

NORTHUMBERLAND LINE ORDER

APPLICANT'S UPDATE TO INQUIRY (ISSUE NO. 3)

29 NOVEMBER 2021

1. This note provides the Applicant's responses to queries raised by the Inspector during the second week of the inquiry (16 - 19 November 2021) and also clarifies some matters raised in oral submissions by the Applicant.

MALHOTRA (OBJ22)

2. Costs of managing Ashington car park
 - 2.1 The advocate for Malhotra requested information concerning the maintenance and security costs of the station car park at Ashington once the Northumberland Line is operational. It is anticipated that annual maintenance and renewals costs for the car park will be approximately £40,000 per annum. It anticipated that the operational costs will be approximately £22,000 per annum, which will cover winter clearing, periodic drainage inspection and general cleaning.
 - 2.2 These estimated figures are derived from project-wide estimates that have been split pro-rata based on the proportion of cost allocated to Ashington car park against all car park costs for the Scheme as a whole. The figures are annualised nominal costs (i.e. they do not account for inflation) and the maintenance and renewals cost includes an allowance for overheads and risk.
3. Fare price assumptions used in car parking demand model
 - 3.1 A fare price of £4.92 for a return ticket from Newcastle to Ashington at peak time, and £3.62 off peak, was assumed in the demand forecast model presented in the statement of Andy Coates (Appendix B to APP-W2-3). These figures represent the average fare paid; this average being derived from the prices of each of the different ticket types weighted by usage of those ticket types.

NORTHUMBERLAND ESTATES / LORD HASTINGS (OBJ12 and OBJ21)

4. Transportation of coal
 - 4.1 As confirmed in James Holdroyd's evidence, no coal has been transported on the Northumberland Line for approximately 6 months. Network Rail has confirmed that the transportation of coal on the line is unlikely to recommence, but it could potentially do so in the future, for example if any problems occurred to the current supply routes used for coal.

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS / CLARIFICATION POINTS

5. Timing for publication of the Full Business Case (FBC)
 - 5.1 The FBC has now been submitted to the Department for Transport (DfT), and the Applicant is in the process of finalising it with them so that the DfT can prepare its paper for the Rail Tier 2 Investment Board which will consider the FBC.
6. Mobilisation costs for Northern Trains Limited (Northern)
 - 6.1 Further to the information provided in the Applicant's Update Note (Issue No. 2) [INQ-17], the Applicant has sought further clarification from Northern of the likely level of mobilisation costs, to the extent this can be shared without disclosing any commercially sensitive information.
 - 6.2 Mobilisation costs are incremental costs incurred by Northern in the period prior to the commencement of passenger services (which is assumed to be December 2023). These are costs necessary to ensure that Northern as the train operator and station facility operator has sufficient resources, assets and systems in place to ensure a smooth entry into passenger service for the Northumberland Line. Northern's estimated mobilisation costs are approximately £3.3m and

cover train crew and management, project management, property and rolling stock costs. This figure has been reviewed and approved by the DfT.

7. Bridge at Bebside (near Asda)

- 7.1 When providing a response to a question raised by the inspector on 11 November 2021, Julian Sindall stated that the bridge between Bebside and the Asda car park was pedestrian only. The Applicant wishes to correct this statement. The design of the bridge has been changed to a shared walking / cycling bridge.

8. Statutory authority for passenger trains to run along the Northumberland Line

- 8.1 On Friday 19 November, the Inspector referred to a sentence he had seen in the inquiry documents which referred to there being statutory authority to run passenger trains between Benton junction and the East Coast Main Line (Newcastle Central station), and noted this could imply there is no such authority to run trains along the rest of the line.
- 8.2 The Applicant has not been able to locate the sentence referred to by the Inspector. If the sentence does appear in the inquiry documents no inference should be drawn from this statement that there is no equivalent statutory authority to run passenger trains along the remainder of the line. There is statutory authority to operate passenger rail services along the entire route of the line. The statutory authority is derived from various sources, including section 86 of the Railway Clauses Consolidation Act 1845 which is expressly incorporated into the local Acts which authorised the Blyth and Tyne railway.

9. Affidavit of Melissa Griffiths

- 9.1 The inspector noted there were minor errors in the affidavit of Melissa Griffiths, appended to the '*Note on Compliance with notification and publicity requirements*' [INQ-02]. The Applicant is correcting the points identified and will submit a corrected version as soon as possible. If necessary, this will be sent to the DfT after the close of the inquiry.

10. New and updated documents

- 10.1 The Applicant is submitting with this note the following documents:

- 10.1.1 Updated Position Statement with Local Planning Authority and Highway Authority: Sets out the latest position on those matters which are described as being 'under discussion' in the Statement of Common Ground [APP-48].
- 10.1.2 Details of purposes for which land is required: As requested by the Inspector, the Applicant has prepared a version of the book of reference which includes an extra column which sets out the purpose for which each plot is required.
- 10.1.3 Corrected Book of Reference [APP-12]: The book of reference has been corrected to address the errors identified by Northumberland Estates – see paragraph 8(ii) and 8(iii) of the Estate's Opening Statement [INQ-25]. Plots 298a and 302a have also been removed to reflect the removal of these plots from the previous iteration of the Land and Works Plans [APP10-1].
- 10.1.4 Corrected Sheet 13 of Land and Works Plans: A corrected version of this sheet is being provided which includes plot 144a (Lysdon Farm level crossing). This plot had been removed in error from this sheet in revision 1 of the Land and Works Plans [APP10-1].
- 10.1.5 Updated Draft Order [APP-1] and Explanatory Memorandum [APP-2]: The draft order has been updated to include:
- (a) the Applicant's proposed wording for article 34 and deletion of article 22(4);
 - (b) protective provisions for the benefit of Nexus at Part 3 of Schedule 10; and

- (c) updates to column (2) of Schedule 1 (planning permissions) to provide the date of recent planning permissions.

The explanatory memorandum has been revised accordingly.

- 10.1.6 A site specific note relating to Northumberland Park: This note brings together details of the mitigation proposals and compensation provisions relevant to Fenwick Close, and responds to the question raised by the inspector on the anticipated maximum construction period at Northumberland Park.