

The Network Rail (Huddersfield to Westtown) (Dewsbury) Improvement) Order

The following is Network Rail's response to Kirklees Council in respect of the objection to open space at Deighton.

The necessity of removing tree adjacent to the railway west of Deighton Station

Please refer to Figure 1 below which shows the requirement for an embankment design north of the railway to the west of the proposed newly aligned Deighton Station for the Huddersfield to Westtown (Dewsbury) scheme ("the scheme"). The requirement for this embankment means the removal of approximately 940 hundred trees in the area that currently line the railway. The embankment design is necessary given the new configuration of Deighton Station and the resulting position of the rail lines. The design seeks to minimise the extent of the embankment so as to maintain the walkway itself but in this area, it does mean the removal of the belt of trees between the existing railway and walkway.



Figure 1: Embankment design, Deighton Station

Landscaping in the Environmental Statement

The Environmental Statement (ES), a document which supports the Transport and Works Act application, assesses the landscape effects of the scheme and this includes a consideration of the de vegetation required to construct and operate the scheme. As a result of the assessment, Network Rail is recommending that a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) will be a planning condition which must be submitted to and agreed with Kirklees Council in advance of the applicable works. The ES includes landscape figures where the landscaping is intended to be completed. The effects at Deighton are included in the ES and show an area of species rich grassland but in this area no specific tree replacement is recommended with the aim of retaining the open aspect of the greenway.



However, the landscape figures which form part of the ES should be reviewed as a whole across the scheme. Network Rail is committed to replanting trees to offset the effects as part of the overall LEMP. Whilst it is not recommended to plant replacement trees in the specific area of the greenway where the rail embankment is to be constructed, across the whole scheme this localised loss is accounted for. Whilst the landscape chapter of the ES recommends an open aspect in the greenway, Network Rail will engage with Kirklees Council and agree specific tree planting on the greenway that is land owned by Kirklees Council. This would then be a commitment to be included in the LEMP as outlined above.

Biodiversity Offsetting

Network Rail has previously indicated to Kirklees Council that it is committed to biodiversity offsetting with 10% enhancement across the scheme. This means that Network Rail commits to replacing the value of the habitats lost and adding an additional 10% of value in accordance with a metric or measure that is approved by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. This commitment, that has also been made by Network Rail to Natural England, is separate to the requirements to mitigate the ecological and landscape effects of the scheme that the implementation of the LEMP will achieve as outlined above. What it means is a minimum of two trees will be planted for every tree lost as result of the commitment to biodiversity offsetting. In all likelihood this two for one replacement number will be exceeded through various agreements with third party stakeholders, including Kirklees Council, to create new habitat and plant more trees. Network Rail will continue to engage with Kirklees Council to progress the biodiversity offsetting commitment further.