

Northumberland Line

Transport and Works Act 1992

The Transport and Works (Applications and Objections Procedure) (England and Wales) Rules 2006

Rule 10(2)(c)

Statement of Aims



Northumberland
County Council

Northumberland Line

TWA Order

Statement of Aims

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This statement is submitted in support of the application by Northumberland County Council (NCC) to the Secretary of State under the Transport and Works Act 1992 for the Northumberland Line Order (the Order). The document is submitted in accordance with Rule 10(2)(c) of the Transport and Works (Applications and Objections Procedure) (England and Wales) Rules 2006 and contains a concise statement of the aims of the proposals to which the application relates.

2 Background

- 2.1 The Northumberland Line will reintroduce passenger trains into service between Ashington and Newcastle. The scheme involves the construction of six new railway stations, works to existing railway infrastructure and the closure and upgrading of certain level crossings.
- 2.2 The majority of works required for the Northumberland Line will be authorised by a combination of planning permissions granted under Part 3 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and permitted development rights granted by the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015.
- 2.3 The Order (if made) will provide NCC with a range of powers and authorisations to facilitate the delivery of the scheme. In particular, the Order would authorise:
- the closure of certain level crossings,
 - the extinguishment and diversion of public rights of way,
 - the compulsory acquisition of land and rights over land,
 - the temporary possession of land for the purposes of construction, and
 - a limited range of ancillary works required in connection with the scheme.

3 Aims of the scheme

- 3.1 The railway between Ashington and Newcastle was used to provide both passenger and freight services until the Beeching cuts in the 1960s. Since then, freight trains have continued to use the line, primarily serving Lynemouth Power Station. The absence of passenger railway services serving South East Northumberland has contributed to congestion on the highway network. For many residents without a car, bus travel is the only viable form of alternative transport. Highway congestion, infrequent and poor public transport and long journey times have contributed to poor local employment opportunities and the economic decline of the area.
- 3.2 The reintroduction of passenger services along the line has been an aspiration of NCC for many years and the current political, social, economic and rail industry context means that it can now be successfully delivered. As a

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result of being awarded development funding from the Department for Transport (DfT), NCC has been working alongside partners since 2018 to design a scheme which protects the line for the essential freight services whilst upgrading the line for passenger services.

- 3.3 The scheme is a priority of both NCC and North Tyneside Council and is supported by a number of key project partners, including the DfT, Network Rail, Transport for the North (TfN) and Nexus.
- 3.4 The Northumberland Line aims to stimulate and support economic growth, regeneration and community development in Northumberland by providing new and improved transport links for local people and businesses. In doing so, the scheme will:
1. 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;
 2. Provide a real incentive for potential employers to relocate to and invest in the area;
 3. Provide vital infrastructure to help deliver the region's aspirations for population and economic growth;
 4. Help to attract visitors and improve local tourism;
 5. Enhance public transport connectivity within and beyond the region;
 6. Help to reduce congestion and improve air quality on key corridors by moving people away from car travel and onto public transport; and
 7. Support the delivery of significant growth in sectors such as renewable energy, offshore oil and gas and engineering.