to have moderate adverse impacts.
77. Operational impacts would include the implementation of a repeater mast within the Avon Gorge. It is proposed that this would be mostly screened by existing vegetation. The pedestrian ramp at Ashton Vale would have localised effects, considered slight adverse in landscape terms.
78. It is considered that the visual impact of the Project would be acceptable, provided sufficient mitigation is implemented through the screening of the Clanage Road compound and the implementation of the Avon Gorge Vegetation Management Plan, to be secured by Requirement 4, Requirement 7 and Requirement 17.

## **CULTURAL HERITAGE AND ARCHAEOLOGY**

79. The setting of a number of designated heritage assets within BCC are within proximity of the Project. The most significant of these include listed buildings such as the Clifton Observatory, the Clifton Suspension Bridge, The Paragon, The Colonnade and Brunel's swing bridge, the Clifton Down Camp Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM) and the Shirehampton, Sea Mills, the Downs, City Docks and Bower Ashton Conservation Areas (CAs).
80. The assessment undertaken to inform the Environmental Statement found that the Project would have a neutral to slight adverse impact upon these heritage assets. The DCO application proposes that any change to the setting of these features would be mitigated by maintaining existing planting and the provision of new planting to screen views. Bristol City Council's Conservation and Archaeology Officer was consulted on the DCO application and considers this assessment acceptable.

81. The loss of railway features associated with the original C.18 railway would be mitigated through preservation by record and potential re-use.
82. It is considered that for the most part the impact upon impact on the historic environment within the BCC section of the project is relatively minor, and vegetation loss is likely to be a temporary impact. Post-construction it is hoped that greenery would re-establish, and the setting of the affected assets would be restored to the present character.
83. It is understood that where the potential for below ground archaeology exists a written scheme of investigation or archaeological watching brief would be undertaken. The locations specified within the Applicant's Environmental Statement (Chapter 8 – Cultural Heritage) are considered appropriate by BCC's Conservation and Archaeology Officer.
84. Bristol City Council is satisfied that the Project would not result in unacceptable harm to designated heritage assets in accordance with Policies BCS22 and DM31. A sufficient level of control would be retained by the LPA through Requirement 10 of the draft DCO.

### **CONTAMINATED LAND, GEOLOGY AND SOILS**

85. Potential construction impacts assessed in the Applicant's the Environmental Statement in relation to contaminated land, geology and soils are likely to be related to the removal and replacement of ballast along the railway, and the foundations and earthworks associated with the new structures along and adjoining the railway. It is noted that the Paragraph 3.28 of the Secretary of State's Scoping Opinion supported scoping out operational impacts on geology, hydrogeology, ground conditions and contaminated land from the Environmental Statement.
86. Given the nature of the Project, generally, the risks to human health are low during and after development.
87. Bristol City Council has raised concerns in relation to the protection of the watercourses from pollution during the construction phase, however it is understood that discussions are ongoing with the Environment Agency and would be subject to consents from the Environment Agency.
88. Measures to mitigate pollution during the construction phase as part of the overarching CEMP and stage-specific CEMPs, each with a site waste management plan, would be secured by Requirement 5. This is supported by BCC.
89. Consideration of the risk of pollution of the sensitive designated sites along the River Avon and of the watercourse should be managed through stage-specific CEMPs and these should be agreed with the Environment Agency it is role managing the main river.
90. The Project is acceptable to BCC in terms of land contamination, geology and soils, subject to the provision of additional measures and mitigation secured within the CEMP.

### **PLANNING OBLIGATIONS**

91. A form of highways agreement is required under s.278 and s.38 of the Highways Act 1980 for the works at Winterstoke Road, Ashton Vale Level Crossing and the new vehicular maintenance road rail access point / construction compound at Clanage Road. It is understood that this is being progressed with BCC as Local Highways Authority.

92. Should the DCO application be granted, a contribution would need to be provided for the traffic signals team to implement the upgrade to MOVA on the signalised junction of Winterstoke Road / Ashton Vale Road.
93. A Statutory Notice would need to be processed for a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) to enable the Ashton Road Pelican crossing to be replaced with a Toucan crossing. There appear to be no other permanent TRO/Statutory Notice requirements associated with the highway modifications at Ashton Vale Road/Winterstoke Road.
94. As set out within paragraph 58 of this local impact report, the Applicant's updated position regarding tree compensation in accordance with Policy DM17 is awaited.

## **CONCLUSION**

95. Bristol City Council supports the principle of the Project, to reopen the Portishead Branch Line and the associated transport connectivity and economic benefits.
96. The Project would be acceptable to the Local Highway Authority in terms of transport impacts, subject to the provision of further information via requirement and the provision of financial contributions.
97. Bristol City Council consider that the Project would not have an unacceptable impact upon ecology and biodiversity within BCC, subject to the measures implemented within the stage-specific CEMPs and the Avon Gorge Vegetation Management Plan, and the provision of tree compensation in accordance with DM17.
98. Bristol City Council accepts that the impacts of the Project on environmental health in terms of air quality, noise and vibration can be sufficiently managed during construction and would have benefit/negligible impact during operation.
99. No objection has been raised by the LLFA to the proposals for drainage and flood compensation at Clanage Road compound.
100. Landscape, visual impact and heritage impacts can be sufficiently managed by screening of construction and maintenance compounds and by undertaking a written scheme of investigation or archaeological watching brief.
101. The Project is acceptable to BCC in terms of land contamination, geology and soils, subject to the provision of additional measures and mitigation via the CEMP.