



# Department for Transport

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To: North Somerset District  
Council, Bristol Port Company,  
National Grid Electricity  
Transmission Plc, Western Power  
Distribution (South West) Plc,  
Exolum Pipeline System Ltd

Date: 26 July 2021

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Dear Sir/Madam

## **Planning Act 2008 (as amended)**

**Application by North Somerset District Council ("the Applicant") for an Order granting Development Consent** to construct a new railway on the trackbed of the former branch line from Bristol to Portishead including associated works ("the Proposed Development")

## **REQUEST FOR COMMENTS FROM THE APPLICANT, BRISTOL PORT COMPANY ("BPC"), NATIONAL GRID ELECTRICITY TRANSMISSION PLC ("NGET"), WESTERN POWER DISTRIBUTION (SOUTH WEST) PLC ("WPD"), EXOLUM PIPELINE SYSTEM LTD ("EXOLUM") AND OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES**

The Examining Authority submitted on 19 July 2021 a Report and Recommendation in respect of its findings on the above application to the Secretary of State for Transport ("the Secretary of State"). In accordance with section 107 of the Planning Act 2008, the Secretary of State has until 19 October 2021 to make a decision on the application. I am writing in relation to some outstanding matters at the end of Examination on which we would appreciate updated information before determining the application.

### **Bristol Port Company (BPC) protective provisions**

The Secretary of State notes at the close of the examination an agreement on the protective provisions had not been reached [\[REP7-042\]](#).



Please could the **Applicant** and **BPC** confirm the status of the agreement regarding the protective provisions within the DCO? If an agreement has been reached, please could both parties provide the agreed up to date set of protective provisions.

### **National Grid Electricity Transmission Plc (NGET) protective provisions**

The Secretary of State notes at the close of the examination an agreement on the protective provisions had not been reached [\[REP7-042\]](#).

Please could the **Applicant** and **NGET** confirm the status of the agreement regarding the protective provisions within the DCO? If an agreement has been reached, please could both parties provide the agreed updated set of protective provisions.

### **Western Power Distribution (South West) Plc (WPD) protective provisions**

The Secretary of State notes from the section 127 statement that discussions on the protective provisions and a side agreement remained ongoing at the close of the examination [\[REP7-042\]](#).

Please could the **Applicant**, **Network Rail** and **WPD** confirm the status of the agreement regarding the protective provisions within the DCO and the side agreement? If an agreement has been reached on the protective provisions, please could the **Applicant** and **WPD** provide the agreed up-to-date version.

### **Exolum Pipeline System Ltd protective provisions**

The Secretary of State notes that negotiations on the protective provisions and a separate agreement remained ongoing at the close of the examination [\[REP7-052\]](#).

Please could the **Applicant** and **Exolum** confirm the status of the agreement regarding the protective provisions within the DCO and the separate agreement. If an agreement has been reached on the protective provisions, please provide the up-to-date version.

### **Compulsory Acquisition schedule update**

The Secretary of State notes from the compulsory acquisition schedule submitted at deadline 7 that many discussions were ongoing, and several surveys were pending regarding voluntary agreements [\[REP7-063\]](#).

Please could the **Applicant** provide an accurate and up-to-date compulsory acquisition schedule confirming all the agreements that are now complete and update on the status of the remaining unsigned agreements.

### **The deadline for any response is 9 August 2021**

Responses to the matters outlined in this letter should be submitted by email to [Metrowest1@planninginspectorate.gov.uk](mailto:Metrowest1@planninginspectorate.gov.uk). Given the coronavirus (COVID-19) emergency, the Planning Inspectorate is currently unable to accept hard copies of consultation responses.

Your response will be published on the project page for the Portishead Branch Line – MetroWest Phase 1 on the Planning Inspectorate website as soon as possible after the above deadline for response at:

<https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/south-west/portishead-branch-line-metrowest-phase-1/>

This letter is without prejudice to the Secretary of State’s decision whether or not to grant development consent for the Portishead Branch Line – MetroWest Phase 1 and nothing in this letter is to be taken to imply what that decision might be.

Yours faithfully

Kevin O'Hanlon