

Appendix G: Assurance and Approvals Plan

Introduction

The Northumberland Line project is a multi-disciplinary project involving multiple stakeholders and project components. Key to the success of the project is to have a clear plan outlining the assurance process to be followed to satisfy promoters, funders and statutory body requirements and to minimise risk to the project.

This IAAP covers the planning, coordination and provision of assurance activities and approval points throughout the project lifecycle, proportionate to levels of project cost and risk. The benefits of an IAAP are:

- Clarity of roles and responsibilities and clear understanding of assurance requirements by project team, funders and stakeholders.
- Integration of assurance and approvals activities minimises risk of programme slippage and duplication.
- Enables resourcing to be planned efficiently to meet assurance and approvals requirements

Purpose and scope

The IAAP will be used by the project team to plan the resources and activities required to meet challenging timescales for the assurance, audit and approvals for the project. The scope of this IAAP comprises all assurance and approvals processes for the Development, Design, Delivery and Deployment of the project. It addresses the requirements associated with the following bodies:

- Department for Transport
- Northumberland County Council
- Network Rail
- Office for Road and Rail
- Train Operating Companies
- Freight Operating Companies
- Highways England
- Natural England
- Environment Agency

Assessment of risks and determination of assurance requirements

The project is subject to the following risk assessment and assurance processes:

Tools/Techniques	Required by	Purpose
Quantified Risk Assessment	RNEP process/ NCC	Identify scope and cost risk within the project
Project Risk Register/Review	Standard Project Requirement	Identify and quantify all project risks and mitigations
Network Rail GRIP process and Gateways	Network Rail	Ensure all design/works proposals meet applicable standards and other requirements
Review and Appraisal of 5 case model by DfT through RNEP process SOBC, OBC and FBC stages	DfT	Identify strategic, economic, financial, management and commercial risks at each stage in the approvals process.

Tools/Techniques	Required by	Purpose
Fit with National/Regional Transport Strategy	Transport for North	Fit with strategy and interface with current/committed projects
Internal LA review	Northumberland County Council Scrutiny Committees	Identify key strategic, financial and political risks.

Roles and responsibilities

Roles and responsibilities in respect of the Assurance and Approvals process are shown in Annex A.

Approvals

Within Northumberland County Council (NCC), Cabinet approval is required in respect of the project strategic outputs, cost plan, funding, borrowing, land acquisition, procurement, planning matters and relevant delegated authorities to officers.

North East and North of Tyne Combined Authority approval will be required if funding is providing via the Transforming Cities Fund or other funding controlled by either body. Approval by DfT will also be needed.

The RNEP process does not require full adherence to the Network Rail GRIP process. However, as the project is enhancing Network Rail assets the design assurance acceptance and Network Change processes will need to be followed including the relevant supporting processes such as performance modelling. The Office of Road and Rail are responsible for receiving the relevant assurances in respect of technical standards for interoperability and safety assurance required for entry into service of new assets and infrastructure.

Train and Freight Operating Companies require the relevant safety and technical assurances to enable acceptance of new assets and infrastructure into service.

Details of the assurance evidence required for each party are provided in Annex B.

Cost and resources (Design Phase)

Funding Source	(£m)	Status
NCC Capital Programme	£4.96m	Secured
DfT RNEP contribution	£4.96m	Not Secured
Total	£9.92m	

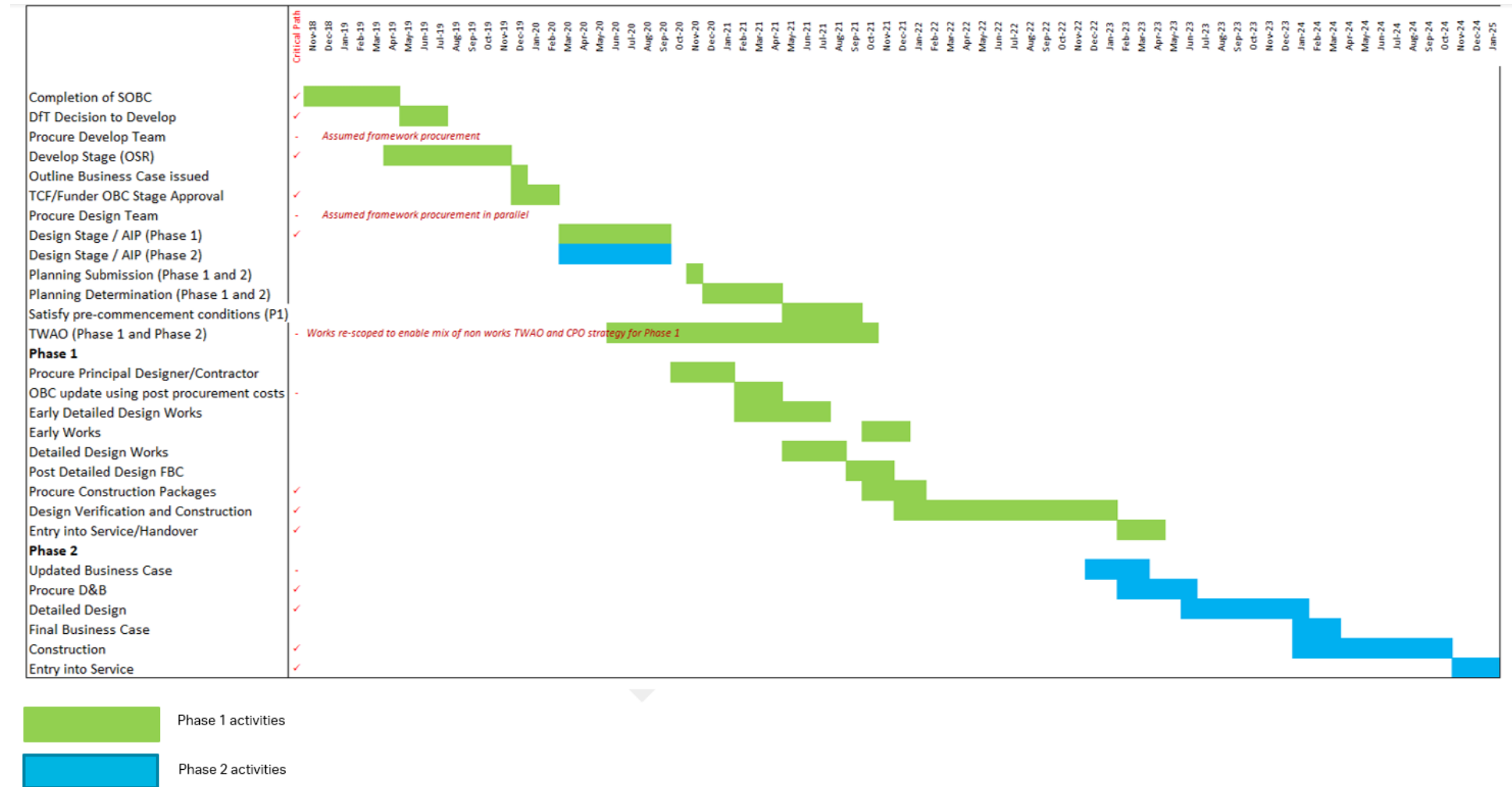
Reporting and communications

Reporting of Assurance process outcomes is the responsibility of the Programme Manager via the Senior Responsible Officer to Programme Board.

Managing outcomes, consequential assurance and escalation

The SRO is responsible for implementing the actions and recommendations in assurance review reports in conjunction with the Programme Manager and wider project team

Annex A: Project Plan



Annex B: Assurance Evidence

Responsible Body/Role	Responsibility
Northumberland County Council Cabinet/Full Council	Receive assurances to inform decision making
Programme Board	Monitor execution and implementation of IAAP and implement consequential assurance and intervention as necessary
Senior Responsible Officer (Director, Planning and Economy, NCC)	Sponsor assurance reviews and reports to Project Board and Cabinet
Programme Manager (Stuart McNaughton NCC)	Manage and execute IAAP and Risk Register and report to SRO.
North East/North of Tyne Combined Authority	Confirm assurance and approval requirements and receive assurances to inform decision making
Department for Transport	Confirm assurance and approval requirements and receive assurances to inform decision making
Network Rail	Confirm technical assurance and approval requirements. Manage and execute Stage-gate review process and internal clearance.
Office of Road and Rail	Receive assurances to inform decision making in respect of level crossings, interoperability and CSM Safety Assessment Report
Train and Freight Operating Companies	Confirm safety and financial/commercial assurance and approval requirements