



Secretary of State for Transport  
c/o Transport Infrastructure Planning Unit  
Department for Transport  
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Network Rail Infrastructure Limited  
One Eversholt Street,  
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Dear Sir/Madam

**Transport and Works Act 1992, application for the Northumberland Line Order by Northumberland County Council**

**Rule 21, Transport and Works (Applications and Objections Procedure) (England and Wales) Rules 2006**

**Representation of Network Rail Infrastructure Limited**

This letter is the representation of Network Rail Infrastructure Limited (**Network Rail**) in respect of the application by Northumberland County Council (**NCC**) for the Northumberland Line Order (**Order**) which has been applied for to enable the Northumberland Line reinstatement project (**Project**) to be implemented and operated.

Network Rail has been working closely with NCC:

- in relation to the consents needed to deliver the Project
- in support of Project design
- in support of negotiations for the voluntary acquisition of land and rights needed for the Project.

Network Rail supports the Project which will:

- improve connectivity, bring social and economic benefits to residents, commuters, visitors and businesses both in Northumberland and the wider region.
- improve access from towns such as Ashington and Blyth to employment hubs like Newcastle, as well as opening up new opportunities for education and travel;
- provide a real incentive for potential employers to relocate to and invest in the area;
- provide vital infrastructure to help deliver the region's aspirations for population and economic growth;
- help to attract visitors and improve local tourism;
- enhance public transport connectivity within and beyond the region;
- help to reduce congestion and improve air quality on key corridors by moving people away from car travel and onto public transport; and
- support the delivery of significant growth in sectors such as renewable energy, offshore oil and gas and engineering.

The proposed Northumberland Line Order is vital to secure the delivery of the Project and we hope the Secretary of State will make the Order to enable the Project to go ahead as soon as possible.

**Protection of Network Rail's statutory undertaking**

Network Rail has a duty to safeguard the safety and integrity of the railway. Network Rail operates and maintains the railway infrastructure of Great Britain pursuant to a network licence granted under section 8 of the Railways Act 1993. A key element of Network Rail's statutory undertaking and a condition under the Network Licence is to ensure the safety of the railway and those using and operating it. In the context of the Project, that means that, in addition to supporting its delivery, Network Rail must ensure that the existing railway is not compromised by the Project and the exercise of the powers in the Order.

The draft Order includes, at schedule 10, protective provisions for Network Rail's benefit which will ensure that Network Rail's approval must be obtained of all works that affect the railway and that compulsory powers in the Order, that affect railway property, may not be exercised without Network Rail's consent. The protective provisions will serve to ensure that the Project does not compromise the safety and integrity of the operational railway and railway property and Network Rail asks that the protective provisions are included in the Order made by the Secretary of State.

Network Rail reserves the right to raise any specific issues of concern during the inquiry process either in a statement of case, proofs of evidence or at the public inquiry.

Yours faithfully

Kieran Dunkin  
Principal Programme Sponsor

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "K Dunkin", written over a horizontal line.