



MetroWest+

Portishead Branch Line (MetroWest Phase 1)

Planning Inspectorate Reference: TR040011

Applicant: North Somerset District Council

DCO Document Reference: 9.7 ExA.SoC.D3.V2

Statement of Commonality of Statements of Common Ground

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22 October 2020	1	Draft	First draft
2 November 2020	1	D1 Final	For submission at Deadline 1
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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 1.

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 3 status of Statements of Common Ground

3.4.1 Table 1 provides a summary of the current position of negotiations of SoCGs at Deadline 3. As at Deadline 1, 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

4. STATUS OF THE STATEMENTS OF COMMON GROUND

Table 1 – Position of Statements of Common Ground at Deadline 3

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			
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			
9.3.9 ExA.SoCG- SCC.D1.V1	Somerset County Council	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			

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			
9.3.5 ExA.SoCG- HE.D1.V1	Historic England	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			
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			
9.3.11 ExA.SoCG- ASP.D1.V1	Avon & Somerset Constabulary	Agreed but not yet signed	Agreed but not yet signed			
-	National Trust	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			

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			
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			
9.3.10 ExA.SoCG- OL.D1.V1	Openreach Limited	Agreed but not yet signed	Agreed but not yet 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			
-	Bristol Water PLC	SoCG not yet in circulation	SoCG not yet in circulation			
-	Network Rail Infrastructure Limited	SoCG not yet in circulation	SoCG not yet in circulation			
-	Western Power Distribution	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
Interested parties						
-	Woodland Trust	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 3.
- 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 Deadline 1 and matters at issue have narrowed. Nevertheless, until a revised SoCG is submitted to the Examination 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

Table 2 – Summary of Commonality with each SoCG stakeholder at Deadline 3

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
9.3.2 ExA.SoCG-BCC.D1.V1	Bristol City Council Local Planning Authority																	
9.3.1 ExA.SoCG-NSC.D1.V1	North Somerset District Council Local Planning Authority																	
9.3.9 ExA.SoCG-SCC.D1.V1	Somerset County Council																	
9.3.3 ExA.SoCG-EA.D3.V2	Environment Agency																	
9.3.4 ExA.SoCG-HECL.D1.V1	Highways England																	
9.3.5 ExA.SoCG-HE.D1.V1	Historic England																	
9.3.6 ExA.SoCG-NE.D3.V2	Natural England																	
9.3.7 ExA.SoCG-NSLIDB.D3.V2	North Somerset Levels Internal Drainage Board																	

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																		
-	Western Power Distribution																		
-	Woodland Trust																		

5.2 Summary of updates to SoCGs at Deadline 3

5.2.1 Natural England

- Additional text to confirm that Natural England is satisfied with the surveys undertaken by the Applicant to assess the ecological effects of the DCO Scheme;
- Additional text to confirm that Natural England is satisfied with the monitoring periods proposed in the AGVMP;
- Additional text to confirm that the Natural England is satisfied with lighting levels for SAC bats;
- Amendments to reflect the latest position on protected species licences for bats and badgers and the Applicant's District Level Licence for Great Crested Newts;
- Additional text to confirm that Natural England is satisfied with the Applicant's proposals in respect of the toads at Lodway Farm;
- Additional text to confirm that that Natural England is satisfied with the impact of the DCO Scheme on air quality, water quality and landscape in the Avon Gorge Woodlands SAC; and
- Substituting 'Forestry England' for 'Forestry Commission'.

5.2.2 North Somerset Levels Internal Drainage Board (NSLIDB)

- The Applicant and NSLIDB have been in discussion over the disapplication of byelaws and many matters are now agreed.
- The disapplication of Byelaw 17(d) is not yet agreed. The Applicant will continue to work with the NSLIDB to resolve its concerns over disapplication of this byelaw. However, the matter has been flagged as 'not agreed' as it is possible this matter will remain to be agreed at the close of the Examination.

5.2.3 National Grid Electricity Transmission PLC (NGET)

- The Applicant and NGET continue to explore the interface between the Applicant's DCO scheme and the Hinkley Connection Order including in respect of District Level Licensing.
- Further matters have arisen and are being discussed in relation to the 'Construction Impacts (inc. CEMP and CTMP)' and 'Design and Engineering' topics in Table 2.

5.2.4 Environment Agency

- The Applicant and the Environment Agency have exchanged correspondence since the SoCG submitted at Deadline 1 and significant progress has been made. The technical flood modelling for the DCO Scheme including for the relevant climate change allowances is now agreed.
- The design life of the DCO Scheme (60 years) is agreed.
- It is agreed there is no requirement for flood plain compensation at Easton in Gordano stream.
- The Applicant's emergency flood plan for operation of the rail service, approval to main river culverts and permitting are all now agreed.

6. UPDATES TO STATEMENT OF COMMONALITY

- 6.1 This version of the Statement of Commonality submitted at Deadline 3 addresses broad themes based around both the Principal Issues identified in the examination and topics which have emerged through dialogue with the interested parties.
- 6.2 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.

6.3 In addition to the broad issues/topics of commonality, by Deadline 5 the Applicant expects to be able to narrow down the outstanding issues with a number of parties. At this point it may be appropriate to break down each issue/topic with a range of issue-specific tables.