



MetroWest+

Portishead Branch Line (MetroWest Phase 1)

Planning Inspectorate Reference: TR040011

Applicant: North Somerset District Council

DCO Document Reference: 9.7 ExA.SoC.D5.V3

Statement of Commonality of Statements of Common Ground

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2. ACRONYMS, ABBREVIATIONS AND TERMINOLOGY

2008 Act	Planning Act 2008
CEMP	Construction Environmental Management Plan
CTMP	Construction Traffic Management Plan
DCO	Development Consent Order
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
ES	Environmental Statement
ExA	Examining Authority
NSIP	Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project
PINS	Planning Inspectorate
SoCG	Statement of Common Ground

In the text, "DCO Document Reference" refers to the DCO document reference number as shown on the documents on the Portishead Branch Line (MetroWest Phase 1) [project page on the PINS website](#).

In cases where a document appears twice and there are two Document reference numbers, (for example, the AGVMP which appears twice as standalone document reference number 8.12 and as ES Appendix 9.11, document 6.25), we have used the DCO Document Reference for the standalone document.

3. INTRODUCTION

3.1 Scheme Overview

- 3.1.1 The Applicant has applied to the Planning Inspectorate ("PINS") for a DCO to construct the Portishead Branch Line under the Planning Act 2008 ("Application"). The Application was made on 15 November 2019 under reference TR040011 and was accepted for examination on 12 December 2019.
- 3.1.2 The DCO Scheme will provide an hourly (or hourly plus) railway service between Portishead and Bristol Temple Meads Railway Station, with stops at Portishead, Pill, Parson Street and Bedminster.
- 3.1.3 The DCO Scheme comprises the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project ("NSIP") as defined by the Planning Act 2008 ("the 2008 Act") to construct a new railway 5.4 kilometres long between Portishead and the village of Pill, and associated works including a new station and car park at Portishead, a refurbished station and new car park at Pill and various works along the existing operational railway line between Pill and Ashton Junction where the DCO Scheme will join the existing railway. Ashton Junction is located close to the railway junction with the Bristol to Exeter Mainline at Parson Street.¹

3.2 Purpose of the Statement of Commonality

- 3.2.1 This document provides the Examining Authority ("ExA") with an overview of the position of each Statement of Common Ground ("SoCG") between the Applicant and the various parties in relation to the MetroWest Portishead Branch Line DCO at Deadline 5.

¹ Please refer to Schedule 1 of the DCO (DCO Document Reference 3.1) for more detail.

3.2.2 The Statement of Commonality is provided at the request of the ExA and sets out the Applicant's understanding of the current progress of negotiations and the areas of commonality across the SoCGs.

3.2.3 The Applicant will continue to work with interested parties to review any matters that remain unresolved as the Examination progresses.

3.3 Structure

3.3.1 This report is structured as follows:

- (i) Section 3 outlines the background to the SoCGs;
- (ii) Section 4 sets out the status of each SoCG; and
- (iii) Section 5 sets out the matters agreed, the matters not agreed and the matters subject to further discussions.

3.4 Deadline 5 status of Statements of Common Ground

3.4.1 Table 1 provides a summary of the current position of negotiations of SoCGs at Deadline 5. As at Deadlines 1 and 3, the status of negotiations is categorised as follows:

- (i) **Agreed and signed** – all matters are agreed between the parties and the interested party has signed the SoCG;
- (ii) **Agreed but not yet signed** – all matters are agreed between the parties but the interested party has not yet signed the SoCG;
- (iii) **Largely agreed but not yet signed** – the SoCG has been significantly progressed but matters remain outstanding. The Applicant will also undertake a review of the issues covered in the SoCG following the ExA's first written questions and seek to address those issues with the relevant party;
- (iv) **Applicant's latest draft not yet agreed** – a draft SoCG is in circulation between the parties but matters remain outstanding and the latest draft by the Applicant is yet to receive comments/ approval from the interested party. The

draft submitted to the ExA is, the Applicant believes, an accurate reflection of the current position between the parties;

- (v) **SoCG not yet in circulation** – notification of the ExA's request for a SoCG with this party was received in the Rule 6 letter and the Applicant is taking steps to engage with the party and agree the basis for drafting of a SoCG. The SoCG will be progressed through the course of the Examination.

3.4.2 Where a new version of a SoCG has been submitted at Deadline 5, the status of that SoCG in Table 1 is shown in a highlighted box.

4. STATUS OF THE STATEMENTS OF COMMON GROUND

Table 1 – Position of Statements of Common Ground at Deadline 5

Document Reference	Party	Position at Deadline 1	Position at Deadline 3	Position at Deadline 5	Position at Deadline 6	Position at Deadline 7
Local authorities						
9.3.2 ExA.SoCG- BCC.D1.V1	Bristol City Council Local Planning Authority	Largely agreed but not yet signed	Largely agreed but not yet signed	Largely agreed but not yet signed		
9.3.1 ExA.SoCG- NSC.D1.V1	North Somerset District Council Local Planning Authority	Largely agreed but not yet signed	Largely agreed but not yet signed	Largely agreed but not yet signed		
9.3.9 ExA.SoCG- SCC.D1.V1	Somerset County Council	Agreed and signed	Agreed and signed	Agreed and signed		
Statutory consultees						
9.3.3 ExA.SoCG- EA.D3.V2	Environment Agency	Applicant's latest draft not yet agreed	Applicant's latest draft not yet agreed	Applicant's latest draft not yet agreed		

Document Reference	Party	Position at Deadline 1	Position at Deadline 3	Position at Deadline 5	Position at Deadline 6	Position at Deadline 7
9.3.4 ExA.SoCG- HECL.D1.V1	Highways England	Agreed and signed	Agreed and signed	Agreed and signed		
9.3.5 ExA.SoCG- HE.D1.V1	Historic England	Agreed and signed	Agreed and signed	Agreed and signed		
9.3.6 ExA.SoCG- NE.D3.V2	Natural England	Largely agreed but not yet signed	Largely agreed but not yet signed	Largely agreed but not yet signed		
9.3.7 ExA.SoCG- NSLIDB.D3.V2	North Somerset Levels Internal Drainage Board	Largely agreed but not yet signed	Largely agreed but not yet signed	Largely agreed but not yet signed		
9.3.11 ExA.SoCG- ASP.D1.V1	Avon & Somerset Constabulary	Agreed but not yet signed	Agreed but not yet signed	Agreed but not yet signed		
-	National Trust	SoCG not yet in circulation	SoCG not yet in circulation	SoCG not yet in circulation		
-	Forestry England (formerly Forestry Commission)	SoCG not yet in circulation	SoCG not yet in circulation	SoCG not yet in circulation		

Document Reference	Party	Position at Deadline 1	Position at Deadline 3	Position at Deadline 5	Position at Deadline 6	Position at Deadline 7
Statutory undertakers						
9.3.8 ExA.SoCG- NGET.D3.V2	National Grid (NGET)	Largely agreed but not yet signed	Largely agreed but not yet signed	Largely agreed but not yet signed		
9.3.12 ExA.SoCG- BPC.D1.V1	Bristol Port Company	Applicant's latest draft not yet agreed	Applicant's latest draft not yet agreed	Applicant's latest draft not yet agreed		
9.3.10 ExA.SoCG- OL.D1.V1	Openreach Limited	Agreed but not yet signed	Agreed but not yet signed	Agreed and signed		
9.3.12 ExA.SoCG- WW.D1.V1	Wessex Water Limited	Applicant's latest draft not yet agreed	Applicant's latest draft not yet agreed	Agreed but not yet signed		
-	Bristol Water PLC	SoCG not yet in circulation	SoCG not yet in circulation	SoCG not yet in circulation		
-	Network Rail Infrastructure Limited	SoCG not yet in circulation	SoCG not yet in circulation	SoCG not yet in circulation		

Document Reference	Party	Position at Deadline 1	Position at Deadline 3	Position at Deadline 5	Position at Deadline 6	Position at Deadline 7
9.3.14 ExA.SoCG- WPD.D5.V1	Western Power Distribution	SoCG not yet in circulation	SoCG not yet in circulation	Applicant's latest draft not yet agreed		
Interested parties						
-	Woodland Trust	SoCG not yet in circulation	SoCG not yet in circulation	SoCG not yet in circulation		

5. COMMONALITY

5.1 Summary

- 5.1.1 This section of the report provides a summary of the principal topics covered in the SoCGs and evidences the areas of commonality with various parties at Deadline 5.
- 5.1.2 Where the Applicant considers issues to have developed since the previous Statement of Commonality and a revised SoCG has been submitted to the ExA reflecting those developments, the relevant sub-topics are outlined in bold.
- 5.1.3 Please note, in many cases the Applicant has continued its discussions since Deadlines 1 and 3, and matters at issue have narrowed. Nevertheless, until a revised SoCG is submitted to the ExA the status in this Statement of Commonality will remain as per the most recently submitted SoCG.
- 5.1.4 The summary in Table 2 outlines the topics covered in the SoCGs and how these are relevant to each party, with the position for each topic presented as follows:

	Matter agreed
	Matter subject to further discussions
	Matter not relevant/not covered by the SoCG
	Matter not agreed

Document Reference Number	Party	Topics															Impacts on statutory undertakers/bodies		
		Air quality	Biodiversity, Ecology and the Natural Environment	Climate change	Construction impacts (inc. CEMP and CTMP)	Cultural heritage	Design and engineering	Draft DCO	EIA and ES	Water environmental effects	Noise, vibration and light	Planning policy	Public rights of way and cycle routes	Socio-economic effects	Traffic and transport	Contamination (land/water)		Other consents and licences	Landscape
9.3.11 ExA.SoCG-ASP.D1.V1	Avon & Somerset Constabulary																		
9.3.8 ExA.SoCG-NGET.D3.V2	National Grid (NGET)																		
9.3.12 ExA.SoCG-BPC.D1.V1	Bristol Port Company																		
9.3.10 ExA.SoCG-OL.D1.V1	Openreach Limited																		
9.3.12 ExA.SoCG-WW.D1.V1	Wessex Water Limited																		
-	National Trust																		
-	Forestry England																		
-	Bristol Water PLC																		
-	Network Rail Infrastructure Limited																		
9.3.14 ExA.SoCG-WPD.D5.V1	Western Power Distribution																		
-	Woodland Trust																		

5.2 Summary of updates to SoCGs at Deadline 5

5.2.1 Openreach

The SoCG with Openreach has been agreed for several months but was pending the signature of Network Rail Infrastructure Limited. This has now been provided and the Applicant expects the document to remain with this status at the close of the Examination.

5.2.2 Environment Agency

- Reduced the number of overlapping topics and transferred the Deadline 4 SoCG appendices to an updated FRA and addendum currently being prepared.
- Further discussions between the EA and the Applicant have taken place with good progress towards an agreed SoCG.
- The Applicant has provided alternative proposals to the EA to consider for construction and use of the Clanage Road site.
- Progressed the EA land and assets access arrangements.
- Provided new and amended requirements for Cattle Creep bridge, Clanage Road and contaminated land.

5.2.3 Bristol City Council (Local Planning Authority)

- The parties have agreed that there are no significant cumulative effects on air quality.
- The parties have agreed the amendment made to Requirement 5(5) of the draft DCO to provide a Construction Workers Travel Plan in respect of the Clanage Road compound site as part of the detailed CEMP.
- The parties have agreed the updated tree loss payment figures (Appendix 4 to the SoCG) arising from a reduction in tree loss following removal of Work 27 from the draft DCO. The payment mechanism remains subject to ongoing discussion between the Applicant and BCC's legal team.

- The parties have agreed the assessment of traffic and transport impacts in the vicinity of Winterstoke Road and Ashton Value Road is robust.
- The parties agree a flood evacuation plan will be implemented at the Clanage Road Compound and this is secured by way of an amendment to Requirement 31 of the draft DCO.
- The parties have agreed that, whilst they share the view that the Clanage Road compound does not adversely affect the openness of the Green Belt, there are nevertheless very special circumstances to justify its location.

5.2.4 Wessex Water Services Limited

- The Applicant and Wessex Water have had constructive dialogue in the lead-up to Deadline 5. Most notably Wessex Water has confirmed it is satisfied with the protective provisions included in Schedule 16 Part 2 of the draft DCO.

5.2.5 Western Power Distribution (South West) plc

- The Applicant has issued a draft SoCG to WPD and awaits comments. The SoCG will be used as a basis for further discussions between the Applicant and WPD shortly after Deadline 5, with view to providing a further update with input from WPD at Deadline 6.

- 5.3** This version of the Statement of Commonality submitted at Deadline 5 addresses broad themes based around both the Principal Issues identified in the examination and topics which have emerged through dialogue with the interested parties.
- 5.4** The Applicant's intention is to update this Statement of Commonality as SoCGs are commenced with interested parties not yet engaged in respect of a SoCG. This may present additional high level issues/topics to report.
- 5.5** The Applicant will continue to work with parties already engaged to narrow down the outstanding issues, with significant updates and 'final form' SoCGs expected to be submitted at Deadline 6.