

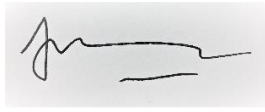
# Stakeholder Engagement Strategy

Northumberland Line

May 2019

## Quality information

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# 1. Introduction

**This Stakeholder Engagement Strategy (SES) summarises the overall strategy for engaging with and managing stakeholders for the Northumberland Line scheme up until the submission of the scheme's Outline Business Case (OBC). This means it covers the period up to the Rail Network Enhancements Pipeline (RNEP) Decision to Design stage.**

**Overall accountability for stakeholder management sits with Northumberland County Council (NCC), who will have a strategic overview of all engagement across the project. NCC's Project Manager will approve all new or potentially contentious engagement, and will coordinate this with the relevant relationship managers, via AECOM's Project Manager. Please see section 7 for more details on this.**

## 1.1 Who should read this SES?

- 1.1.1 The SES has been prepared as a guide to all engagement activity relating to the Northumberland Line and sets out guidelines to ensure all engagement is effective, coordinated and ultimately supports delivery of a successful scheme.
- 1.1.2 The SES should be read by those involved in the scheme's delivery to help them understand how stakeholder interfaces will be managed to help support successful outcomes.

## 1.2 Who are our stakeholders?

- 1.2.1 In the context of this scheme, a stakeholder can be defined as an individual, group or organisation with an interest or influence in the delivery or operation of the Northumberland Line.
- 1.2.2 A categorised list of stakeholders that have been identified to date for the Northumberland Line can be found in Section 6 of this document.

## 1.3 Why is it important we manage relationships with our stakeholders?

- 1.3.1 Understanding stakeholders' interests and aspirations and demonstrating a willingness to listen and respond to concerns is essential to the successful delivery of the Northumberland Line. The overarching aims of managing stakeholder relationships are to:
  - provide consistent, relevant and up to date information on the scheme;
  - listen to and take into consideration feedback provided by stakeholders about the development of the scheme; and
  - respond appropriately and in a timely manner to issues, concerns or questions raised over the life of the scheme.

## 2. Scheme overview

### 2.1 Summary of the scheme

- 2.1.1 The scheme involves the conversion of the Ashington, Blyth and Tyne route (the 'Northumberland Line') from its current use as a freight railway back to a passenger and freight railway. It will provide six new stations at Ashington, Blyth Bebside, Bedlington, Newsham, Seaton Delaval and Northumberland Parkway. Of those stations, Ashington and Bedlington stations are expected to be located broadly on the historic station sites, which are now significantly dilapidated.
- 2.1.2 The reintroduction of passenger services on the Northumberland Line has been an aspiration of Northumberland County Council (NCC) for many years and accords with key local and regional policy, principally in terms of promoting economic growth across South East Northumberland. Improving the links between towns such as Ashington and Blyth with Newcastle is of key importance to encouraging more sustainable access to the key regional economic centres in Tyne and Wear. Figure 1 shows the route and provisional location of proposed stations. This will directly support the economic growth aspirations set out in the Council's Economic Strategy and those of the emerging North of Tyne Combined Authority.



**Figure 1: The route and proposed stations**

## 3. Approach and purpose

### 3.1 Approach

- 3.1.1 The scheme's overall approach to stakeholder management is based on the four steps illustrated in Figure 3.

**Figure 3: Overall approach to stakeholder management**



- 3.1.2 Due to the number of different stakeholders, their varied information needs, and the range of consents required to deliver the works, an approach involving a combination of communication and engagement activities will be required.
- 3.1.3 This SES will be implemented by NCC in partnership with its consultants and contractors, taking account of the Council's wider strategic objectives and external communications governance. This SES is a live document and additional information and stakeholders may be added as the project progresses.

### 3.2 Purpose

- 3.2.1 The overarching purpose of this SES is to help support successful delivery of the scheme. I will do this by facilitating effective and proactive engagement with stakeholders in order to promote advocacy, minimise objections and deliver a successful programme of works. Ensuring that there is a commitment to consistent and genuine stakeholder engagement is critical to the success of the programme.
- 3.2.2 The specific objectives for this SES are to:
- outline the processes that should be followed to help deliver integrated, efficient and coherent stakeholder engagement and communications;
  - define a process to manage the capture and analysis of information received from stakeholders, so that it can be fed back to the scheme delivery team and into the scheme's requirements matrix (where feasible), informing scheme development; and
  - provide details of the assurance and sign-off process for engagement materials and activities.

## 4. Key messages

### 4.1 Agreed key messaging

4.1.1 Currently agreed key messages for the Northumberland Line are set out below; these are to be used as the basis of any engagement with external stakeholders about the scheme.

- The Northumberland Line's aim is to stimulate and support economic growth, regeneration and community development in Northumberland and the surrounding regions. It will do this by providing new and improved connectivity between the communities along the route, including to employment hubs like Newcastle.
- Although the Northumberland Line has been talked about for many years, the current political, social, economic and industry context means that it can now be successfully delivered.
- The Northumberland Line will be transformational for transport in the region, with the reintroduction of passenger services to the existing freight line complimenting the aspirations of freight operating companies that use the line. This will include modernisation of the rail infrastructure (including level crossings and signals) to improve journey times, capacity and safety for all railway users and neighbours.
- The Northumberland Line will provide six new stations between Newcastle and Ashington over a number of phases, and we are looking at ways these stations could provide added value and crucial facilities to local communities.
- We are committed to delivering the Northumberland Line as quickly as possible but are mindful that many of the legal processes involved will take time. We will endeavour to keep the local community informed at every step of the way and, as part of this, will engage the local community on details of the scheme at suitable points.



## 5. Engagement to date

Due to the long history of the scheme, considerable engagement has already taken place with both technical stakeholders and the local community. Much of this historic engagement is referenced and summarised in Table 1, with additional information contained in points 5.1 to 5.4 below.

### 5.1 Programme Board

- 5.1.1 The Northumberland Line Programme Board has been established for the scheme and is due to have its first meeting in the near future. It is chaired by NCC and will meet every two months following the first meeting.
- 5.1.2 The Board's remit is to ensure each project element is delivered on time, to budget and in accordance with the expected outcomes. It also receives recommendations from the Project Steering Group and reviews project objectives in view of wider UK and regional transport policy objectives.
- 5.1.3 The following parties are represented on the Programme Board:
- NCC (Director for Planning and Economy, Finance Director and Project Manager)
  - North of Tyne Combined Authority
  - DfT (RNEP Sponsor)
  - TfN
  - Network Rail (scheme Sponsor)
  - Lead operator (Northern)
  - North East LEP
  - Nexus (Managing Director, Transport North East)
  - AECOM
  - SLC Rail

### 5.2 Project Steering Group

- 5.2.1 The Northumberland Line Steering Group for the scheme was established in October 2018. It is chaired by NCC and meets monthly.
- 5.2.2 Its remit is to review project progress and make key decisions, escalating where necessary and making recommendations on specific issues to the Programme Board. It also gives the project team guidance and feedback on the design and delivery processes, any emerging requirements and strategic objectives.
- 5.2.3 The following parties are represented on the Project Steering Group:
- NCC (Project Manager, Finance, Planning, Highways, Comms, Legal, Estates)
  - DfT (RNEP Sponsor)
  - Network Rail (Scheme Sponsor, Network Rail Project Manager)
  - TfN
  - Nexus (Head of Heavy Rail and Head of Network Extensions)
  - Lead operator (Northern)
  - AECOM
  - SLC Rail

### 5.3 Stakeholder Working Group

- 5.3.1 A Stakeholder Working Group will be established for the scheme and should aim to have its first meeting in the near future. It is to be chaired by the AECOM Project Management team and will meet monthly.
- 5.3.2 Its remit is to present updates on all project elements to the secondary stakeholders that attend and to receive feedback (where possible/appropriate) and incorporate it into the Requirements Strategy. It aims to ensure these stakeholders' continued buy-in to the

developing timetable and station outcomes and programmes and to build advocacy for the scheme in order to influence key decision makers.

5.3.3 The following parties are represented on the Stakeholder Working Group:

- NCC (Project Manager, Planning, Finance, Highways, Legal, Comms, Estate)
- Network Rail (Scheme Sponsor plus Property/Commercial as appropriate)
- Lead operator (Northern leads on Timetable Planning, Franchise Management, Property as appropriate)
- AECOM
- SLC Rail

## 5.4 Local community

5.4.1 The local community have been made aware of the scheme through information in local media, resulting from press releases issued by NCC. High-level information about the scheme has also been shared on NCC's website.

## 5.5 Stations engagement

5.5.1 A number of high-level meetings focussing on aspirations for the new stations has recently begun (DfT and Advance Northumberland, an economic regeneration company owned by NCC). This workstream is expected to develop in parallel to the engagement outlined in this SES, but is outside the scope of it.

## 6. Stakeholder identification and relationship management

### 6.1 Stakeholder identification and relationship managers

- 6.1.1 A number of stakeholders have been identified for the scheme and are listed in Table 1.
- 6.1.2 A relationship manager (RM) has been assigned to each stakeholder. Each RM is responsible for overseeing all engagement and communication with the stakeholders they manage. This means that each RM will be accountable for monitoring and coordinating engagement with the stakeholders they manage, including reporting on engagement undertaken, feedback received and planning future engagement with other members of the project team. As part of this, they will also be responsible for early identification of stakeholder-related risks to scheme delivery. More information about how engagement is planned and recorded is included in sections 7 and 8.
- 6.1.3 This list will be updated each time this document is refreshed<sup>1</sup>. This list will inform a more detailed stakeholder database that will be managed by the AECOM Project Management team and kept up-to-date throughout the lifespan of the scheme. This database will be compliant with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

**Table 1: Stakeholders and Relationship Managers**

| Stakeholder                    | Relevance to project  | Engagement to date  | Methods of engagement  | Relationship Manager    |
|--------------------------------|---|---|--|-------------------------|
| <b>Key stakeholders</b>        |   |   |  |                         |
| Department for Transport (DfT) | Government department responsible for investment in transport infrastructure. Potential project funder and long-term supporter of the project's aspirations. The project has a dedicated Sponsor at the Department for Transport. | <p>Attendance at Project Steering Group meetings</p> <p>Have been engaged at different levels throughout the lifespan of the project, including through the Rail Strategy Team, the regional liaison officer, the Northern franchise process and the Transforming Cities Fund team.</p> <p>In addition, initial meetings about station concepts took place on 12 April and 14 May 2019.</p> | <p>Programme Board every two months and monthly Project Steering Group meetings</p> <p>Regular updates and contact via the Northumberland County Council Project Manager</p> | Stuart McNaughton (NCC) |

<sup>1</sup> Currently, this SES covers the period up until the submission of the scheme's OBC. When the OBC has been submitted, the SES will be updated to cover the next stage of the scheme.

| Stakeholder   | Relevance to project  | Engagement to date   | Methods of engagement  | Relationship Manager    |
|---|---|--|--|-------------------------|
| Network Rail  | Delivered GRIP 2 feasibility study and are the asset owner. Hold valuable local knowledge that could help shape the scheme  | Delivered GRIP 2 study and are actively involved in reviewing scheme proposals             | Programme Board every two months and monthly Project Steering Group meetings<br><br>Regular technical meetings | Alasdair Bathie (AECOM) |
| Nexus (Tyne and Wear Passenger Transport Executive)                       | Administers funds on behalf of the Joint Transport Committee of the North East Combined Authority and the North of Tyne Combined Authority. Operates Tyne and Wear metro, which is an important interface at Northumberland Park. Play a key role in Transforming Cities Fund funding stream. | Attendance at Project Steering Group meetings<br><br>Regular meetings over the past year   | Programme Board every two months and monthly Project Steering Group meetings<br><br>Regular dedicated meetings | Stuart McNaughton (NCC) |
| Nexus (Tyne and Wear Passenger Transport Executive) – Head of Engineering | Manages the Engineering assets associated with the Metro and will be a key interface between the NL line and Metro and Northumberland Park Station.   | Attendance at the 2 <sup>nd</sup> scheme development workshop on 16 <sup>th</sup> May 2019 | Regular technical meetings and updates (via email and face to face)  | Alasdair Bathie (AECOM) |
| North East Combined Authority (NECA)                                      | Combined Authority for the region   | None   | Regular updates  | Stuart McNaughton (NCC) |
| North East Local Enterprise Partnership                                   | Local Enterprise Partnership for the region   | Have been briefed on the scheme and have submitted a letter of support                     | Programme Board meetings every two months  | Stuart McNaughton (NCC) |
| North of Tyne Combined Authority  | Combined Authority for the region and potential funder  |  | Programme Board meetings every two months  | Stuart McNaughton (NCC) |

| Stakeholder  | Relevance to project   | Engagement to date   | Methods of engagement  | Relationship Manager           |
|--|--|--|--|--------------------------------|
| Northern Rail  | Holders of information that is critical to scheme development (e.g. demand data, rolling stock information) and current franchise operators (have made franchise commitment to support scheme development) | Attendance at Project Steering Group meetings<br>Fed into the development of the business case<br>Regular contact and requests for information | Programme Board every two months, monthly Project Steering Group meetings and Stakeholder Working Group meetings<br><br>Regular updates (via email and face to face) | Mike Haigh (SLC)               |
| Office of Road and Rail                                  | Independent safety and economic regulator for Britain's railways. Their input will be needed on a range of scheme elements, including level crossings.   | Regular meetings over the last year. Initial meeting on level crossings on 4 December 2018   | Quarterly meetings to provide progress reports and discuss developing scheme design.   | Julian Sindall (AECOM/Cadenza) |
| Transport for the North (TfN) and Rail North Partnership | Support is required to ensure project is in line with Transport for the North's long-term strategy and Strategic Transport Plan.   | Attendance at Project Steering Group meetings  | Programme Board every two months and monthly Project Steering Group meetings   | Andy Coates (AECOM)            |
| <b>Emergency services</b>                                |  |  |  |                                |
| British Transport Police (BTP)                           | New infrastructure may lead to additional security requirements. Security / policing may be required during construction.  | None   | Briefings / consultation as required   | Stuart McNaughton (NCC)        |
| North East Ambulance Service                             | Project (and its construction) may affect emergency services' routes (e.g. access to stations and potential delays at level crossings)   | None   | Briefings / consultation as required   | Stuart McNaughton (NCC)        |
| Northumbria Police                                       | Project (and its construction) may affect emergency services' routes (e.g. access to stations and potential delays at level crossings)   | None   | Briefings / consultation as required   | Stuart McNaughton (NCC)        |

| Stakeholder  | Relevance to project   | Engagement to date  | Methods of engagement  | Relationship Manager    |
|--|--|---|--|-------------------------|
| Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service  | Project (and its construction) may affect emergency services' routes (e.g. access to stations and potential delays at level crossings)                         | None  | Briefings / consultation as required                                 | Stuart McNaughton (NCC) |
| <b>Freight operating companies (FOCs)</b>  |  |   |  |                         |
| DB Schenken  | Operate freight services that currently use the line. Freight services might be affected by opening the line to passenger services.                            | Initial discussions have taken place  | Ad-hoc meetings as required  | Mike Haigh (SLC)        |
| Direct Rail Services   | Operate freight services that may use the line in future.  | Initial discussions have taken place  | Ad-hoc meetings as required  | Mike Haigh (SLC)        |
| Freightliner   | Operate freight services that may use the line in future.  | Initial discussions have taken place  | Ad-hoc meetings as required  | Mike Haigh (SLC)        |
| GB Railfreight   | Operate freight services that currently use the line. Freight services might be affected by opening the line to passenger services.                            | Initial discussions have taken place  | Ad-hoc meetings as required  | Mike Haigh (SLC)        |
| <b>Landowners</b>  |  |   |  |                         |
| Adjacent landowners  | Land may need to be accessed (e.g. for survey work) or acquired. The project may also cause disruption that adjacent landowners will need to be made aware of. | Written correspondence relating to ecological surveys (land containing ponds within 500m of the line) and permission to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (owners of land that is likely to be required by for construction) | Targeted meetings when required, supported by written correspondence | Russell Mills (SLC)     |
|  |  | NCC has pre-existing relationships with a number of landowners in the area  |  |                         |
| <b>Local authorities (officer level)</b>   |  |   |  |                         |
| Highways officers (Newcastle City Council, North Tyneside Council and Northumberland County Council) | Teams will hold critical information that will feed into project design  | Meetings have taken place with Northumberland County Council's highways team  | Ad-hoc meetings as required  | Matthew Creedy (SLC)    |

| Stakeholder  | Relevance to project  | Engagement to date   | Methods of engagement   | Relationship Manager           |
|--|---|--|---|--------------------------------|
| Planning officers (Newcastle City Council, North Tyneside Council and Northumberland County Council)             | Teams will hold critical information that will feed into project design   | <p>Newcastle County Council's Head of Planning has been briefed on the project, outline programme and the intention to submit a Request for a Screening Opinion (RfSO) during Q2/Q3 of 2019</p> <p>A meeting with the North Tyneside Council's Head of Planning is scheduled for May 2019; this meeting will focus on the draft Consents Strategy and will seek guidance on the scope of the anticipated RfSO and planning applications</p> <p>A number of meetings have taken place with Northumberland County Council's planning team.</p> | Ad-hoc meetings as required   | Allen Creedy (SLC)             |
| Public Rights of Way officers (Newcastle City Council, North Tyneside Council and Northumberland County Council) | Teams will hold critical information that will feed into project design   |  | Ad-hoc meetings as required   | Allen Creedy (SLC)             |
| <b>Local business community</b>  |   |  |   |                                |
| Advance Northumberland   | NCC's arm's length economic development company, which has a particular interest in stations                            | Ad-hoc updates   | Briefings / consultation as required. Meeting scheduled for June 2019 | Julian Sindall (AECOM/Cadenza) |
| Cobalt Business Park   | Employment park a 10-15 minute walk from Northumberland Park. Have known issues attracting staff and support the plans. | Have been briefed on the project and have submitted a letter of support  | Update meeting and then briefings / consultation as required          | Matthew Creedy (SLC)           |

| Stakeholder  | Relevance to project  | Engagement to date  | Methods of engagement   | Relationship Manager           |
|--|---|---|---|--------------------------------|
| Lynemouth Power Station                            | Changes to highways and freight lines could affect their freight paths  | Briefed on the project a few years ago, but have not been contacted recently                      | Update meeting and then briefings / consultation as required                          | Stuart McNaughton (NCC)        |
| North East Chamber of Commerce                     | Chamber of Commerce for the region, interested in benefits to local business  | Presented to quarterly meeting in April 2019 and have agreed to attend future meetings on request | Ad-hoc attendance at meetings   | Stuart McNaughton (NCC)        |
| Other businesses along the route                   | Could be impacted by the plans  | None  | Messages shared via business groups and businesses approached directly where relevant | Stuart McNaughton (NCC)        |
| Port of Blyth                                      | Changes to highways and freight lines could affect their freight paths  | Briefed on the project a few years ago  | Update meeting and then briefings / consultation as required                          | Stuart McNaughton (NCC)        |
| <b>Local community</b>                             |   |   |   |                                |
| ACoRP (Association of Community Rail Partnerships) | Provides support for community-based groups and partnerships that connect their community with their railway and deliver social benefit. Can provide ideas and experience in the successful delivery and integration of railway schemes into the community. | None  | Initial meeting followed by six-monthly meetings                                      | Julian Sindall (AECOM/Cadenza) |
| Community Rail Lancashire                          | Works closely with Arriva Rail North and local communities to involve local people in the development and running of local and rural routes, services and stations. Could share useful knowledge about opening local authority stations                     | None  | Initial meeting followed by six-monthly meetings                                      | Stuart McNaughton (NCC)        |



| Stakeholder   | Relevance to project  | Engagement to date   | Methods of engagement   | Relationship Manager           |
|---|---|--|---|--------------------------------|
| Equalities groups   | The project and its construction may affect accessibility for disability and elderly user groups in particular. This is particularly relevant to station design and changes to level crossings.   | None   | Mapping exercise needs to be undertaken to establish which there are<br><br>Inform about the scheme when proposals are more developed | Jo Rodgers (SLC)               |
| Gateshead Rail Academy                                    | Could be a useful way to integrate the project with local learning organisations and provide an outlet for Apprentice activities.   | None   | Initial meeting to decide approach  | Julian Sindall (AECOM/Cadenza) |
| General public  | May have an interest in or be indirectly impacted by the project and related works  | Press releases and associated media coverage                             | Press releases and project website  | Stuart McNaughton (NCC)        |
| Local schools   | Community members travelling to and from school may be impacted by the works and have a wider interest in the project   | SENUG ran a competition related to the scheme with local schools in 2014 | Mapping exercise needs to be undertaken to establish which there are<br><br>Inform about the scheme when proposals are more developed | Stuart McNaughton (NCC)        |
| Near neighbours (i.e. those living near the railway line) | Will likely be directly impacted by the project and its construction. Concerns relating to disruption from works (particularly in terms of air quality, noise, dust and visibility) and alteration to the local landscape and operations occurring within it will need to be minimised and mitigated where appropriate. | None   | Letter drops as required  | Stuart McNaughton (NCC)        |

| Stakeholder                            | Relevance to project  | Engagement to date                     | Methods of engagement   | Relationship Manager           |
|--|---|--|---|--------------------------------|
| Poacher Line                           | A Community Rail Partnership based in Lincolnshire who worked with the local authority on a development project at Sleaford Station.  | None                                   | Knowledge sharing meeting/s   | Julian Sindall (AECOM/Cadenza) |
| Tyne Valley Community Rail Partnership | Works closely with the train operating company (currently Northern) to promote, strengthen and protect the role of the Tyne Valley railway line between Newcastle-Hexham-Carlisle for residents, tourists, employees and service providers. Will provide insight and influence into the local community and help build community support. | None                                   | Initial meeting followed by six-monthly meetings  | Julian Sindall (AECOM/Cadenza) |
| <b>Media</b>                           |   |  |   |                                |
| Regional and national press            | Communicate messages and updates to a wider audience  | Press releases issued by NCC           | Press releases issued at key project milestones<br><br>Reactive statements and responses as appropriate | Andrew Ward (NCC)              |
| Specialist rail and transport press    | Communicate messages and updates to a targeted and engaged audience   | Dedicated article in Modern Railways   | Dedicated features proposed as appropriate  | Andrew Ward (NCC)              |
| <b>Other transport groups</b>          |   |  |   |                                |
| Bus operators (particularly Arriva)    | Run key local routes whose revenue might be affected by the project. Concerns need to be minimised and mitigated as appropriate   | Are aware of and opposed to the scheme | Dedicated briefings / consultation as required  | Stuart McNaughton (NCC)        |
| Road users                             | Key local routes are likely to be impacted particularly by works to level crossings. Concerns surrounding delays and disruption to travel for commuters and the local community need to be minimised and mitigated where appropriate  | None                                   | Informed about the scheme when proposals are more developed   | Stuart McNaughton (NCC)        |

| Stakeholder   | Relevance to project   | Engagement to date  | Methods of engagement                                       | Relationship Manager    |
|---|--|---|---|-------------------------|
| Sustrans  | Manages the National Cycle Network and will be interested in the project's impact on cycle routes and cycle provision at stations and on trains  | Have been briefed on the project and have looked into potential cycle facilities at stations and on trains                                | Update briefings and further consultation as required       | Stuart McNaughton (NCC) |
| Taxi and private hire operators   | Part of the local transport offering   | None  | Informed about the scheme when proposals are more developed | Stuart McNaughton (NCC) |
| Walking and cycling groups (e.g. Ramblers)  | The project may affect a number of Public Rights of Way  | None  | Informed about the scheme when proposals are more developed | Stuart McNaughton (NCC) |
| <b>Political</b>  |  |   |   |                         |
| Government ministers  | Politicians who hold significant public office in the government, making and implementing decisions on policies in conjunction with the other ministers. Of particular relevance will be the Secretary of State (SoS) for Transport.         | The Secretary of State for Transport took a train visit to the line in Spring 2019  |   | Stuart McNaughton (NCC) |
| Local councillors (Northumberland County Council, Newcastle City Council, North Tyneside Council) | Elected members of local councils that represent the interests of their local area. Will be particularly interested in benefits to local communities and anticipated disruption. Need to ensure they are aware and supportive of the scheme. | Engagement has primarily focussed on Northumberland County Council, but councillors at all three councils have been briefed on the scheme | Quarterly briefings   | Stuart McNaughton (NCC) |
| Local MPs (Berwick-upon-Tweed, Newcastle Central, Newcastle East, North Tyneside, Tynemouth)      | Secondary wards affected by the project. Will be particularly interested in benefits to local communities and anticipated disruption.  | Ad-hoc updates (primarily responses to requests for information)  | Keep up-to-date through local councils                      | Stuart McNaughton (NCC) |

| Stakeholder   | Relevance to project   | Engagement to date   | Methods of engagement                | Relationship Manager    |
|---|--|--|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Local MPs (Blyth Valley, Wansbeck)                            | Key wards affected by the project. Will be particularly interested in benefits to local communities and anticipated disruption.  | Ad-hoc updates (primarily responses to requests for information) | Quarterly briefings                  | Stuart McNaughton (NCC) |
| Parish and town councils <sup>2</sup>                         | Administrative bodies for civil parishes, representing localised community interests.  | Have received some briefing information, but very high level     | Town forums                          | Stuart McNaughton (NCC) |
| <b>Special interest groups</b>                                |  |  |                                      |                         |
| North East England Civic Trust                                | Have an active role in conservation and regeneration across the North East of England, North Yorkshire and Cumbria and champion public involvement in the processes that shape the environment, often working with local groups  | None   |                                      | Matthew Creedy (SLC)    |
| Society of Antiquaries: Newcastle upon Tyne                   | Aims to promote the preservation, study and enjoyment of historical and archaeological heritage in general, and of the North East of England in particular   | None   |                                      | Matthew Creedy (SLC)    |
| <b>Statutory stakeholders</b>                                 |  |  |                                      |                         |
| Canal and River Trust (Yorkshire & North East Advisory Board) | A charity whose remit is to protect waterways and promote them widely to those who live on their doorstep in order to allow more people to benefit from this free, accessible and local source of wellbeing                      | None   | Briefings / consultation as required | Matthew Creedy (SLC)    |
| Environment Agency  | Remit is to protect and enhance the environment, including through sustainable development. Engagement will aim to ensure scheme proposals respect environmental assets and that any necessary environmental consents are secure | None   | Briefings / consultation as required | Matthew Creedy (SLC)    |

<sup>2</sup> Ashington Town Council, Blyth Town Council, Choppington Parish Council, Cramlington Town Council, East Bedlington Parish Council, Hebron Parish Council, Hepscott Parish Council, Mitford Parish Council, Morpeth Parish Council, Newbiggin by the Sea Town Council, Longhirst Parish Council, Pegswood Parish Council, Seaton Valley Parish Council, West Bedlington Parish Council

| Stakeholder  | Relevance to project  | Engagement to date  | Methods of engagement                | Relationship Manager    |
|--|---|---|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Highways England                                       | Operates, maintains and improves England's motorways and major A roads. Should be engaged on highways interfaces (e.g. level crossings).  | Although Highways England are aware of the scheme, no detailed discussions have taken place to date | Regular meetings                     | Stuart McNaughton (NCC) |
| Historic England                                       | Remit is to protect the historical environment of England by preserving and listing historic buildings, ancient monuments and advising central and local government. Will be interested in any impacts on listed structures       | None  | Briefings / consultation as required | Matthew Creedy (SLC)    |
| National Park Authority (Northumberland National Park) | Remit is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage within the park. They also have the duty to seek to foster the economic and social well-being of local communities within the national parks. | None  | Briefings / consultation as required | Matthew Creedy (SLC)    |
| Natural England  | Remit is to protect England's nature and landscapes. Act as an advisor to the government in relation to conserving England's natural environment and will responsible for certain permits and licenses that might be needed.      | None  | Briefings / consultation as required | Matthew Creedy (SLC)    |
| Utility companies                                      | Once it has been ascertained whether any utilities will be affected by the scheme, any diversions will need to be discussed with the relevant utility companies   | None  | Briefings / consultation as required | Alasdair Bathie (AECOM) |
| <b>Train operating companies (TOCs)</b>                |   |   |                                      |                         |
| Cross Country  | Operate passenger services that could be affected by the new line   | None  | Briefings / consultation as required | Mike Haigh (SLC)        |
| East Coast   | Operate passenger services that could be affected by the new line   | None  | Briefings / consultation as required | Mike Haigh (SLC)        |

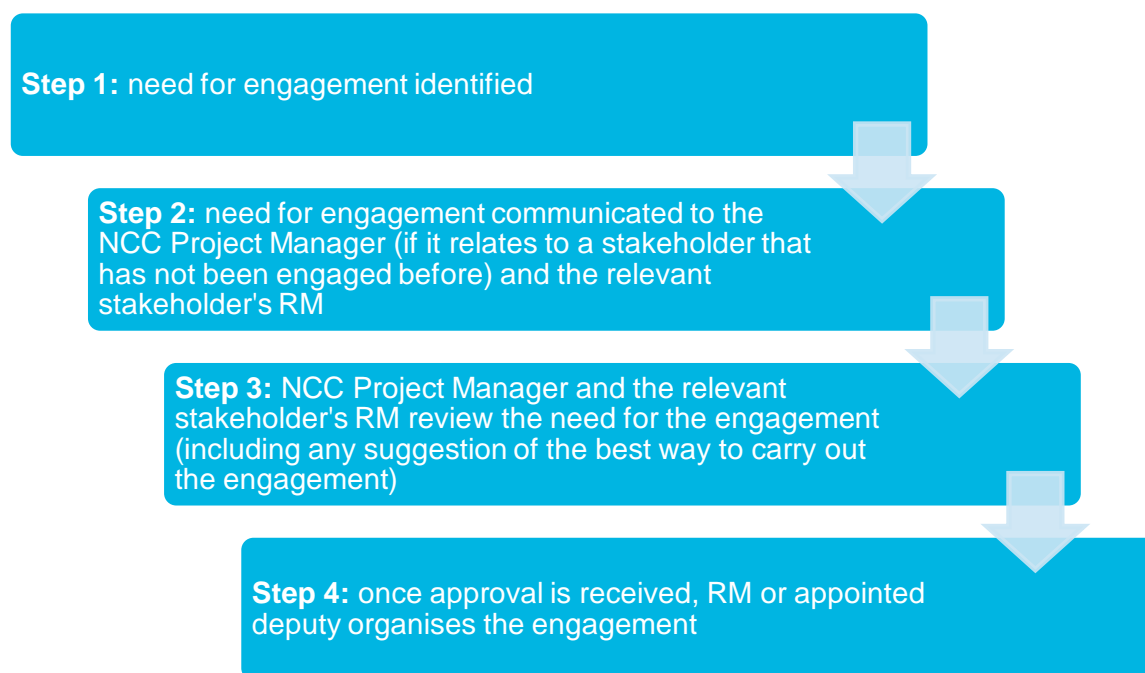
| Stakeholder  | Relevance to project  | Engagement to date  | Methods of engagement                                       | Relationship Manager    |
|--|---|---|---|-------------------------|
| Grand Central                                      | Operate passenger services that could be affected by the new line   | None  | Briefings / consultation as required                        | Mike Haigh (SLC)        |
| LNER   | Operate passenger services that could be affected by the new line   | None  | Briefings / consultation as required                        | Mike Haigh (SLC)        |
| TransPennine Express                               | Operate passenger services that could be affected by the new line   | None  | Briefings / consultation as required                        | Mike Haigh (SLC)        |
| <b>User groups</b>                                 |   |   |   |                         |
| Passenger Focus                                    | An independent passenger watchdog set up by the government to represent the interests of Britain's rail passengers.   | None  | Informed about the scheme when proposals are more developed | Stuart McNaughton (NCC) |
| Rail passengers                                    | May be affected by disruption to services during construction but will also be interested in benefits of greater connectivity.  | Many will be aware of the project through media activity, but no dedicated engagement has been undertaken (outside of SENRUG) | Media activity  | Stuart McNaughton (NCC) |
| South East Northumberland Rail User Group (SENRUG) | Local rail user campaign group that is supportive of the scheme. Offers advocacy and scrutiny, as well as being a channel through which to convey messages to a wider audience. | Regular information updates since scheme inception.   | Ad-hoc briefings and written updates                        | Stuart McNaughton (NCC) |

## 7. Communications and engagement protocol

### 7.1 Planning and coordinating engagement

- 7.1.1 No contact should be made with new external stakeholders (i.e. those that have not been contacted before) without the prior approval of the NCC Project Manager or his appointed deputy via the AECOM Project Management team. No formal engagement should take place with stakeholders with which the scheme has a pre-existing relationship without the prior approval of the relevant RM (see Section 6 for details of the role of the RM).
- 7.1.2 For these purposes, 'formal engagement' is understood to mean any engagement that involves sharing new/updated scheme details and/or discussions that may have an impact on the scheme (e.g. design or programme).
- 7.1.3 Figure 4 illustrates the steps that should be taken when planning any engagement activity.

**Figure 4: Process for planning engagement activity**



- 7.1.4 To help drive consistency in all engagement with external stakeholders the following protocol should be followed.
- All engagement should be in accordance with this SES.
  - Meeting agendas and attendees should be agreed with the relevant RM prior to meetings.
  - A record of the engagement must be produced, including details of any plans and information shared, actions agreed or commitments made.
  - Draft notes of meetings must be made and circulated for agreement with attendees within five working days of each meeting taking place. Where important assumptions, risks or impacts have come to light as a result of a meeting, they should be communicated to the wider project team within the same timeframe.

- Final notes of meetings must be issued within 10 working days of the meeting taking place and be saved to the relevant area on ProjectWise (see 8.3.1). They must also be sent to relevant members of the project team
- Meeting notes should include: subject, date, venue, attendees, points agreed, any areas of disagreement, actions agreed, key risks and impacts on work.
- All engagement will be logged in the stakeholder engagement database (see 8.2) within 10 working days of the engagement taking place.

## 7.2 Media and political enquiries

- 7.2.1 All media relations will be managed by the NCC communications team. Any media enquiries should be forwarded to [communications@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:communications@northumberland.gov.uk), who will liaise with the communications team on the scheme's behalf. The team can also be reached on 01670 622 428.
- 7.2.2 Political enquiries should be sent to Andrew Ward at Northumberland County Council.



## 8. Recording engagement

### 8.1 Approach

- 8.1.1 When conducting any kind of engagement activity, it is important that it is always made clear when stakeholders are being informed and when they are being given an opportunity to shape proposals.

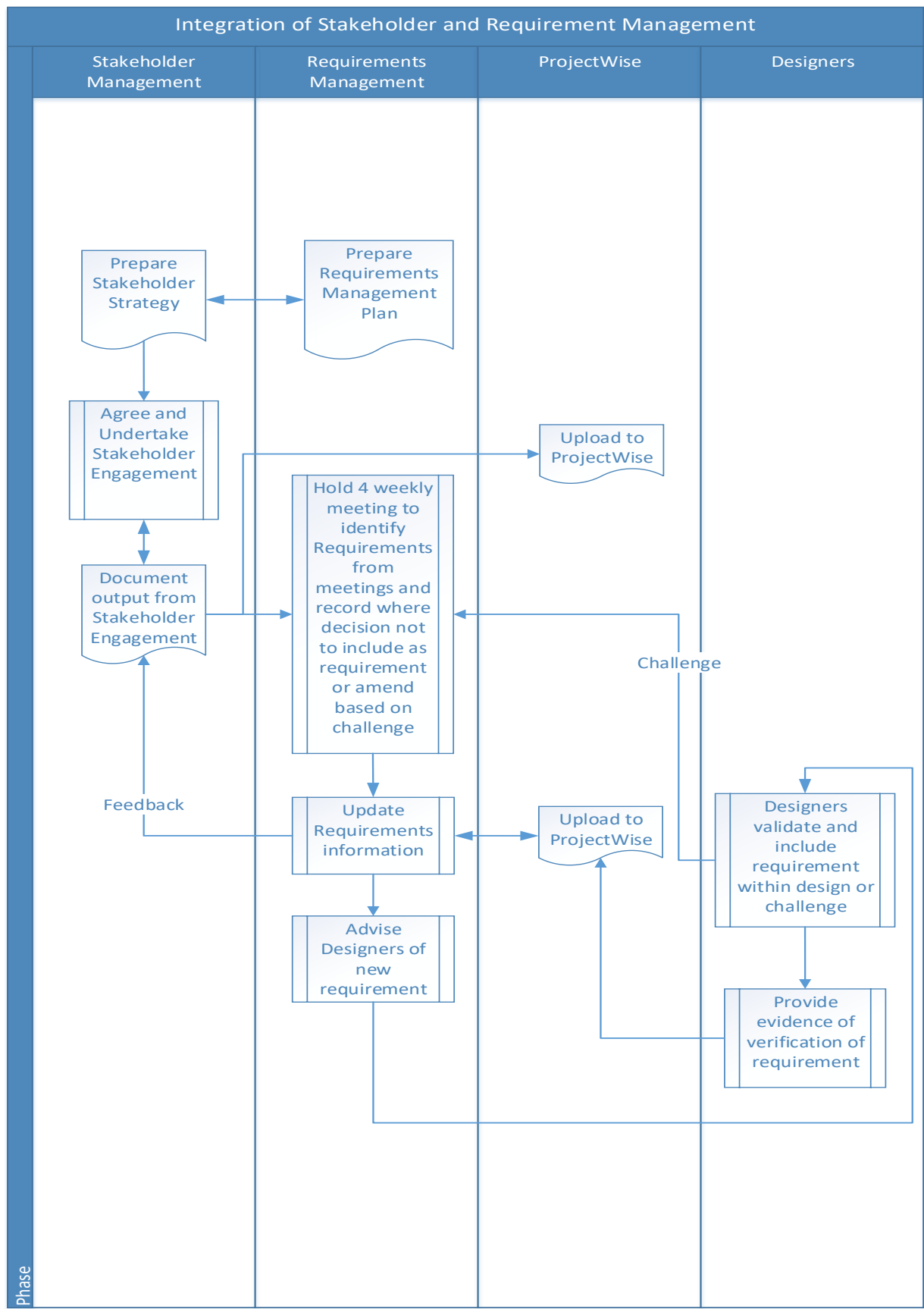
### 8.2 Engagement database

- 8.2.1 A record of all stakeholder engagement activity will be captured in a database known as the Stakeholders Engagement Tracker that will be stored on ProjectWise so that team members can update a live version. The purpose of the database will be to help make engagement as efficient and effective as possible by ensuring detailed records are available to the project team. It will record details of all stakeholder engagement activities and any correspondence and information received and issued that is relevant to the delivery of the scheme. This database will be compliant with GDPR.
- 8.2.2 This Stakeholders Engagement Tracker will be pre-populated with existing records going back to the beginning of 2019. The AECOM Project Management team will have ultimate responsibility for the tracker, but all individuals that organise and/or undertake any formal engagement (including meetings, letters, e-mails and consultations) will be responsible for entering details of their engagement activities.
- 8.2.3 The purpose of each engagement activity and the details of what is being shared and/or consulted on will be agreed with the project team in advance of each meeting, workshop or other event. This will be clarified with stakeholders in advance to ensure an open dialogue can take place.

### 8.3 Requirements management

- 8.3.1 After each formal stakeholder engagement activity or meeting, the notes or minutes relating to that activity should be shared with all key parties involved in it (e.g. meeting attendees) and added to the Requirements Register by the AECOM Project Management team.
- 8.3.2 Where engagement results in a suggested design alteration or alternative, the relevant RM should discuss this with the Requirements Manager at the regular monthly meeting so that it can be reflected in the scheme's requirements matrix. This does not mean that the RM should not independently communicate the meeting outputs with the wider team; please see section 7.1 for guidance on this.
- 8.3.3 Should scheme requirements need to be updated, designers will be advised of this and any proposed new requirement will then go through a verification and validation process. A programme will be developed for the monthly RM meeting that will tie into 2 validation periods at the end of July and October.
- 8.3.4 Points 8.3.1 to 8.3.3 are summarised in Figure 5. Once this process has been completed, stakeholders will be informed how their feedback has influenced the design via their RM. If their requirements have not been incorporated into the design, a note will be issued explaining why this is the case.

Figure 5: Process for integrating stakeholder feedback into scheme requirements



## 9. Programme for engagement

### 9.1 Ongoing engagement

9.1.1 As well as regular Programme Board, Project Steering Group and Stakeholder Working Group meetings, a number of key technical stakeholders are already being engaged on a regular basis, and this will continue for the foreseeable future. This ongoing engagement is referenced in Table 1 and is summarised below.

- **DfT:** scheme update meetings with the Rail Strategy Team, the regional liaison officer and the Transforming Cities Fund team
- **Northern Rail:** technical meetings and information requests on an ad-hoc basis
- **Network Rail and Nexus:** technical meetings on an ad-hoc basis
- **SENBUG:** information updates sent via email and ad-hoc briefings as necessary
- **TfN:** technical and strategic meetings on an ad-hoc basis

9.1.2 Relationships with these stakeholders are already well-established, and an onwards programme of activity for them is not felt necessary at this stage.

### 9.2 Regular engagement

9.2.1 Table 2 summarises engagement that is currently anticipated to take place on a regular basis for the lifespan of the scheme<sup>3</sup>. This regular engagement will be led by each stakeholder's RM.

Table 2: Regular engagement

| Stakeholder   | Type of engagement   | Timeframe  |
|---|--|--|
| Office of Road and Rail   | Quarterly meetings to provide progress reports and discuss developing scheme design (focus on level crossings) | Next meeting due for June 2019, quarterly following this |
| Local MPs (Blyth Valley, Wansbeck)                                      | Quarterly meetings to provide progress reports and discuss developing scheme design                            | Meeting due quarterly                                    |
| Local councillors (NCC, Newcastle City Council, North Tyneside Council) | Quarterly meetings to provide progress reports and discuss developing scheme design                            | Meeting due quarterly                                    |
| Parish and town councils  | Town forums  | To be confirmed  |

### 9.3 Consents

9.3.1 Following the early engagement that has already taken place with the scheme's two principal planning authorities (NCC and North Tyneside Council), a process of regular formal engagement will be put in place from June 2019. This will focus on the environmental and planning consents needed to deliver the scheme.

<sup>3</sup> Please note that these meetings will be rescheduled or cancelled if it is felt that there is no significant update to provide

## 9.4 Landowners

- 9.4.1 Owners of land adjacent to the scheme will need to be formally informed about plans for the Northumberland Line, and this should ideally take place by June 2019. This will be led by NCC and will be informed by a land referencing process that is already underway.
- 9.4.2 Before engaging with landowners, especially those whose land may need to be acquired, it will be vital to have approved supporting drawings and reports that can inform the discussions and demonstrate need for the land in question. As part of this engagement, it will be important to gauge landowners' sentiments towards the scheme and, in certain cases, whether there is a possibility of acquiring their land on a temporary or permanent basis. A database of any land that needs to be acquired will also need to be developed, building on existing knowledge (e.g. the proposed turnback at Butterwell that is privately owned).
- 9.4.3 This stream of work will form the basis of a landowner engagement schedule that will be managed by NCC and sit outside of this document. It will also form the basis of monthly meetings between SLC (Russell Mills) and NCC.

## 9.5 Future engagement

- 9.5.1 There are a number of statutory bodies whose advice will be needed as the scheme design develops. Initial contact will be made with these bodies in the latter half of 2019, with a view to arranging individual, targeted briefings on the scheme. These briefings will have a focus on highlighting and understanding any potential issues or opportunities. These briefings will initially be organised for:
  - Highways England
  - Historic England
  - Environment Agency
  - Natural England
- 9.5.2 Update meetings will need to be arranged with Port of Blyth, Lynemouth Power Station and Cobalt Business Park. These meetings will build on pre-existing relationships and previous engagement and should take place in the latter half of 2019.
- 9.5.3 A number of TOCs are yet to be formally briefed on the proposed scheme (East Coast, Grand Central and TransPennine Express). This briefing should take place by July 2019.

## 9.6 Community engagement

- 9.6.1 A public consultation on the scheme, with a focus on stations, access to stations and service pattern, is anticipated for September and October 2019. This consultation will be planned and led by NCC (with consultancy support as required) and is outside the scope of this SES. The consultation is expected to last six weeks and include online information (including feedback survey) and a minimum of two public events.
- 9.6.2 As there is a desire to build community understanding of and support for the scheme, the community will be kept informed via the development of a new scheme website, press and social media activity.
- 9.6.3 A set of key messages and lines to use in response to questions from members of the public or others (e.g. whilst on site visits) will be produced to ensure messages are consistent and accurate.
- 9.6.4 A programme of targeted community engagement with schools and equality groups is expected to start in the latter half of 2019. To prepare for this, a stakeholder mapping exercise needs to be undertaken to establish key contacts and preferred engagement methods. Once this mapping has been undertaken, this stream of work will be the subject of a more detailed and separate programme of engagement activity.

- 9.6.5 Where there is a need to engage a particular type of local community stakeholder (e.g. businesses, cyclists, walkers), where possible this will be done through suitable interest or membership groups or forums.

## 10. Updating the SES

This SES covers the period up until the submission of the scheme's OBC. When the OBC has been submitted, the SES will be updated to cover the next stage of the scheme. This could include the creation of separate, workstream-specific Stakeholder Engagement Plans.

